noon, the first of June was to open with a twenty-four hour race at Beach track, and Lestrange was entered for it. Excitement was in the air; Dick came in the house only to eat and sleep.

The day before the race, Mr. Ffrench walked into the room where his niece was reading.

"I want to see Bailey," he said briefly. "Do you wish to drive me down to the factory, or shall I have Anderson bring around the limousine?"

"Please let us drive," she exclaimed, rising with alacrity. "I have not been to the factory for months."

"Very good. You are looking well, Emily, of late."

Surprised, a soft color sweet the face she turned to him.

"I am well. Dear, I think we are all better this spring."

"Perhaps," said Ethan Ffrench. His bitter gray eyes passed deliberately over the large room with all its traces of a family life extending back to pre-Colonial times, but he said no more.

It was an exquisite morning, too virginal for June, too richly warm for May. When the two exchanged the sunny road for the factory office, a north room none too light, it was a moment before their dazzled eyes perceived no one was present. This was the foreman's office, and its owner had passed into the room beyond.

"I will wait," conceded Mr. Ffrench, dismissing the boy who had ushered them in. "Sit down, Emily. Bailey will return directly, no doubt."

But Emily had already sat down, for she knew the voice speaking beyond the half-open door, and that the long-prevented meeting was now imminent.

"It will not do," Lestrange was stating definitely. "It should be reinforced."

"It's always been strong enough," Bailey's slower tones objected. "For years. It's not a thing likely to break."

"Not likely to break? Look at last year's record, Mr. Bailey, and tell me that. A broken steering-knuckle killed Brook in Indiana, another sent Little to the hospital in Massachusetts, the same thing wrecked the leader at the last Beach race and dashed him through the fence. Do you know what it means to the driver of a machine hurling itself along the narrow verge of destruction, when the steering-wheel suddenly turns useless in his grasp? Can you feel the sick helplessness, the confronting of death, the compressed second before the crash? Is it worth while to risk it for a bit of costless steel?"

The clear realism of the picture forced a pause, filled by the dull roar and throb through the machinery-crowded building.

"They were not our cars that broke, any of them," Bailey insisted.

"Not our cars, no. But the steering-knuckle of my own machine broke under my hands last March, on the road, and if I had been on a curve instead of a straight stretch there would have been a wreck. As it was, I brought her to a stop in the ditch. There is no other thing that may not leave a fighting chance after it breaks but this leaves absolutely gone. I know, you both know, that the steering-wheel is the only weapon in the driver's grasp. If it fails him, he goes out and his mechanician with him."

Emily paled, shrinking. She remembered the road under the maples and Lestrange's laughing face as he leaned breathless across his useless wheel. That was what it had meant, then, the lightly treated episode!

"You'd better fix it like he wants it," advised Dick's disturbed tones. "Remember, he's got to drive the car Friday and Saturday, Bailey, not us."

"It's not alone for my racer I'm speaking, but for every car that leaves the shop," Lestrange caught him up. "I'm not flinching; I've driven the car before and I will again. It may hold for ever, that part, but I've tested it and it's a weak point—take the warning for what it's worth."

There was a movement as if he rose with the last word. Emily laid her hand on the arm of the chair, turning her excited dark eyes on her uncle. Surely if ever Mr. Ffrench was to meet his manager, this was the moment; when Lestrange's ringing argument was still in their ears, his splendid force of earnestness still vibrant in the atmosphere. And suddenly she wanted them to meet, passionately wanted Ethan Ffrench's liking for this man.

"Uncle," she began. "Uncle——"

But it was not Lestrange's light step that halted on the threshold.

"Why, I didn't know—" exclaimed Bailey. "Excuse me, Mr. Ffrench, they didn't tell me you were down."

He glanced over his shoulder, as he pulled shut the door Emily fancied she heard an echo, as if the two young men left the next room. Bitterly disappointed, she sank back.

"That was your manager with you?" Mr. Ffrench frigidly inquired.

"Yes; he went upstairs to see how the new drill is acting." Bailey pulled out a handkerchief and rubbed his brow. "Excuse me, it's warm. Yes, he wants me to strengthen a knuckle—he's spoken considerable about it. I guess he's right; better too much than too little."

"I do not see that follows. I should imagine that you understood building chassis better than this racing driver. You had best consult outside experts in construction before making a change."

"Uncle!" Emily cried.

"There's a twenty-four hour race starts tomorrow night," Bailey suggested uneasily. "It's easy fixed, and we might be wrong."

"We have always made them this way!"

"Yes, but—"

"Consult experts, then. I do not like your manager's tone; he is too assuming. Now let me see those papers."

Emily's parasol slipped to the floor with a sharp crash as she stood up, quite pale and shaken.

"Uncle, Mr. Lestrange knows," she appealed. "You heard him say what would happen—please, please let it be fixed."

Amazed, Mr. Ffrench looked at her, his face setting.

"You forget your dignity," he retorted in displeasure. "This is mere childishness, Emily. Men will be consulted more competent to decide than this Lestrange. That will do."

From one to the other she gazed, then turned away.

"I—I Would Rather Be Outdoors."

"I will wait out in the cart," she said. "I—I would rather be outdoors."

Dick Ffrench was up-stairs, standing with Lestrange in one of the narrow aisles between lines of grimly efficient machines that bit or cut their way through the steel and aluminum fed to them, when Rupert came to him with a folded visiting card.

"Miss Ffrench sent it," was the explanation. "She's sitting out in her horse-motor car, and she called me off the track to ask me to demean myself by acting like a messenger boy. All right?"

"All right," said Dick, running an astonished eye over the card.

"No answer?"

"No answer."

"Then I'll hurry back to my embroidery. I'm several laps behind in my work already."

"See here, Lestrange," Dick began, as the mechanician departed, sitting down on a railing beside a machine steadily engaged in notching steel disks into gear-wheels.

"Don't do that!" Lestrange exclaimed sharply. "Get up, Ffrench."

"It's safe enough."

"It's nothing of the kind. The least slip—"

"Oh, well," he reluctantly rose. "If you're going to get fussy. Read what Emily sent up."

Lestrange accepted the card with a faint flicker of expression.

"Dick, uncle is making the steering-knuckle wait for expert opinion," the legend ran, in pencil. "Have Mr. Bailey strengthen Mr. Lestrange's car, anyhow. Do not let him race so."

Near them two men were engaged in babbitting bearings, passing ladlefuls of molten metal carelessly back and forth, and splashing hissing drops over the floor; at them Lestrange gazed in silence, after reading the card still in his hand.

"Well?" Dick at last queried.

"Have Mr. Bailey do nothing at all," was the deliberate reply. "There is an etiquette of subordination, I believe—this is Mr. Ffrench's factory. I've done my part and we'll think no more of the matter. I may be wrong. But I am more than grateful to Miss Ffrench."

"That's all you're going to do?"

"Yes. I wish you would not sit there."

"I'm tired; I won't fall in, and I want to think. We've been a lot together this spring, Lestrange; I don't like this business about the steering-gear. Do you go down to the Beach tomorrow?"

"Tonight. Tomorrow I must put in practicing on the track. I would have been down today if there had not been so much to do here. Are you coming with me, or not until the evening of the start?"

Dick stirred uncomfortably.

"I don't want to come at all, thank you. I saw you race once."

"You had better get used to it," Lestrange quietly advised. "The day may come when there is no one to take your place. This factory will be yours and you will have to look after your own interests. I wish you would come down and represent the company at this race."

"I haven't the head for it."

"I do not agree with you."

Their eyes met in a long regard. Here, in the crowded room of workers, the ceaseless uproar shut in their conversation with a walled completeness of privacy.

"I'm not sure whether you know it, Lestrange, but you've got me all stirred up since I met you," the younger man confessed plaintively. "You're different from other fellows and you've made me different. I'd rather be around the factory than anywhere else I know, now. But honestly I like you too well to watch you race."

"I want you to come."

"I—"

One of the men with a vessel of white, heaving molten metal was trying to pass through the narrow aisle. Dick broke his sentence to rise in hasty avoidance, and his foot slipped in a puddle of oil on the floor.

It was so brief in happening that only the workman concerned saw the accident. As Dick fell backward, Lestrange sprang forward and caught him fairly, snatching him from the greedy teeth. There was the rending of fabric, a gasping sob from Dick, and reeling from the recoil Lestrange was sent staggering against a flying wheel next in line.

The [illegible] at down his burden with a recklessness endangering further trouble, active too late.

"Mr. Lestrange!" he cried.

But Lestrange had already recovered himself, his right arm crossed with a scorched and bleeding bar where it had touched the glittering wheel, and the two young men were standing opposite each other in safety.

"You are not hurt?" was the first question.

"I? I ought to be, but I'm not. Come to a surgeon, Lestrange— Oh, you told me not to sit there!"

Lestrange glanced down at the surface-wound, then quickly back at the two pallid faces.

"Go on to your work, Peters," he directed. "I'm all right." And as the man slowly obeyed, "Now will you take my advice and come to the race with me, Ffrench?"

"Race! You'd race with that arm?"

"Yes. Are you coming with me?"

Shaken and tremulous, Dick passed a damp hand across his forehead.

"I think you're mad to stand talking here. Come to the office, for heaven's sake. And, I'd be ground up there, if you hadn't caught me," he looked toward the jaws sullenly shredding and reshredding a strip of cloth from his sleeve. "I'll do anything you want."

"Will you?" Lestrange flashed quickly. He flung back his head with the resolute setting of expression the other knew so well, his eyes brilliant with a resolve that took no heed of physical discomfort. "Then give me your word that you'll stick to your work here. That is my fear; that the change in you is just a mood you'll tire of some day. I want you to stand up to your work and not drop out disqualified."

"I will," said Dick, subdued and earnest. "I couldn't help doing it—your arm—"

Lestrange impatiently dragged out his handkerchief and wound it around the cut.

"Go on."

"I can't help keeping on; I couldn't go back now. You've got me awake. No one else ever tried, and I was having a good time. It began with liking you and thinking of all you did, and feeling funny alongside of you." He paused, struggling with Anglo-Saxon shyness. "I'm awfully fond of you, old fellow."

The other's gray eyes warmed and cleared. Smiling, he held out his left hand.

"It's mutual," he assured. "It isn't playing the game to trap you while you are upset like this. But I don't believe you'll be sorry. Come find some one to tie this up for me; I can't have it stiff tomorrow."

But in spite of his professed haste, Lestrange stopped at the head of the stairs and went back to recover some small object lying on the floor beneath a pool of chilling metal. When he rejoined Dick, it was to linger yet a moment to look back across the teeming room.

"It's worth having, all this," he commented, with the first touch of sadness the other ever had seen in him. "Don't throw it away, Ffrench."

There is usually a surgeon within reach of a factory. When Mr. Ffrench passed out to the cart where Emily waited, he passed Dick and the village physician entering. The elder gentleman put on his glasses to survey his nephew's white face.

"An accident?" he inquired.

The casual curiosity was sufficiently exasperating, and Dick's nerves were badly gone.

"Nothing worth mentioning," he snapped. "Just that I nearly fell into the machinery and Lestrange has done up his arm pulling me out. That's all."

And he hurried the doctor on without further parley or excuse.

Lestrange was in the room behind the office, smoking one of Bailey's cigars and listening to that gentleman's vigorous remarks concerning managers who couldn't keep out of their own machinery, the patient not having considered it worth while to explain Dick's share in the mischance. An omission which Dick himself promptly rectified in his anxious contrition.

Later, when the arm was being swathed in white linen, its owner spoke to his companion of the morning:

"I hope you didn't annoy Miss Ffrench with this trifling matter, as you came in."

"I didn't speak to her at all, only to my uncle."

"Very good."

Something in the too-indolent tone roused Dick's usually dormant observation. Startled, he scrutinized Lestrange.

"Is that why you bothered yourself with me?" he stammered. "Is that why—"

"Shut up!" warned Lestrange forcibly and inelegantly. "That isn't tight enough, Doc. You know I'm experienced at this sort of thing, and I'm going to use this arm."

"[illegible] to be silenced in his new enlightenment. When the surgeon momentarily turned away, he leaned nearer, his plump face grim.

"If I brace up, it won't be for Emily, but for you, Darling Lestrange," he whispered viciously. "She don't want you and I don't want her, that way. I've got over that. And—and—oh, confound it, I'm sorry, old man."

"Shut up!" said Lestrange again.

But though Dick's very sympathy unconsciously showed the hopeless chasm between the racing driver and Miss Ffrench, the hurt did not cloud the cordial smile Lestrange sent to mitigate his command.

CHAPTER VI.

Emily first heard the full story of the accident that evening, when Dick sat opposite her on the veranda and gave the account in frank anxiety and dejection.

"We're going down tonight on the nine o'clock train," he added in conclusion. "Tomorrow morning he'll spend practicing on the track, and tomorrow evening at 6 the race starts. And Lestrange starts crippled because I'am a clumsy idiot. He laughs at me, but—he'd do that anyhow."

"Yes," agreed Emily. "He would do that anyhow." Her eyes were wide and terrified, the little hands she clasped in her lap were quite cold. "I wish, I wish he had never come to this place."

"Oh, you do!" Dick said oddly. "Maybe he will, too, before he gets through with us. We're a nasty lot, we Ffrenches; a lot of blue-blooded snobs without any red blood in us. Are you going to say good-by to me? I won't be home until it's over."

She looked at him, across the odorous dusk slowly silvering as the moon rose.

"You are going to be with him?"

Dick smoothed his leggings before standing up, surveying his strict motor costume with a gloomy pride not to be concealed.

"Yes; I'm representing our company. Lestrange might want some backing if any disputes turned up. Uncle Ethan clearly had a fit when Bailey told him what I was going to do; he called me Richard for the first time in my life. I guess I'll be some good yet, if every one except Lestrange did think I was a chump."

"I am very sure you will," she answered gently. "Good-by, Dick; you look very nice."

When he reached the foot of the steps, her voice recalled him, as she stood leaning over the rail.

"Dick, you could not make him give it up, not race this time?"

He stared up at her white figure.

"No, I could not. Don't you suppose I tried?"

"I suppose you did," she admitted, and went back to her seat.

The June night was very quiet. Once a sleepy bird stirred in the honeysuckle vines and chirped through the dark. Far below the throb of a motor passed down the road, dying away again to leave silence. Suddenly Emily Ffrench hid her face on the arm of her chair and the tears overflowed.

There was no consciousness of time while that inarticulate passion of dread spent itself. But it was nearly half an hour later when she started up at the echo of a light step on the gravel path, dashing her handkerchief across her eyes.

It was incredible, but it was true: Lestrange himself was standing before her at the foot of the low stairs, the moonlight glinting across his uncovered bronze head and bright, clear face.

"I beg pardon for trespass, Miss Ffrench," he said, "but your cousin tells me he has been saying a great deal of nonsense to you about this race, and that you were so very good as to feel some concern regarding it. Really, I had to run up and set that right; I couldn't leave you to be annoyed by Mr. Ffrench's nerves. Will you forgive me?"

Like sun through a mist his blithe

"That Isn't Tight Enough, Doc."

voice cleaved through her distress. Before the tranquil sanity of his regard, her painted terrors suddenly showed as the artificial canvas scenes of a stage, unreal, untrue.

"It was like you to come," she answered, with a [illegible] that ended half sob. "I was frightened, yes."

There is no cause. A dozen other men take the same chance as Rupert and I; the driver who alternates with me, for instance. This is our life."

"Your arm—"

"Is well enough." He laughed a little. "You will see many a bandaged arm before the twenty-four hours are up; few of us finish without a scratch or strain or blister. This is a man's game, but it's not half so destructive as foot-ball. You wished me good luck for the Georgia race; will you repeat the honor before I go back to Ffrench?"

"I wish you," she said unsteadily, "every kind of success, now and always. You saved Dick today—of all else you have done for him and for me I have not words to speak. But it made it harder to bear the thought of your hurt and risk from the hurt, when I knew that I had sent Dick there, who caused it."

Lestrange hesitated, himself troubled. Her soft loveliness in the delicate light that left her eyes unreadable depths of shadow, her timidity and anxiety for his safety, were from their very unconsciousness most dangerous. And while he grasped at self-control, she came still nearer to the head of the steps and held out her small fair hand, mistaking his silence for leave-taking.

"Good night; and I thank you for coming. I am not used to so much consideration."

Her accents were unsure when she would have made them most certain, with her movement the handkerchief fell from her girdle to his feet. Mechanically Lestrange recovered the bit of linen, and felt it lie wet in his fingers. Wet—

"Emily!" he cried abruptly, and sprang the brief step between them.

Her white, terrified face turned to

Her Accents Were Unsure When She Would Have Made Them Most Certain.

him in the moonlight, but he saw her eyes. And seeing, he kissed her.

The moment left no time for speech. Some one was coming down the drawing-room toward the long windows. Dick's impatient whistle sounded shrilly from the park. Panting, quivering, Emily drew from the embrace and fled within.

She had no doubt of Lestrange, no question of his serious meaning—he had that force of sincerity which made his silence more convincing than the protestations of others. But alone in her room she held her cheek against the hand his had touched.

"I wish I had died in the convent," she cried to her heart. "I wish I had died before I made him unhappy too."

CHAPTER VII.

Morning found a pale and languid Emily across the breakfast table from Mr. Ffrench. Yet, if a contented heart, the heart, her pride in loving and being loved so overbore the knowledge that only sorrow could result to herself and Lestrange, that her eyes shone wide and lustrous and her lips curved softly.

Mr. Ffrench was almost in high spirits.

"The boy was merely developing," he stated, over his grape-fruit. "I have been unjust to Richard. For two months Bailey has been talking of his interest in the business and attendance at the factory, but I was incredulous. Although I fancied I observed a change—have you observed a change in him, Emily?"

"Yes," Emily confirmed, "a very great change. He has grown up, at last."

"Ah? I cannot express to you how it gratifies me to have a Ffrench representing me in public; have you seen the morning journals?"

"I have just come down-stairs."

He picked up the newspaper beside him and passed across the folded page.

"All in readiness for Beach Contest," the head-lines ran. "Last big driver to arrive, Lestrange is in Mercury camp with H. Ffrench, representative of Company."

And there was a blurred picture of a speeding car with driver and mechanician masked to goblinesque noisy identity, with the legend underneath, "[illegible] Ethan Ffrench, to be Mercury on the Georgia course."

"Next year I shall make him partner. It was always my poor brother's desire to have the future name still Ffrench, and Ffrench. He was not thinking of Richard then; he hadn't hope of—"

[illegible] her gaze from the picture, recalled to attention by the break.

"Of?" she echoed vaguely.

"Of one who is unworthy though! Richard has redeemed our family from extinction; that is at rest." He paused for an instant. "My dear child when you are married and established I shall be content."

Her breathing quickened, her courage rose to the call of the moment.

"If Dick is here, if he is instead of a substitute," she said, carefully quiet in manner, "would it matter, since I am only a girl, whom I married, Uncle Ethan?"

The recollection of that evening when Emily had given her promise of old, stirred under Mr. Ffrench's self-absorbition. He looked across the table at her colorless, eager face with perhaps his first thought of what that promise might have cost her.

"No," he replied kindly. "It is part of my satisfaction that you are set free to follow your own choice, without thought of utility or fortune. Of course, I need not say provided the man is of your own class and associations. We will fear no more low marriages."

She had known it before, but it was hard to hear the sentence embodied in words. Emily folded her hands over the paper in her lap and the pleasant breakfast room darkened before her. Mr. Ffrench continued speaking of Dick, unheard.

When the long meal was ended and her uncle withdrew to meet Bailey in the library, Emily escaped outdoors. There was a quaint summer house part way down the park, an ancient white pavilion standing beside the brook that gurgled by on its way to the Hudson, where the young girl often passed her hours. She went there now, carrying her little work-basket and the newspaper containing the picture of Lestrange.

"I will save it," was her thought. "Perhaps I may find better ones—this does not show his face—but I will have this now. It may be a long time before I see him."

But she sat with the embroidery scissors in her hand, nevertheless, without cutting the reprint. Lestrange would return to the factory, she never doubted, and all would continue as before, except that she must not see him. He would understand that it was not possible for anything else to happen, at least for many years. Perhaps, after Dick was married—

The green and gold beauty of the morning hurt her with the memory of that other sunny morning, when he had so easily taken from her the task she hated and strove to bear. And he had succeeded, how he had succeeded! Who else in the world could have so transformed Dick? Leaning on the table, her round chin in her palm as she gazed down at the paper in her lap, her fancy slipped back to that night on the Long Island road, when she had first seen his serene genius for setting all things right. How like him that elimination of Dick. Instead of a romantic and impracticable attempt to escort her himself.

A bush crackled stiffly at some one's passage; a shadow fell across her.

"Caught!" laughed Lestrange's glad, exultant voice. "Since you look at the portrait, how shall the original fear to present himself? See, I can match." He held out a card burned at the corners and streaked with dull red. "The first time I saw your writing, and found my own name there."

Amazed, Emily sat up, and met in a glowing rear of memory her old life and youth.

"Oh!" she gasped piteously.

"You are surprised that I am here? My dear, my dear, after last night did you think I could be anywhere else?"

"The race—"

"I know that track too well to need much practice, and I had the machine out at dawn. My partner is busy practicing this morning, and I'll be back in a couple of hours. I was afraid," the gray eyes were so gentle in their brilliancy, "I was afraid you might worry, Emily."

Serenely he assumed possession of her, and the assumption was very sweet. He had not touched her, yet Emily had the sensation of brutally thrusting him away when she spoke:

"How could I do anything else," she asked with desolation, "since we must never meet each other any more? Only, you will not go far away—you will stay where I can sometimes see you as we pass? I—I think I could not bear it to have you go away."

"Emily!"

The scissors clinked sharply to the floor as she held out her white hands in appreciation of his cry; the tears rushed to her eyes.

"You know, you know! I am not free; I am Emily Ffrench. I cannot call my uncle and grieve him as his son did. Oh, I will never marry any

"Dick Will Tell Me of You."

one else, and we will bear of each other; I can read in the papers and Dick will tell me of you. It will be something to be so close, down there and up here."

"Emily!"

"You are not angry? You will not be angry? You know I can do nothing else; please say you know."

He came nearer and took both cold little hands in his clasp, bending to her the shining gravity of his regard.

"Do you think me such a selfish human, my dear, that I would have kissed you when I could not claim you?" he asked. "Did you think I could forget you were Emily Ffrench, even by moonlight?"

Her fair head fell back, her dark eyes questioned his.

"You—mean—"

"I mean that even your uncle cannot deny my inherited quality of gentleman. I am no millionaire incognito. I have driven racing cars and managed this factory to earn my living, having no other dependence than upon myself, but my blood is as old as yours, little girl, if that means anything."

"Not to me," she cried, looking up into his eyes. "Not to me, but to him. I cared for you—"

He drew her toward him, unresisting, their gaze still on each other. As from the first, there was no shyness between them, but the strange, exquisite understanding now made perfect.

"I was right to come to you," he declared, after a time. "Right to fear that you were troubled, conscientious lady. But I must go back, or there will be a fine disturbance at the Beach. And I have shattered my other plans to insignificant fragments, or you have. I did not forget by moonlight that you were Emily Ffrench, I certainly forgot everything else."

She looked up at him, her softly tinted face bright as his own, her yellow hair rumpled into floosy tendrils under the black ribbon binding it.

"Everything else?" she echoed. "Is there anything else but this?"

"Nothing that counts, to me. You for my own, and this good world to live in—a stand barehanded before it all. But yet, I told you once that I had a purpose to accomplish; a purpose now very near completion. In a few months I meant to leave Ffrenchwood."

Emily gave a faint cry.

"Yes, for my work would have been done. Then I fell in love and upset everything. When I left Mr. Ffrench that I want you, I will have to leave at once."

"Why? You said—"

"How brave are you, Emily?" he asked. "I said your uncle could not question my name or birth, but I did not say he would want to give you to me. Nor will he; unless I am mistaken. Are you going to be brave enough to come to me, knowing he has no right to complain, since you and I together have given him Dick?"

"He does not know you; how can you tell he does not like you?" she urged.

"Do you think he likes 'Darling' Lestrange of the race course?"

The sudden keen demand disconcerted her.

"I hear a little down there," he added. "I have not been fortunate with your kinsman. No, it is for you to say whether Ethan Ffrench's unjust caprice is a bar between us. To me it is none."

"I thought there was to be no more trouble," she faltered, distressed.

Lestrange looked down at her steadily, his gray eyes darkening to an expression she had never seen.

"Have I no right?" was his question. "Is there no canceling of a claim, is there no subsequent freedom? Is it all no use, Emily?"

Vaguely awed and frightened, he fingers tightened on his arm in panic of surrender.

"I will come to you, I will come! You know best what is right—I trust you to tell me. Forgive me, dear, I wanted to—"

He silenced her, all the light flashing back to his face.

"A promise; hush! Oh, I shall win tonight with that singing in my ears. I have more to say to you, [illegible] how I must see Bailey, somehow, before I go."

"He is at the house; let me send him here to you."

"If you come back with him."

They laughed together.

"I will— Do you know," her color deepened roughly, "they call you 'Darling'; I have never heard your own name."

"My name is David," Lestrange said quietly, and kissed her for farewell.

The earth danced under Emily's feet as she ran across the lawns, the sun glowed warm, the brook tinkled over the cascades in a very madness of mirth. At the head of the veranda steps she turned to look once more at the roof of the white pavilion among the locust trees.

"Uncle will like you when he knows you," she laughed in her heart. "Any one must like you."

The servant she met in the hall said that Mr. Bailey had gone out, and Mr. Ffrench, also, but separately, the former having taken the short route toward the factory. That way Emily went in pursuit, intending to overtake him with her pony cart.

But upon reaching the stables, past which the path ran, she found Bailey himself engaged in an inspection of the limousine in company with the chauffeur.

"You'll have to look into her differential, Anderson," he was pronouncing, when the young girl came beside him.

"Come, please," she urged breathlessly.

"Come!" repeated Bailey, wheeling, with his slow, benevolent smile. "Sure, Miss Emily; where?"

She shook her head, not replying until they were safely outside; then:

"To Mr. Lestrange; he is in the pavilion. He wants to see you."

"To Lestrange!" he almost shouted halting. Lestrange here?"

"Yes. There is time; he says there is time. He is going back as soon as he sees you."

"But what's he doing here? What does he mean by risking his neck without any practice?"

"He came to see me," she whispered, and stood confessed.

"God!" said Bailey, quite reverently, after a moment of speechless stupefaction. "You, and him!"

She lifted confiding eyes to him, moving nearer.

"It is a secret, but I wanted you to know because you like us both. Dick said you loved Mr. Lestrange."

"Yes," was the dazed assent.

"Well, then— But come, he is waiting."

She was sufficiently unlike the usual Miss Ffrench to bewilder any one. Bailey dumbly followed her across the park, carrying his hat in his hand.

A short distance from the pavilion Emily stopped abruptly, turning a startled face to her companion.

"Some one is there," she said. "Some one is speaking. I forgot that Uncle Ethan had gone out."

She heard Bailey catch his breath oddly. Her own pulses began to beat with heavy irregularity, as a few steps farther brought the two opposite the open arcade. There they halted, rooted.

In the place Emily had left, where all her feminine toys still lay, Mr. Ffrench was seated as one exhausted by the force of overmastering emotion; his hands clenched on the arms of the chair, his face drawn with pain. Opposite him stood Lestrange, colorless and still as Emily had never conceived him, listening in absolute silence to the bitter address pouring from the other's lips with a low-toned violence indescribable.

"I told you then, never again to come here," first fell upon Emily's conscious hearing. "I supposed you were at least Ffrench enough to take a dismissal. What do you want here, money? I warned you to live upon the allowance sent every month to your bankers, for I would pay no more even to escape the intolerable disgrace of your presence here. Did you imagine me so deserted that I would accept even you as a successor? Wrong; you are not missed. My nephew Richard takes your place, and is fit to take it. Go back to Europe and your low-born wife; there is no lack in my household."

The voice broke in an excess of savage triumph, and Lestrange took the pause without movement or gesture.

"I am going, sir, and I shall never come back," he answered, never more quietly. "I can take a dismissal, yes. If ever I have wished peace or hoped for an accord that never existed between us, I go cured of such folly. But hear this much, since I am arraigned at your bar: I have never yet disgraced your name or mine unless by the boy's mischief which sent me from college. The money you speak of, I have never used; ask Bailey of it, if you will." He hesitated, and in the empty moment there came across the mile of June air the roaring noon whistle of the factory. Involuntarily he turned his head toward the call, but as instantly recovered himself from the self-betrayal. "There is another matter to be settled, but there is no time now. Not even in concluding it will I ever come here again, sir."

There was that in his bearing, in the dignified carefulness of courtesy with which he saluted the other before turning to go, that shocked as a blow from Ffrench. But as Lestrange crossed the threshold of the little building, Emily ran from the thicket to meet him, her eyes a dark splendor in her white face, her hands outstretched.

"Not like this!" she pasted. "Not without seeing me! Oh, I might have guessed—"

His vivid color and animation returned as he caught her to him, heedless of witnesses.

"You dare? My dear, my dear, not even a question? There is no one like you. Say, shall I take you now, or send Dick for you after the race?"

Mr. Ffrench exclaimed some inarticulate words, but neither heard him.

"Send Dick," Emily answered, her eyes on the gray eyes above her. "Send Dick—I understand. I will come."

He kissed her once, then she drew back and he went down the terrace toward the gates. As Emily sank down on the bench by the pavilion door, Bailey brushed past her, running after the straight, lithe figure that went steadily on out of sight among the huge trees planted and tended by five generations of Ffrenches.

When the vistas of the park were empty, Emily slowly turned to face her uncle.

"You love David Ffrench?" he asked, his voice thin and harsh.

"Yes," she answered. She had no need to ask if Lestrange were meant.

"He is married to some woman of the music halls."

"No."

"How do you know? He has told you?"

She lifted to him the superby confidence of her glance, although nervous tremors shook her in wavelike succession.

"If he had been married, he would not have made me care for him. He has asked me to be his wife."

They were equally strange to each other in these new characters, and equally spent by emotion. Neither moving, they sat opposite each other in silence. So Bailey found them when he came back later, to take his massive stand in the doorway, his hands in his pockets and his strong jaw set.

"I think that things are kind of mixed up here, Mr. Ffrench," he stated grimly. "I guess I'm the one to straighten them out a bit; I've loved Mr. David from the time he was a kid and never saw him get a square deal yet. You asked him what he was doing here—I'll tell you; he is Lestrange."

There is a degree of amazement which precludes speech; Mr. Ffrench looked back at his partner, mute.

"He is Lestrange. He never meant you to know; he'd have left without your ever knowing, but for Miss Emily. I guess I won't need to remind you of what he's done. If it hadn't been for him we might have closed our doors some day. He understands the business as none of us back-number, old-fashioned ones do; he took hold and shook some life into it. We can make cars, but he can make people" buy them. Advertising! Why, just that fool picture he drew on the back of a pad, one day, of a row of thermometers up to one hundred forty, with the sign 'Mercuries are at the top,' made more people notice."

Bailey cleared his throat. "He was always making people notice, and laughing while he did it. He's risked his neck on every course going, to bring our cars in first, he's lent his fame as a racing driver to help us along. And now everything is fixed the way we want, he's thrown out what did he do it for? A life thing! he needed to square accounts with you, he's being born, I suppose; so when he heard how things were going with us he came to me and offered his help. At least, that's what he said. I believe he came because he couldn't bear to see the old place go under."

There was a skein of blue silk swinging over the edge of the table. Mr. Ffrench picked it up and replaced it in Emily's work basket before replying.

"If this remarkable story is true," he began, accurately precise in accent, [illegible]

"You don't need me to tell you it is," retorted Bailey. "You know what my new manager's been doing; why, you disliked him without seeing him, but you had to admit his good work. And I heard you talking about his allowance, Mr. Ffrench. He never touched it, not from the first; it piled up for six years. Last April, when we needed cash in a hurry, he drew it out and gave it to me to buy aluminum. When he left here first he drove a taxicab in New York city until he got into racing work and made Darling Lestrange famous all over the contigent. I guess it went pretty hard for a while; if he'd been the things you called him, he'd have gone to the devil alone in New York. But he didn't."

An oriole darted in the arcade and [illegible] wings. The clink of glass and silver sounded from the house windows with a pleasant cheerliness and suggestion of comfort and plenty. [illegible]

"He made good," Bailey concluded, thoughtfully. "But it looked queer to me to hear you tell him you didn't want him around because Mr. Dick took his place. I know, and Miss Emily knows, that Dick Ffrench was no use on earth for any place until Mr. David took him in hand and made him fit to live. That's all, I guess, that I had to say; I'll get back to work." He turned, but paused to glance around. "It's going to be pretty dull

Laid Her Wet Cheek Against the Pictured Driver.

at the factory for me. And between us we've sent Lestrange to the grave with a nice set of nerves."

His retreating footsteps died away to leave the noon hush unbroken. As before, uncle and niece were left opposite each other, the crumpled newspaper where Lestrange's name showed in heavy type lying on the floor between them.

The effect of Bailey's final sentence had been to leave Emily dizzied by apprehension. But when Mr. Ffrench rose and passed out, she aroused to look up at him eagerly.

"Uncle," she faltered.

Disregarding or unseeing her outstretched hand, he went on and left her there alone. And then Emily dared rescue the newspaper.

"A substitute," she whispered. "A substitute," and laid her wet cheek against the pictured driver.

No one lunched at the Ffrench home that day, except the servants. Near three o'clock in the afternoon Mr. Ffrench came back to the pavilion where Emily still sat.

"Go change your gown," he commanded, in his usual tone. "We will start now. I have sent for Bailey and ordered Anderson to bring the automobile."

"Start!" she wondered, bewildered.

He met her gaze with a stately repellence of comment.

"For the Beach. I understand this race lasts twenty-four hours. Have you any objection?"

Objection to being near David! Emily sprang to her feet.

CHAPTER VIII.

Six o'clock was the hour set for the start of the Beach race. And it was just seventeen minutes past five when Dick Ffrench, hanging in a frenzy of anxiety over the paddock fence circling the inside of the mile oval, uttered something resembling a howl and rushed to the gate to signal his recreant driver. From the opposite side of the track Lestrange waved gay return, making his way through the officials and friends who pressed around him to shake hands or clap