

THE BARRIER

BY REX BEACH

CHAPTER XVI
SOME GALE'S HOME

It was a heathenish time of night to arouse the girl, thought Burrell as he left the barracks, but he must ally these fears that were assailing him; he must see Neela at once. The low, drifting clouds obscured what star glow there was in the heavens, and he stepped back to light a lantern.

A few moments later he stood above the squaw, who crouched on the trader's doorstep, waiting her death song into the night.

"What's wrong? Where is Neela? Where is she?" he demanded and at last seized her roughly, facing her to the light, but Neela only blinked owlishly at his lantern and shook her head.

"Gone away," she finally informed him and began to weep again in her despair, but he held her fiercely.

"Where has she gone? When did she go?" He shook her to quicken her reply.

"I don't know. I don't know. Long time she's gone now." She trailed off into Indian words he could not comprehend, so he pushed past her into the house to see if Neela was there without knocking flung Neela's door open and stepped into her chamber. Before he had swept the unfamiliar room with his eyes he knew that she had indeed gone, and gone hurriedly, for the signs of disorder betrayed a reckless haste.

"When did she go, Neela? For God's sake, what does this mean?" he cried.

"I don't know. She came and she and I don't see her; maybe three, four hours ago."

"Where's the lantern? He'll know. He's gone after her, eh?"

The upward glow of the lantern heightened the young man's pallor, and again the squaw broke into her sad lament.

"John Gale—he's gone away with the knife of my father. I am afraid."

"Did he come back here just now?"

"No. He went to look for her, and he would not let me follow. He don't come back no more."

"This was confusing, and Meade cried angrily:

"Why didn't you give the alarm? Why didn't you come to me instead of yelling your lungs out around the house?"

"He told me to wait," she said simply.

"Go find Pooleon, quick!"

"He told me to wait," she repeated stolidly, and Burrell knew he was powerless to move her. He saw the image of a great terror in the woman's face. The light suddenly became heavy with the hint of unspeakable things, and he grew fearful, suspecting now that Gale had told him but a part of his story, that all the time he knew Stark's identity and that his quarry was at hand, ready for the kill, or, if not, he had learned enough while standing behind that partition. Where was he now? Where was Neela? What part did she play in this? He gave up trying to think and fled for Stark's saloon, reasoning that where one would surely be near, and there would surely be some word of Neela. He burst through the door, a quick glance over the place showed it empty of those he sought; but, spying Pooleon Doret, he dragged him outside, inquiring breathlessly:

"Have you seen Gale?"

"No."

"Have you seen Stark? Has he been about?"

"Yes; wan hour, maybe two, hour ago. Why? What for you ask?"

"There's the devil to pay. Those two have come together, and Neela is gone."

"Neela gone? The Canadian jerked out. 'What you mean by dat? Were she's gone too?'"

"I don't know. Nobody knows. Heaven! I'm shaking like a leaf."

"Bah! She's feel pury bad. She's got out by herself. Dat's all right."

"I tell you something has happened to her! There's the devil to pay! I found her clothes at the house torn to ribbons and all muddy and wet."

Pooleon cried out at this.

"We've got to find her and Gale, and we haven't a minute to lose."

"Where have you look?"

"I've been to the house, but Neela is crazy and says Gale has gone to kill Stark, as near as I can make out. Both of them were at my quarters tonight, and I'm afraid the squaw is right."

"But where is Neela?"

"We don't know. Maybe Stark has got her."

The Frenchman cursed horribly.

"Have you try heebance her?"

"No."

Without answer the Frenchman darted away, and the lieutenant sped after him through the deserted rows of log houses.

Burrell gripped his companion's arm with fingers of steel, and together they crept up to the door. But even before they had gained it they heard a voice within. It was Stark's. The walls of the house were of moss chinked logs that deadened every sound, but the door itself was of thin whiplash pine boards with ample cracks at top and bottom, and they heard plainly. The lieutenant leaned forward, then with difficulty smothered an exclamation, for he heard another voice now—the voice of John Gale. The words came to him muffled, but distinct, and he raised his hand to knock when suddenly he seized Pooleon, hissing into his ear:

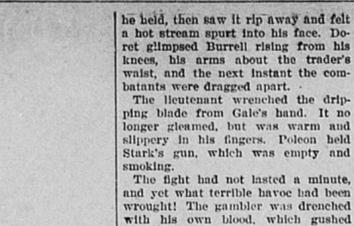
"Listen! For God's sake, listen!"

For the first time in his tempestuous life Ben Stark lost the iron composure that had made his name a byword in the west, and at sight of his bitterest enemy seated in the dark of his own house waiting for him he became an ordinary, nervous, frightened man. It was the utter unexpectedness of the thing that shook him, and before he could regain his balance Gale spoke:

"I've come to settle, Bennett."

"What are you doing here?" the gambler stammered.

"I was up at the soldier's place just now and heard you. I didn't want any interruptions, so I came here, where we can be alone." He paused and when Stark made no answer continued, "Well, let's get at it." But still the other made no move. "You've had all the best of it for twenty



years," Gale went on in his level voice, "but tonight I get even. I've lived for this!"

"That shot in Lee's cabin?" recalled Stark, with the light of new understanding. "You knew me then?"

"Yes."

"Stark took a deep breath. 'What a fool I've been!'"

"Your devil's magic saved you that time, but it won't stop this." The trader rose slowly, with the knife in his hand.

"You'll hang for this!" said the gambler unsteadily, at which Gale's face blazed.

"I exclaimed the trader exultingly. 'You can feel it in you already, eh?'"

With an effort Stark began to assemble his wits as the trader continued:

"You sadded your dirty work on me, Ben Stark, and I've carried it for fifteen years, but tonight I put you out the way you put her out. An eye for an eye!"

"I didn't kill her," said the man.

"So? The yellow is showing up at last. I knew you were a coward, but I didn't think you'd be afraid to own it to yourself."

"Look here," said Stark curiously, "do you really think I killed Merridy?"

"I know it. A man who would strike a woman would kill her—if he had the nerve."

Stark had now mastered himself and smiled.

"My hate worked better than I thought. Well, well, that made it hard for you, didn't it?" he chuckled. "I supposed, of course, you knew."

"Knew?" Gale's face showed emotion for the first time. "Knew what?" His hands were quivering slightly.

"She killed Merridy."

"So he got her?"

"So help me God!"

There was a long pause.

"Why?"

"Say, it's kind of funny our standing here talking about that thing, isn't it? Well, if you want to know, I came home early that night. I guess you hadn't been gone two hours. And the surprise did it more than anything else, I suppose. She hadn't prepared a story. I got suspicious, named you at random and hit the nail on the head."

Gale's face was like chalk, and his voice sounded thin and dry as he said:

"You beat her; that's why she did it."

Stark made no answer.

"The papers said the room showed a struggle."

When the other still kept quiet Gale insisted:

"Did the Stark flamed up defiantly. 'Well, I guess I had cause enough. No woman except her was ever untrue to me—wife or sweetheart.'

"You didn't really think—"

"I think so now. She denied it, but 'And you knew her so well too. I guess you've had some bad nights yourself, Bennett, with that ways on your mind—'

"I never did have—"

"and so you put her blood on my head and made me an outlaw." After an instant, "Why did you tell me this, anyhow?"

"It's our last talk, and I wanted you to know how well my hate worked."

"Well, I guess that's all," said Gale. So far they had watched each other with unwavering, unblinking eyes, inquiring breathlessly:

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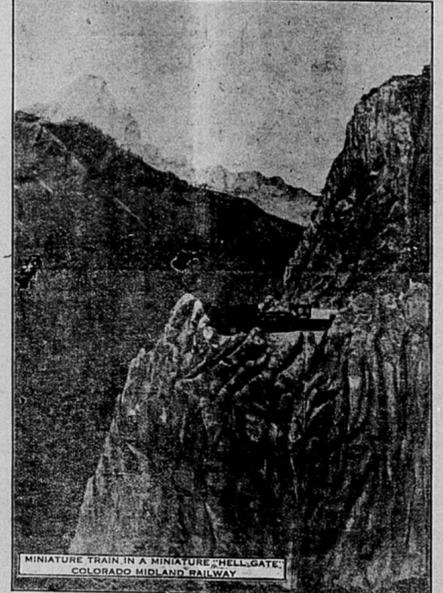
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Stories of Colorado and The Rocky Mountains

HOW A SCENE AND TRAIN LOOKS IN MINIATURE.

A little practical train, only six inches high, and measuring less than seven feet from cow-catcher to rear bumper, consisting of an engine, baggage car, chair car, dining car and observation car, and running at a surprising rate of speed through a miniature mountain scene, is a sight that will greet the eyes of visitors to Denver this year. The display is in the window of the Colorado Midland ticket office, Seventeenth and California streets. It is a scene of "Hell Gate," near the Continental Divide, and that rugged and inspiring bit of Nature's handiwork, by the art of the painter and papier mache builders is reproduced in perfect miniature, even to the



MINIATURE TRAIN IN A MINIATURE HELL-GATE, COLORADO MIDLAND RAILWAY.

most minute detail. The little engine and cars are painted, varnished and lettered in the most approved railroad equipment fashion, and even passengers, in the forms of tiny dressed dolls, are seen through the windows of the little coaches.

The little train, making endless revolutions around the circular track, has caused a discussion among mathematicians in Denver. Someone who had plenty of idle time on his hands attempted to figure out how far the train travels in a day, which gave rise to the publication of the problem, in order that all might have a chance to figure it out for themselves. This is the problem which will serve to while away an idle hour if you're interested in figures.

Diameter of track, four feet, built in a perfect circle; speed of train, one round trip every twelve seconds, or five trips to the minute. How far does

inside rail, which sets 2 1/2 inches from the outside one? The trucks and other parts of the equipment being together and intact at the end of a ten-hours run, how this is accounted for, since it is admitted that the wheels on the outside rail must, by reason of describing a larger circle each trip, do more distance than those on the inside rail? What, then, is the real difference in distance traveled in a period of ten hours?

One of the accompanying pictures is that of the little train, as it appears along the scenic line, here being compiled in book form, printed in four colors and handsomely bound, serving as an excellent Colorado souvenir.

This pamphlet, called "Hell Gate," is sent free upon application to C. H. Speers, General Passenger Agent, Colorado Midland Railway, Denver, Colo.

An African and a Boa Constrictor.

At M'Gee's, a native who, like all those belonging to the tribe of the Walurgu, regarded snake flesh as an especial delicacy found a huge boa constrictor lying in the middle of a field. He confided the discovery to one or two others and arranged with them to kill it during the hours of darkness, so that they might enjoy the delicacy together. Toward nightfall the man, armed with a stick and a knife, approached the snake. The boa attacked the huge serpent. The man, suddenly seized the unslippery negro and slowly crushed him to pulp and then gradually swallowed him.

Tactics.

"When Clumber gets arguing he loses all tact."

"As for instance?"

"Why, last night he told an opponent who is lame that he hadn't a leg to stand on, another who squints at he was sorry he couldn't see things as he did, and a man who stammered he urged not to hesitate in expressing an opinion."—Stray Stories.

Color Blindness.

Forty men and four women in a thousand are either wholly unable to perceive certain colors or can recognize them only with difficulty. All attempts to overcome color blindness by educating the color sense have failed. There are three theories of color vision, all of which are based on the workings of the sensitive fibrils of the inner eye.

Odesa's Working Days.

The legal laboring day at Odesa, Russia, is twelve hours, with two hours for rest. Workers less than seventeen years old must go to school for three hours daily. Christians are not required to work Sundays or feast days nor Jews and Mohammedans on their holidays. Those who have to work on Sundays have the next day for rest.

Tribe's All the Time.

Father—I'm singular that whenever I want you to marry a man you object and whenever I do not want you to marry one you straightway insist on it. Daughter—Yes, and whenever we are agreed the man objects.—Liverpool Mercury.

How He Looked.

Green—I saw your friend White this morning. Brown—So? I heard he was sick. How did he look? Green—He was looking the other way when I saw him. He owes me \$10. Chicago News.

Most Anything.

Club Doctor (with view to diagnosis)—And now, my man, what do you drink? Patient (cheerfully)—Oh, er—well, doctor, I'll leave that to you.—Bystander.

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Railroad Fare \$ Pullman Fare \$ Hotel \$ Incidentals \$ Total \$

We can tell you what the railroad and sleeping car fares will cost, but the last two items depend entirely upon your preference and purse. We can also send you illustrated literature descriptive of many of the Summer Resorts and Resort districts of the United States and Canada; and quote Tourist Rates for the number of points in different States or Provinces enumerated below:

Nova Scotia, 7 points; New Brunswick, 6; Quebec, 25; Maine, 31; New Hampshire, 28; Vermont, 24; Massachusetts, 31; New Jersey, 14; New York, 37; Ontario, 77; Michigan, 25; Minnesota, 102; South Dakota, 21; Colorado, 18; Idaho, 16; Montana, 7; Wyoming, 14; Utah, 4; British Columbia, 5; Washington, 4; Oregon, 11; California, 3, and a number in other States.

If you have not decided just where you will go, ask for a copy of our "Summer Tours"

leaflet quoting Summer Excursion fares for forty-four points, east, west and north-including fares for the following named gateways:

N. E. A., Denver, July 5-9. Eika, Los Angeles, July 11-17. G. A. R., Salt Lake City, Aug. 9-14. Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, Seattle, Wash., June 1-Oct. 15, 1909. Let the Illinois Central help you plan your trip. Address the undersigned stating where you wish to go this summer, and information as to fares, and literature, will be freely furnished.

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Anders & Phillips.

RAILROAD Time Cards.

Manchester & Oneida RY TIME TABLE.

MANCHESTER & ONEIDA RY.	
No. 2. Leaves Manchester 5:15 a. m. connects with Chicago Great Western train No. 2 west bound returning reaches Manchester at 6:15 a. m.	No. 3. Leaves Manchester 7:25 a. m. connects with Chicago Great Western train No. 3 east bound returning reaches Manchester at 8:15 a. m.
No. 4. Leaves Manchester at 8:45 a. m. connects with Chicago Great Western train No. 4 west bound returning reaches Manchester at 9:45 a. m.	No. 5. Leaves Manchester 2:00 p. m. connects with Chicago Great Western train No. 5 east bound returning reaches Manchester at 3:00 p. m.
No. 6. Leaves Manchester at 3:45 p. m. connects with C. M. & St. P. No. 21 south bound returning Manchester at 4:45 p. m.	No. 7. Leaves Manchester at 5:30 p. m. connects with C. M. & St. P. No. 21 north bound returning reaches Manchester at 6:30 p. m.
General Traffic Manager.	

ILLINOIS CENTRAL R. R. TIME TABLE.

West Bound	
No. 5. Omaha, Sioux City and St. Paul Fast Mail,	8:10 a. m.
No. 2. Ft. Dodge Express,	8:10 a. m.
No. 3. Ft. Dodge Express,	8:40 a. m.
No. 1. Chicago, Sioux City & St. Paul,	10:50 p. m.
No. 4. St. Paul,	1:45 a. m.
East Bound	
No. 2. Omaha & Sioux City & St. Paul Fast Mail,	8:10 a. m.
No. 1. Ft. Dodge & Dubuque Express,	8:40 a. m.
No. 3. Ft. Dodge Express,	8:40 a. m.
No. 4. Chicago, Sioux City & St. Paul,	10:50 p. m.
No. 5. St. Paul,	1:45 a. m.
Dining Car on Trains No. 5 and 4 CEDAR RAPIDS BRANCH	
No. 225. Pass daily ex Sunday 8:40 a. m.	No. 226. Pass daily ex Sunday 5:40 p. m.
No. 227. Pass daily ex Sunday 8:40 a. m.	No. 228. Pass daily ex Sunday 5:40 p. m.
Arrive from South	
No. 229. Pass daily ex Sunday 8:40 a. m.	No. 230. Pass daily ex Sunday 5:40 p. m.
Arrive from North	
No. 231. Pass daily ex Sunday 8:40 a. m.	No. 232. Pass daily ex Sunday 5:40 p. m.
St. Paul,	
No. 5 runs to Fort Dodge only.	
No. 1 has connections to Omaha, Sioux City, Chicago Falls, St. Paul and Minneapolis and via Chicago from these points.	
Dining car on trains No. 5 and 4.	

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It coaxes back that well feeling, healthy look, puts the sap of life in your system, protects you from disease. Hollister's Rocky Mountain Tea has no equal as a spring tonic for the whole family. 35c, Tea or Tablets.—R. A. Denton.

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Men past middle life have found comfort and relief in Foley's Kidney Remedy, especially for enlarged prostate gland, which is very common among elderly men. L. E. Morris, Dexter, Ky., writes: "Up to a year ago my father suffered from kidney and bladder trouble and several physicians pronounced it enlargement of the prostate gland and advised an operation. On account of his age we were afraid he could not stand it and I recommended Foley's Kidney Remedy, and the first bottle relieved him and after taking the second bottle he was no longer troubled with this complaint."

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Why do you fret and grumble, Why do you feel nervous, Use Housen's Plenic Pills, They will drive away your ill humors. Get them. All druggists.

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For National Encampment Grand Army of the Republic—Salt Lake City, Utah, August 9 to 14, \$32.10 for the round trip. Tickets on sale August 5, 6, 7 and 8. Return limit 30 days from date of sale. Diverted routes west of Missouri river. Stop orders allowed at all stations on return trip.

Low fares to the Pacific coast. Tickets on sale daily May 19 to September 30. Return limit October 31. Liberal stop over privileges. Call on or address the undersigned for any further information. E. E. Brewer, Manchester, Iowa. Traffic Manager.

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Greatest spring tonic, drives out all impurities. Makes the blood rich. Fits you with warm, tingling life. Most reliable spring regulator. The Hollister's Rocky Mountain Tea, 35c, Tea or Tablets.—R. A. Denton.

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