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The Spoilers.

By REX E. BEACH.

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She did not answer, only continued to look at the "layout." "What a woman?! he thought. She was not too tall, with smoothly rounded bust and hips and long waist, all well displayed by her perfectly fitting garments. Her face was oval, the mouth rather large, the eyes of dark, dark blue, prominently outlined under thin, silken lids. Her dull gold hair was combed low over the ears, and her smile showed rows of sparkling teeth before it dived into twin dimples. Strangest of all, it was an innocent face, the face and smile of a schoolgirl.

The Kid finished his shuffling awkwardly and slid the cards into the box. Then the woman spoke:

"Let me have your place, Bronco." The man gasped, the Jew snickered, the lookout straightened in his chair. "Better not. It's a hard game," said the Kid, but her voice was imperious as she commanded him:

"Hurry up. Give me your place." Bronco arose, whereupon she settled in his chair, tucked in her skirts, removed her gloves and twisted into place the diamonds on her hands.

"What the devil's this?" said lookout roughly. "Are you drunk, Bronco? Get out of that chair, miss!" She turned to him slowly. The innocence had fled from her features, and the big eyes flashed warningly. A change had coarsened her like a puff of air on a still pool. Then, while she stared at him, her lids drooped dangerously and her lip curled.

"Throw him out, Bronco," she said, and her tones held the hardness of a mistress to her slave. "That's all right," the Kid reassured

the lookout. "She's a better dealer than I am. This is Cherry Malotte." Without noticing the stares this evoked, the girl commenced. Her



"This is Cherry Malotte."

bands, beautifully soft and white, flashed over the board. She dealt rapidly, unfalteringly, with the finish of one bred to the cards, handling chips and coppers with the peculiar mannerisms that spring from long practice. It was seen that she never looked at | the old timers. But I don't know what ber check rack, but when a bet re- to do. I thought I did, but I don't. quired paying picked up a stack with- The law has come into this country, out turning her head, and they saw and I've tried to meet it halfway. further that she never reached twice | They jumped us and put in a receiver, nor took a large pile and sized it up a big man by the name of McNamara. against its mate, removing the extra Dex wasn't there, and I let them do it disks, as is the custom. When she | When the old man learned of it, he the right number unerringly. This is quarrel. He thought I was afraid"considered the acme of professional | "Not he," said the girl. "I know him finish, and the Bronco Kid smiled de- | and he knows you." lightedly as he saw the wonder spread | "That was a week ago. We've hired from the lookout to the spectators and | the best lawyer in Nome-Bill Whea-Local Office, 130 Clarence St., King- heard the speech of the men who stood | ton-and we've tried to have the inston, C. H. Gilchrist, Representative. on chairs and tables for sight of the junction removed. We've offered bond

a bystander. "He acts funny."

ishing the deck and arose.

ings, speaking with no one, a certain | makes him go round."

dignity serving her as a barrier even

"He's upstairs in a gallery box."

broke in on him."

"Boy," she breathed, and be arose | wouldn't let him."

"Cherry! When did you come?" From Dawson. They told me you man's worried face. had struck it. I stood it as long as 1 | "The girl? What girl? Who is she?" | his summer. I've been drunk. That's

held to his coat lapels, standing close beside him, her warm breath beating

"Well," she said, "kiss me!" He took her wrists in his and loosed ber bold, then looked down on her gravely and said:

"No-that's all over. I told you so when I left Dawson." "All over! Oh, no, it isn't, boy. You think so, but it isn't-it' can't be.

"Hush!" said he. "There are people in the next box." "I don't care! Let them hear," she cried, with feminine recklessness. "I'm proud of my love for you. I'll tell it

to them-to the whole world."

love you too much to let you go."

"Now, see here, little g'rl," he said quietly, "we had a long talk in Dawsor and agreed that it was best to divide our ways. I was mad over you once, as a good many other men have been, but I came to my senses. Nothing could ever result from it, and I old you so,"

"Yes, yes; I know. I thought I could it's been a torture to me every day for the past two years." There was no semblance now to the cold creature she had appeared upon entering the gambling hall. She spoke rapidly, her whole body tense with emotion, her voice shaken with passion. "I've seen men and men and men, and they've loved me, but I never cared for anybody in the world till I saw you. They ran after me, but you were cold. You made me come to you. Perhaps that was it. Anyhow, I can't stand it. I'll give up everything, I'll do anything, just to be where you are. What do you think of a woman who will beg? Oh, I've lost my pride! I'm a fool-a

fool-but I can't help it!" "I'm sorry you feel this way," said Glenister. "It isn't my fault and it isn't of any use."

For an instant she stood quivering, while the light died out of her face; then, with a characteristic change, she smiled till the dimples laughed in her cheeks. She sank upon a seat beside him and pulled together the curtains, shutting out the sight below.

"Vory well!" Then she put his hand to her cheek and cuddled it. "I'm glad to see you just the same, and you can't keep me from loving you."

With his other hand he smoothed her hair, while, unknown to him and beneath her lightness, she shrank and quivered at his touch like a Barbary steed under the whip.

"Things are very bad with me," he said. "We've had our mine jumped." "Bah! You know what to do. You aren't a cripple. You've got five fingers on your gun hand."

"That's it! They all tell me that-all stretched forth her hand, she grasped | nearly went crazy. We had our first

in any sum, but the judge refuses to For twenty minutes she continued, accept it. We've argued for leave to until the place became congested, and appeal, but he won't give us the right. never once did the lookout detect an | The more I look into it the worse it back toward the theater. He was wor- we weren't allowed a chance to ar- and resistless character. ried and distrait, his manner perturbed | gue our own case-nothing. They sim-

ago, unless some of the rustlers has small comfort. The Swedes are crazy. They've hired all the lawyers in town A moment later Glenister, watching and are murdering more good Amerthe scene below, was aroused from his | ican language than would fill Bering gloomy absorption by the click of the i strait. Dex is in favor of getting our kempt, and yet his air gave her the imbox door and the rustle of silken skirts. friends together and throwing the re-"Go out, please," he said, without ceiver off. He wants to kill somebody. turning. "I don't want company." but we can't do that. They've got the Hearing no answer, he began again, "In soldiers to fall back on. We've been while at her greeting he broke into talk came here to be alone"-but there he warned that the troops are instructed ceused, for the girl had come forward to enforce the court's action. I don't ty presence to stir his confidential and laid her two hot hands epon his know what the plot is, for I can't believe the old judge is crooked-the girl |

Cherry Malotte leaned forward while I was gope, and now we can't "Oh, days ago," she said, impatiently. | where the light shone on the young | zet 'em off. He's been tryin' this here

could—then I came to you. Now, tell | Her voice had lost its lazy caress, her | what makes me look so ornery." me about yourself. Let me see you lips had thinned. Never was a woman's face wore eloquent, mused Glenis-She pulled him towards the light and 'ter as he noted her. Every Nought gazed upward, devouring him hungrily fied to this window to over forth, fear-

ful, lustful, hateful, as the case might | require palliation, be. He had loved to play with her in the former days, to work upon her pasher features mirror every varying emotion from tenderness to flippancy, from anger to delight, and at his bidding to see the pale cheeks glow with love's fire, the eyes grow heavy, the dainty fins invite kissen. Cherry was a perfeet little spolled animal, he reflected. and a very dangerous one.

"What girl?" she questioned again, and he knew beforehand the look that "The girl I intend to marry," he said

lowly, looking her between the eyes. He knew he was cruel-be wanted to be. It satisfied the clamor and turmoil within him, while he also felt that the sooner she knew and the colder it left her the better. He could not note the effect of the remark on her, however, opened, and the head of the Bronco Kid appeared, then retired instantly

"Wrong stall," he said in his slow voice. "Looking for another party." Nevertheless his eyes had covered every luch of them-noted the drawn curtains and the breathless polse of the woman, while his ears had caught part of Glenister's speech.

"You won't margy her." said Cherry mietly. "I don't know who she is, but I won't let you marry ber." She rose and smoothed her skirta.

"It's time nice people were going She said it with a speer at berself. "Take me out through this crowd: I'm living quietly, and I don't want these beasts to follow me."

As they emerged from the theater while the sun was just rising. The give you up, but I didn't realize till Bronco Kid lighted a cigar as they you had gone how I wanted you. Oh, passed, nodding silently at their greeting. His eyes followed them, while his hands were so still that the match burned through to his fluxers; then when they had gone his teeth met and ground savagely through the tobacco so that the cigar fell, while he mut-

> "So that's the girl you intend to marry? We'll see, by God!"

> > CHAPTER VIII.

HE water front bad a strong at traction for Helen Chester and rarely did a fair day pass without finding her in seme quiet spot from which she could watch the shifting life along its edge, the ships at anchor and the varied incidents of

This morning she sat in a dory pulled high up on the beach, bathed in the bright sunshine and staring at the rollers, while lines of concentration wrinkled ber brow. The wind had blown for some days till the ocean beat heavily across the shallow bar, and now, as it became quieter, longshoremen were launching their craft, preparing to resume their traffic.

Not until the previous day had the news of her-friends' misfortune come to her, and although she had beard no hint of fraud, she began to realize that they were involved in a serious tangle. To the questions which she anxiously put to her uncle be had replied that their difficulty arose from a technicalin the mining laws which another man had been shrewd enough to profit by. It was a complicated question, be said, and one requiring time to thrash out to an equitable settlement. She with a smile, he interrupted. He could not allow such things to influence his udicial attitude, and she must not endeavor to prejudice him in the discharge of his duty. Recognizing the

For many days the girl had caught scattered talk between the judge and McNamara and between Struve and his associates, but it all seemed foreign and dry, and beyond the fact that it fore on the litigation over the April creek mines, she understood nothing and cared less, particularly as a new interest had but recently come into ber life, an interest in the form of a man

He had begun with quiet, half conseems, for the court wasn't convened | cealed admiration of her, which had While she was busy Glenister enter- in accordance with law, we weren't rapidly increased until his attentions ed the front door and pushed his way notified to appear in our own behalf, bad become of a singularly positive

Judge Stillman was openly delightand unnatural. Silently and without ply slapped on a receiver, and now ed, while the court of one like Alec apparent notice be passed friends who | they refuse to allow us redress. From | McNamara could but flatter any girl. a legal standpoint it's appalling. I'm lu his presence Heleu felt herself re-"What alls Glenister tonight?" asked | told. But what is to be done? What's | belling at his suit, yet as distance sep-"Ala't you heard? Why, the Midas are they up to? I'm nearly out of my kindly of it. This state of mind conhas been jumped. He's in a bad way- mind, for it's all my fault. I didn't trusted oddly with her feelings toward think it meant anything like this or the other man she had met, for in this The girl suddenly ceased without fin- I'd have made a fight for possession country there were but two. When and stood them off at least. As it is, Glenister was with her she saw his "Don't stop," said the Kid, while a my partner's sore and he's gone to love lying nakedly in his eyes, and it murmur of dismay came from the spec- drinking-first time in twelve years. exercised some spell which drew her tators. She only shook her head and He says I gave the claim away, and to him in spite of herself, but when now it's up to me and the Almighty he had gone back came the distrust, to get it back. If he gets full he'll the terror of the brute she felt was Gliding through the crowd, she drive a four horse wagon into some there behind it all. The one appealed threaded about aimlessly, the recipient church or go up and pick the judge to to her while present: the other pleaded of many stares though but few greet- pleces with his fingers to see what strongest while away. Now she was attempting to analyze her feelings and "What 've they got against you and face the future squarely, for she realhere. She stopped a waiter and ques- Dextry-some grudge?" she questioned, ized that her affairs neared a crisis, "No, no! We're not the only ones in and this, too, not a month after meettrouble; they've jumped the rest of the ing the men. She wondered if she good mines and put this McNamara in | would come to love her uncle's friend. "Yes'm. Anyhow, he was a minute as receiver on all of them, but that's She did not know. Of the other she was sure-she never could.

Busied with these reflections, she noticed the familiar figure of Dextry wandering aimlessly. He was not unying her, he approached and seated as if he was needful only of her friendhords into active vibration.

"We're in turrible shape, miss," he said. "Our claim's jumped. Somebody run in and talked the boy out of it new law game that you all brought in

He said the last not in the spirit of ipology, for rarely does your frontiersnon consider that his solf indulrences



his surcingle had broken or that he had

witnessed a lynching.

"What made them jump your claim?" "I don't know. I don't know nothin' about it, because, as I remarked previous, I ain't follered the totterin' footsteps of the law none too close. Nor do I intend to. I simply draws out of the game fer a spell and lets the youngster have his fling. Then if he can't make good I'll take the cards and finish

"It's like the time I was ranchin' with an Englishman up in Montana. This here party claimed the misfortune of bein' a younger son, whatever that is, and is grubstaked to a ranch by his people back home. Havin' acquired an intimate knowledge of the west by readin' Bret Harte and havin' assim'lated the secrets of ranchin' by correspondence school, he is fitted ample to teach us natives a thing or two, and he does it. I am workin' his outfit as foreman, and it don't take long to show me that he's a good hearted feller in spite of his ridin' bloomers an' penuchle eyeglass. He ain't never had no actual experience, but he's got a Henry Thompson Seton book that tells him all about everything from field mice to gorrillys.

"We're troubled a heap with coyotes them days, and finally this party sends home for some Rooshian wolfhounds. I'm fer pizenin' a sheep carcass, but he

"'No, no, me deah man; that's not sportsmanlike. We'll bunt 'em-aye, hunt 'em. Only fawncy the sport we'll have ridin' to hounds!"

"'We will not,' says I. 'I ain't goin' to do no Simon Legree shints. It ain't man's size. Bein' English, you don't

count, but I'm growed up.' "Nothin' would do him but those 'Uncle. Tom's Cabin' dogs, however, and he had 'em imported clean frem Berkshire or Sibeery or thereabouts, four of 'em, great big blue ones. They was as handsome and imposin' as a set of solid gold teeth, but somehow they didn't seem to savvy our play none, One day the cook rolled a rain bar'l downhill from the kitchen, and when them blooded critters saw it comin' they throwed down their tails and tore out like rabbits. After that I couldn't see no good in 'em with a spyglass.

"They ain't got no grit. What i makes you think they can fight? I asked one day. "'Fight?' says H'Anglish. 'My deah

man, they're full blooded. Cost seventy pun each. They're dreadful creatures when they're roused. They'll tear a wolf to pieces like a rag, kill bears, anything. Oh, rully, perfectly

"Well, it wasn't a week later that he mend a barb wire. I had my pliers and a hatchet and some staples. Abouta mile from the house we jumped up a little brown bear that scampered offwhen he seen us, but, bein agin a bluff where he couldn't get away, he climbed a cottonwood. H'Anglish was sim ply frothin' with excitement.

"'What a misfortune! Neyther gun nor hounds." "T'll scratch his back and talk pretty to him,' says L 'while you run back and get a Winchester and them fero-

cious bulldogs." 9 "'Wolf bounds,' says he, with dignity, 'full blooded, seventy pun each. the game? That's the thing. What arated them she thought ever more They'll rend the poor beast limb from limb. I hate to do it, but it'll be good practice for them. "They may be good renders,' says

I, 'but don't forgit the gun.' "Well, I throwed sticks at the critter finally the boss got back with his dogs. They set up an awful holler when they see the bear-first one they'd ever smelled, I reckon-and the little feller crawled up in some forks and watched things, cautious, while they leaped about, bayin' most fierce and blood curdlin'.

"'How you goin' to get him down?" "T'll shoot him in the lower jaw," the dogs. It'll give 'em cawnfidence.'

and misses it three times runnin', he's that excited. "'Settle down, H'Anglish,' says I. 'He ain't got no double chins. How many shells left in your gun?

"He takes aim at Mr. Bear's chin

"When he looks he finds there's only one more, for he hadn't stopped to fill the magazine, so I cautions him. "'You're shootin' too low. Raise

(Continued Next Saturday.)

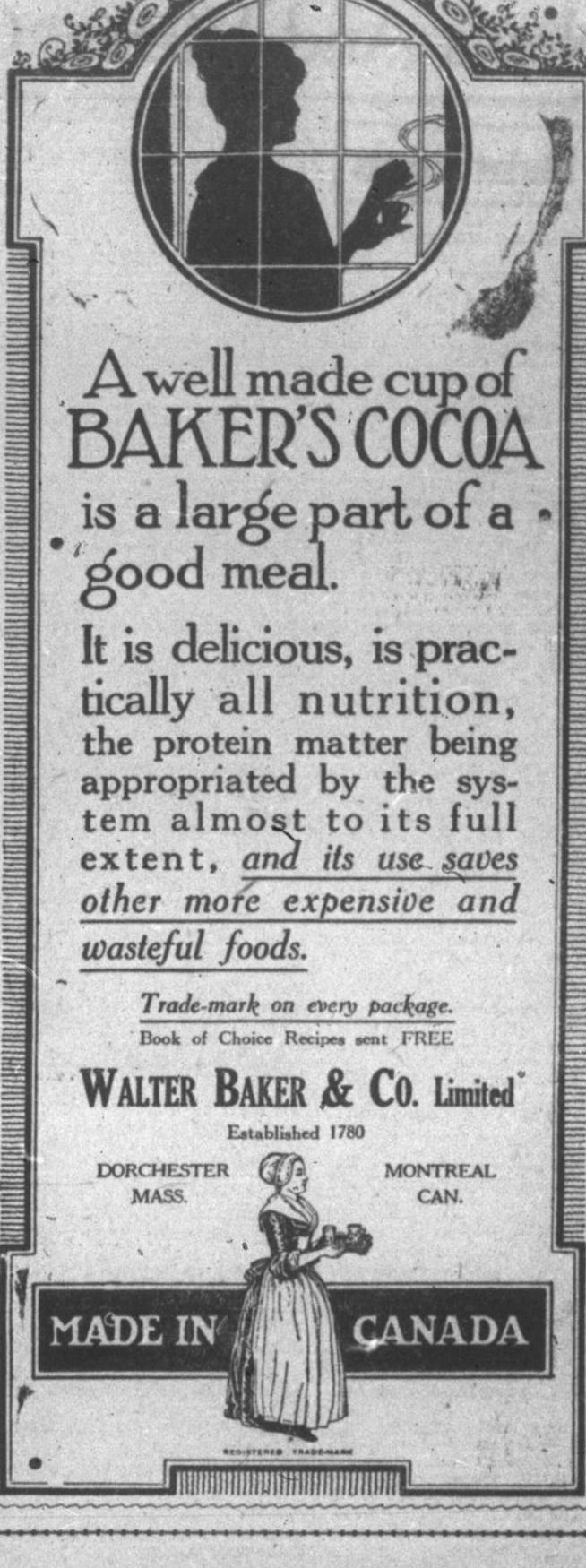
No Mistake. Louisv Ne Courier-Journal. She's very high and mighty.

don't like her altitude." "You mean attitude?" "Altitude fits this case," interposed a third member of the party.

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