## The Spoilers.

By REX E. BEACH.

Copyright, 1905, by Rex E. Beach. -:-

[Continued from last week.]

"I've been called to the mines, and I must go at once."

"You bet! It may be too late now. The news came an hour ago, but I couldn't find you," said Struve. "Your horse is saddled at the office. Better not wait to change your clothes."

"You say Voorhees has gone with twenty deputies, eh? That's good. You stay here and find out all you can."

"I telephoned out to the creek for the boys to arm themselves and throw out pickets. If you hurry, you can get there in time. It's only midnight now." "What is the trouble?" Miss Chester

inquired anxiously. "There's a plot on to attack the mines tonight," answered the lawyer. "The other side are trying to seize them, and there's apt to be a fight."

"You mustn't go out there," she cried, aghast. "There will be bloedshed."

"That's just why I must go," said McNamara. "I'll come back in the morning, though, and I'd like to see you alone. Good night!" There was a strange, dew light in his eyes as he left her. For one unversed in woman's ways he played the game surprisingly well, and as he hurrled toward his office he smiled grimly into the darkness.

"She'll answer me tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Glenister," he said to him-

Helen questioned Strave at length. but gained nothing more than that secret service men had been at work for weeks and had today unearthed the fact that vigilantes had been formed. They had heard enough to make them think the mines would be jumped again tonight and so had given the alarm.

"Have you hired spies?" she asked incredulously.

"Sure. We had to. The other people shadowed us, and it's come to a point where it's life or death to one side or the other. I told McNamara we'd have bloodshed before we were through, when he first outlined the scheme-I mean when the trouble began."

She wrung ber bands. "That's what uncle feared before we left Seattle. That's why I took the risks I did in bringing you those papers. I thought you got them in time to avoid all this." Struve laughed a bit, eying her cu-

"Does Uncle Arthur know about

this?" she continued. "No; we don't let him know anything more than necessary. He's not a strong

man." "Yes, yes. He's not well." Again the lawyer smiled. "Who is behind this vigilante movement?"

"We think it is Glenister and his New Mexican bandit partner. At least they got the crowd together." She

was silent for a time. "I suppose they really think they

own those mines.

"Undoubtedly." "But they don't, do they?" Somehow this question had recurred to her insistently of late, for things were constantly happening which showed there was more back of this great, flerce struggle than she knew. It was impossible that injustice had been done the mine owners, and yet scattered talk reached her which was puzzling. When she strove to follow it up, her acquaintances adroitly changed the subject. She was baffled on every side. The three local newspapers upheld the court. She read them carefully and was more at sea than ever. There was a disturbing undercurrent of alarm and unrest that caused her to feel insecure, as though standing on hollow ground.

"Yes, this whole disturbance is caused by those two. Only for them we'd

be all right."

"Who is Miss Malotte?" He answered promptly, "The handsomest weman in the north and the most dangerous."

"In what way? Who is she?" "It's hard to say who or what she

is. She's different from other women. She came to Dawson in the early days - just came-we didn't know how, whence or why, and we never found out. We woke up one morning, and there she was. By night we were all jealous, and in a week we were most of us driveling idiots. It might have been the mystery or perhaps the competition. That was the day when a dance hall girl could wake a home stake in a winter or marry a millionsire in a month, but she never bothered. She toiled not, neither did she spin on the waxed floors, yet Solomon in all his glory would have looked like a

tramp beside her." "You say she is dangerous?"

"Well, there was a young nobleman, in the winter of '98, Dane, I thinkfine family and all that-big yellow haired boy. He wanted to marry her. but a faro dealer shot him. Then there was Rock of the mounted police, the

finest officer in the service. He was cashiered. She knew he was going to pot for her, but she didn't seem to it all, she is the most generous person and the most tender hearted. Why. she has fed every 'stew bum' on the Yukon, and there isn't a busted prospector in the country who wouldn't swear by her, for she has grubstaked dozens of them. I was horribly in love with her myself. Yes, she's daugerous all right-to everybody but Glenister."

"What do you mean." "She had been across the Yukon to nurse a man with scurvy, and coming back she was caught in the spring breakup. I wasn't there, but it seems this Glenister got her ashore somehow when nobody else would tackle the job. They were carried five miles downstream in the ice pack before he suc-

"What happened then?"

"She fell in leve with him, of course." "And he worshiped her as madly as all the rest of you, I suppose," she said scornfully.

"That's the peculiar part. She hypnotized him at first, but he ran away, and I didn't hear of him again till I came to Nome. She followed him finally and last week evened up her score. She paid him back for saving her." "I haven't heard about it."

He detailed the story of the gambling episode at the Northern saloon and concluded: "I'd like to have seen that turn, for they say the excitement was terrific. She was keeping cases and at the faish stammed her case keeper shut and declared the bet off because she had made a mistake. Of course they couldn't dispute hap and she stuck to it. One of the bystanders told me she fied, though."

"So, in addition to his other vices Mr. Glenister is a reckless gambler, is he?" said Helen with heat, "I am proud to be indebted to such a character. Truly this country breeds wonder ful species."

"There's where you're wrong," Struve chuckled. "He's never been known to bet before."

"Oh, I'm tired of these contradic tions!" she cried angrily. "Saloons, gambling halls, scandals, adventuresses! Ugh! I hate it! I hate it! Why did I ever come here?"

"Those things are a part of new country. They were about all we had till this year. But it is women like you that we fellows need. Miss Helen. You can help us a lot." She did not like the way he was looking at her and remembered that her uncle was upstairs and asleep.

"I must ask you to excuse me now. for it's late and I am very tired."

The clock showed half past 12, so, after letting him out, she extinguished the light and dragged herself wearily up to her room. She removed her outer garments and threw over her bare shoulders a negligee of many flounces and bewildering, clinging looseness. As she took down her heavy braids the story of Cherry Malotte returned to her tormentingly. So Gleuister had saved her life also at the risk of his own. What a very gallant eavalier he was, to be sure! He should bear a coat of arms-a dragon, an armed knight and a fainting maiden. "I succor ladies in distress bandsome ones," should be the motto on his shield. "The handsomest weman in the north." Struve had said. She raised her eyes to the glass and made a mouth at the petulant, wifed reflection there. She pictured Glenister leaping from floe to floe with the hungry river surging and snapping at his feet, while the cheers of the crowd on shore gave heart to the girl crouching out there. She could see him snatch her up and fight his way back to safety over the plunging ice cakes with death dragging at his heels. What a strong embrace he had! At this she blushed and realized with a shock that while she was mooning that very man might be fighting hand to hand in the darkness of a mountain gorge with the man she was going to marry.

A moment later some one mounted the front steps below and knocked sharply. Truly this was a night of alarms. Would people never cease coming? She was worn out, but at the thought of the tragedy abroad and the sick old man sleeping near by she lit a condie and slipped downstairs to avoid adisturbing him. Doubtless it was some ssage from McNamara. she thought, as she unchained the

As she opened it she fell back amazed while it swung wide and the caudle flame sickered and sputtered in the night air. Roy Glenister stood there, grim and determined, his soft, white into tan half boots, in his hand a planking at this point was torn up, so Winchester rifle. Beneath his cordu- to avoid the mud he leaped lightly clandestine gatherings.

prov what hells, and the placeled Eash of a revolver. Without invitation he strode across the threshold, closing the door behind him.

"Miss Chester, you and the judge must dress quickly and come with

"I don't understand." "The vigilantes are on their way here to hang him. Come with me to my house, where I can protect you."

She laid a trembling hand on her bosom, and the color died out of her face, then at a slight noise above they both looked up to see Judge Stillman leaning far over the banister. He had wrapped himself in a dressing gown and now gripped the rail convulsively, while his features were blanched to the color of putty and his eyes were care-and there were others. Yet, with wide with terror, though puffed and swollen from sleep. His lips moved in a vain endeavor to speak.

CHAPTER XV.

N the morning after the episode in the Northern, Glenister awoke under a weight of discouragement and desolation. The past twenty-four hours with their manifold experiences seemed distant and unreal. At breakfast he was ashamed to tell Dextry of the gambling debauch, for he had dealt treacherously with the old man in risking half of the mine, even though they had checked the senseless, unreasoning lust for play that possessed him later. This lapse was the last stand of his old, untamed instincts. The embers of revolt in him were dead. He felt that he would never again lose mastery of himself, that his passions would never best him hereafter.

Dextry spoke. "We had a meeting of the 'Stranglers' last night." He always spoke of the vigilantes in that way, because of his early western training.

"What was done?"

"They decided to act quick and do any odd jobs of lynchin', claim jumpin' or such as needs doin'. There's a lot of law sharps and storekeepers in the bunch who figure McNamara's gang will wipe them off the map next.' "It was bound to come to this."

"They talked of ejectin' the receiver's men and puttin' all us fellers back on our mines."

"Good! How many can be count o to help us?"

"About sixty. We've kept the nur ber down and only taken men with so much property that they'll have to keep their mouths shut."

"I wish we might engineer some kind of an encounter with the court crowd and create such an uproar that it would reach Washington. Everything else has failed, and our last chance seems to be for the government to step in-that is, unless Bill Wheaton can do something with the California courts."

"I don't count on him. McNamara don't care for California courts no! more'n he would for a boy with a pea ! shooter-he's got too much pull at headquarters. If the 'Stranglers' don't do no good we'd better go in an' clean out the bunch like we was willin' snakes. If that fails I'm goin' out to

the States an' be a doctor.' "A doctor! What for?"

hard for you."

"I read somewhere that in the United States every year there is 40,000,000 gallons of whisky used for medical

purposes." Gienister laughed, "Speaking of whisky. Dex. I notice that you've been drinking pretty hard of late-that is,

The old man shook his head. "You're mistaken. It ain't hard for me."

"Well, hard or easy, you'd better cut

It was some time later that one of the detectives employed by the Swedes met Glenister on Front street and by an almost imperceptible sign signified his desire to speak with him. When

they were alone he said: "You've been shadowed."

"I've known that for a long time." "The district attorney has put on some new mea. I've fixed the woman who rooms next to him, and through but I haven't spotted them all. They're bad ones, 'up river' men mostly, remnants of Soapy Smith's Skagway gang.

They won't stop at anything." "Thank you. I'll keep my eyes

A few nights after Glenister had reason to recall the words of the sleuth and to realize that the game was growing close and desperate. To reach his cabin, which sat on the outskirts of the town, he ordinarily followed one of the plank walks which wound through it." the confusion of tents, warehouses and cottages lying back of the two principal streets along the water front. This part of the city was not laid out in rush the first comers had seized whatever pieces of ground they found vacant and erected thereon some kind of buildings to make good their titles. There resulted a formless jamble of huts, cabins and sheds, penetrated by portion of the town found this dark-

ness intensified. Glenister knew his course so well that he could have walked it blindfolded. Nearing a corner of the warehouse roy coat she saw a loose cartridge belt, across. Simultaneously with his jump

ows that banked the wall at his elbow and saw the flaming spurt of a revolver shot. The man bad crouched behind the building and was so close that it seemed impossible to miss. Glenister fell heavilt upon his side, and the thought flashed over him, "McNamara's thugs have shot me."

His assailant leaped out from his hiding place and ran down the walk. the sound of his quick, soft footfalls thudding faintly out into the silence. The young man felt no pain, however, so scrambled to his feet, felt himself over with care and then swore roundly. He was untouched. The other had missed him cleanly. The report, coming while he was in the act of

leaping, had startled him so that he had lost his balance, slipped upon the wet boards and fallen. His assailant was lost in the darkness before he could rise. Pursuit was out of the question, so he continued homeward, considerably shaken, and related the incident to Dextry.

"You think it was some of McNamara's work, eh?" Dextry inquired when he had finished,

"Of course. Didn't the detective warn me today?"

Dextry shook his head. "It don't seem like the game is that far along yet. The time is coming when we'll go to the mat with them people, but they've got the aige on us now, so what could they gain by putting you away? I don't believe it's them, but whoever it is you'd better be careful or you'll be got."

"Suppose we come home together after this," Roy suggested, and they arranged to do so, realizing that danger lurked in the dark corners and that it was in some such lonely spot that the deed would be tried again. They experienced no trouble for a time, though on nearing their cabin one night the younger man fancied that he saw a shadow glide away from its vicinity and out into the blackness of the tundra as though some one had stood at his very door waiting for him, then became frightened at the two figures approaching. Dextry had not observed it, however, and Glenister was not positive himself, but it served to give him the uncanny feeling that some determined, unscrupulous force was bent on his destruction. He determined to go nowhere unarmed.

A few evenings later he went home early and was busied in writing when Dextry came in about 10 o'clock. The old miner hung up his coat before speaking, lit a cigarette, inhaled deeply, then, amid mouthfuls of smoke, began:

"I had my own toes over the edge tonight. I was mistook for you, which compliment I don't aim to have re-

Glenister questioned him eagerly.

"We're about the same height, an' these hats of ours are alike. Just as I came by that lumber pile down yonder a man hopped out an' throwed a 'gat' under my nose. He was quicker than light and near blowed my skelp into the next block before he saw who l was. Then he dropped his weepon and

"'My mistake. Go on.' I accepted bis apology."

"Could you see who he was?"

"Sure! Guess." "I can't."

"It was Bronco Kid." "Lord!" saculated Glenister.

you think he's after me?"

"He ain't after nobody else, an' take my word for it, it's got nothin' to do with McNamara nor that gamblin' row. He's too game for that. There's some other reason.'

This was the first mention Dextry had made of the night at the Northern "I don't know why he should have it in for me. I never did him any fa-

vors," Glenister remarked cynically. "Well, you watch out anyhow. I'd sooner face McNamara an' all the crooks he can hire than that gambler."

During the next few days Roy undertook to meet the proprietor of the Northern face to face, but the Kid had vanished completely from his baunts. her I've got a line on some of them. He was not in his gambling hall at night nor on the street by day. The young man was still looking for him on the evening of the dance at the hotel when he chanced to meet one of the

vigilantes, who inquired of him: "Aren't you late for the meeting?"

"What meeting?" After seeing that they were alone the other stated:

"There's an assembly tonight at 11 e'clock. Something important. I think. I supposed, of course, you knew about

"It's strange I wasn't notified," said Roy. "It's probably an oversight. I'll go along with you."

Together they crossed the river to rectangular blocks, for in the early the less frequented part of the town and knocked at the door of a large unlighted warehouse, flanked by a high board fence. The building faced the street, but was inclosed on the other three sides by this ten foot wall, inside of which were stored large quantities no cross streets and quite unlighted, of coal and lumber. After some delay At night one leaving the illuminated they were admitted and passing down through the dim lit, high banked lanes of merchandise came to the rear room, where they were admitted again. This compartment bad been fitted up for the warm storage of perishable goods dur-Stetson pulled low, his trousers tucked this evening he remembered that the ing the cold weather and, being without windows, made an ideal place for

Just Received, a Car of

## **FLOUR**

## PLUMB'S FLOUR and FEED STORE

You can save money by taking 500 pounds of him.



Some of the choicest lands for grain growing tock raising and mixed farming in the new dis ently been Opened for Settlement under the

Revised Homestead Regulations Entry may now be made by proxy (on certain conditions), by the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of an intending homesteader.

Thousands of homesteads of 160 acres each are thus now easily obtainable in these great graingrowing, stock-raising and mixed farming sec-There you will find healthful climate, good neighbors, churches for family worship, schools for your children, good laws, splendid crops, and railroads convenient to market.

Entry fee in each case is \$10.00. For pamphlet, "Last Best West," particulars as to rates, routes. best time to go and where to locate, apply to W. V. BENNETT 801 New York Life Bldg., Omaha, Neb.

Canadian Government Agen

every man of the organization present. including Dextry, whom he supposed to have gone home an hour since. Evi dently a discussion had been in progress, for a chairman was presiding, and the boxes, kegs and bales of goods had been shoved back against the walls for seats. On these were ranged the threescore men of the "Stranglers," their serious faces lighted imperfectly by scattered lauterns. A certain con straint seized them upon Glenister's entrance. The chairman was embarrassed. It was but momentary, how ever. Glenister himself felt that tragedy was in the air, for it showed in the men's attitude and spoke eloquently from their strained faces. He was sbout to question the man next to him

when the presiding officer continued: "We will assemble here quietly with our arms at 1 o'clock. And let ma caution you again not to talk or de-

anything to scare the birds away." Glenister arose. "I came late, M Chairman, so I missed hearing your plan. I gather that you're out for business, however, and I went to be to It. May I ask what is on foot?"

"Certainly. Things have reached such a pass that moderate means are useless. We have decided to act and act quickly. We have exhausted every

legal resource, and now we're going to stamp out this gang of robbers in our own way. We will get together in an hour, divide into three groups of twerty men, each with a leader, then go to the houses of McNamara, Stillman and Voorhees, take them prisoners, and"-He waved his hand in a large gesture Glenister made no answer for a mo ment, while the crowd watched him ir

tently. "You have discussed this fully?" be sked.

"We have. It has been voted on, and we're unanimous."

"My friends, when I stepped into this room just now I felt that I wasn't wanted. Why, I don't know, because I have had more to do with organizing this movement than any of you and because I have suffered just as much as the rest. I want to know if I was omitted from this meeting intentionally."

"This is an embarrassing position to put me in," said the chairman gravely but I shall answer as spokesman for these men if they wish."

"Yes; go ahead," said those around the room.

"We don't question your loyalty, Mr. Glenister, but we didn't ask you to this meeting because we know your attitude perhaps I'd better say sent ment - regarding Judge Stillman s niece er-family. It has come to to from various sources that you have been affected to the prejudice of your own and your partner's interest. Nov. there isn't going to be any sentiment in the adairs of the vigilantes. We are going to do justice, and we thought the simplest way was to ignore you in this matter and spare all discountion and

hard feeling in every quark [TO BE CONTINUED.]

Drs. Weirick & Riddile, Eye. Ear. Nose and Throat Specialists. Glasses fitted. Over German National Bank, Hastings, Neb.