his shoulder caressingly, jesting and questioning, calling directions and advice. A brass band played noisily in the grand-stand, where the crowd heaved and surged; the racing machines were roaring in their camps.

"What's the matter? Where were you?" cried Dick, when at last Lestrange crossed the course to the central field. "The cars are going out now for the preliminary run. Rupert's nearly crazy, snarling at everybody, and the other man has been getting ready to start instead of you."

"Well, he can get unready," smiled Lestrange. "Keep cool, Ffrench; I've got half an hour and I could start now. I'm ready."

He was ready, one in the close-fitting khaki costume whose immaculate daintiness gave no hint of the certainty that before the first six hours ended it would be a wreck of yellow dust and oil. As he paused in running an appraising glance down the street-like row of tents, the white-clothed driver of a spotless white car shot out on his way to the track, but halted opposite the latest arrival to stretch a cordial hand.

"I hoped a trolley car had bitten you," he shouted. "The rest of us would have more show if you got lost on the way, Darling."

The boyish driver at the next tent looked up as they passed, and came [illegible]

"Water," He Demanded Tersely.

[illegible] in all day, dear child. They've been givin' your manager sal volatile to hold him [illegible] He nodded [illegible] the agitated Dick in frank commiseration.

"Go [illegible] Darling, [illegible] this."

"Strike up the band, here comes a driver," sang another, with an entrancing French accent.

Laughing, retorting, shaking hands with each concrete rival, Lestrange went down the row to his own tent. At his approach a swarm of mechanics from the factory stood back from the long, low, gray car, the driver who was to relieve him during the night and day ordeal slipped down from the seat and unmasked.

"He's here," announced Dick superfluously. "Rupert—where's Rupert? Don't tell me he's gone now! Lestrange—"

But Rupert was already emerging from the tent with Lestrange's gauntlets and cap, his expression a study in the sardonic.

"It hurts me fierce to think how you must have hurried," he observed. "Did you walk both ways, or only all three? I'm no Eve, but I'd give a snake an apple to know where you've been all day."

"Would you?" queried Lestrange provokingly, clasping the goggles before his eyes. "Well, I've spent the last two hours on the Coney Island beach, about three squares from here, watching the kiddies play in the sand. I didn't feel like driving just then. It was mighty soothing, too."

Rupert stared at him, a dry unwilling smile slowly crinkling his dark face.

"Maybe, Darling," he drawled, and turned to make his own preparations.

Fascinated and useless, Dick looked on at the methodical flurry of the next few moments; until Lestrange was in his seat and Rupert swung in beside him. Then a gesture summoned him to the side of the machine.

"I'll run in again before we race, of course," said Lestrange to him, above the deafening noise of the motor. "Be around here; I want to see you."

Rupert leaned out, all good-humor once more as he pointed to the machine.

"Got a healthy talk, what?" he exulted.

The car darted forward.

A long round of applause welcomed Lestrange's swooping advent on the track. Handkerchiefs and scarfs were waved; his name passed from mouth to mouth.

"Popular, ain't he?" chuckled a mechanic next to Dick. "They don't forget that Georgia trick, no, sir."

It was not many times that the cars could circle the track. Quarter of six blew from whistles and klaxons, signal flags sent the cars to their camps for the last time before the race.

"Come here," Lestrange beckoned to Dick, as he brought his machine shuddering to a standstill before the tent. "Here, close—we've got a moment while they fill tanks."

He unhooked his goggles and leaned over as Dick came beside the wheel, the face so revealed bright and quiet in the sunset glow.

"One never can tell what may happen," he said. "I'd rather tell you now than change your feeling afterward that I didn't treat you quite squarely in keeping still. I hope you won't take it in my father did; we've been good chums, you and I. I am your cousin, David Ffrench."

The moment furnished no words. Dick leaned against the car, absolutely limp.

"Of course, I'm not going back to Ffrenchwood. After this race I shall go to the Duplex company; I used to be with them and they've wanted me back. Your company can get along without me, now all is running well—indeed, Mr. Ffrench has dismissed me." His firm lip bent a little more firmly. "The work I was doing is in your hands and Bailey's; see it through. Unless you too want to break off with me, we'll have more time to talk over this."

"Break off!" Dick straightened his [illegible] stubby figure. "Break off with you [illegible] Go on. My name is Lestrange now and always."

A shriek from the official klaxon summoned the racers. Rupert swung [illegible] in his seat. Dick reached up his [illegible] to the other in the first really dignified moment of his life.

"I'm glad you're [illegible] Lestrange," he said. "I've liked you anyhow, but I'm glad, just the same. And I don't care what rot they say of you. Take care of yourself."

Lestrange bared his hand to return the clasp, his warm smile flashing to his cousin; then the swirl of preparation swept between them and Dick next saw him as part of one of the throbbing, flaming row of machines before the judges' stand.

It was not a tranquilizing experience for an amateur to witness the start, when the fourteen powerful cars sprang simultaneously for the first curve, struggling for possession of the narrow track in a wheel to wheel contest where one mistouch meant the wreck of many. After that first view, Dick sat weakly down on an oil barrel and watched the race in a state of fascinated endurance.

The golden and violet sunset melted pearl-like into the black cup of night. The glare of many searchlights made the track a glistening band of white, around which circled the cars, themselves gemmed with white and crimson lamps. The cheers of the people as the lead was taken by one favorite or another, the hum of voices, the music and uproar of the machines blended into a web of sound indescribable. The spectacle was at once ultramodern and classic in antiquity of conception.

At eight o'clock Lestrange came flying in, seat off the track to have a lamp relighted.

"Water," he demanded tersely, in the sixty seconds of the stop, and laughed openly at Dick's expression while he took the cup.

"Why didn't you light it out there?" asked the novice, infected by the speed fever around him.

"Forgot our matches," Rupert flung over his shoulder, as they dashed out again.

An oil-smeared mechanic patronizingly explained:

"You can't have cars manicuring all over the track and people tripping over 'em. You get sent off to light up, and if you don't go they fine you laps made."

Machines darted in and out from their camps at intervals, each waking a frenzy of excitement among its men. At ten o'clock the Mercury car came in again, this time limping with a flat tire, to be fallen on by its mechanics.

"We're leading, but we'll lose by this," said Lestrange, slipping out to relax and meditatively contemplating the alternate driver, who was standing across the camp. "Ffrench, at twelve I'll have to come in to rest some, and turn my machine over to the other man. And I won't have him wrecking it for me. I want you, as owner, to give him absolute orders to do no speeding; let him hold a fifty-two mile an hour average until I take the wheel again."

"Me?"

"I can't do it. You, of course."

"You could," Dick answered. "I've been thinking how you and I will run that factory together. It's all stuff about your going away; why should you? You and your father take me as junior partner, you know I'm not big enough for anything else."

"You're man's size," Lestrange assured, a hand on his shoulder. "But—it won't do. I'll not forget the offer, though, never."

"All on!" a dozen voices signaled; men scattered in every direction as Lestrange sprang to his place.

The hours passed on the wheels of excitement and suspense. When Lestrange came in again, only a watch convinced Dick that it was midnight.

"You gave the order?" Lestrange asked.

"Yes."

He descended, taking off his mask and showing a face white with fatigue under the streaks of dust and grime.

"I'll be all right in half an hour," he nodded, in answer to Dick's exclamation. "Send one of the boys for coffee, will you, please? Rupert needs some, too. Here, one of you others, ask one of those idle doctor's apprentices to come over with a fresh bandage; my arm's a trifle untidy."

In fact, his right sleeve was wet and red, where the strain of driving had reopened the injury of the day before. But he would not allow Dick to speak of it.

"I'm going to spend an hour or two resting. Come in, Ffrench, and we'll chat in the intervals, if you like."

"And Rupert? Where's he?" Dick wondered, peering into the dark with a vague impression of lurking dangers on every side.

"He's hurried in out of the night air," reassured familiar accents; a small figure lounged across into the light, making vigorous use of a dripping towel. "Tell Darling I feel faint and I'm going over to that grand-stand cafe a la car to get some pie. I'll be back in time to rush over to the lesson from the chauffeur's correspondence school. Oh, see what's here!"

A telegraph messenger boy had come up to Dick.

"Mr. Paul Ffrench?" he verified. "Sign, please."

The message was from New York.

"All coming down," Dick read. "Limousine making delay. Wire me at St. Royal of race. Bailey."

Far from pleased, young Ffrench hurriedly wrote the desired answer and gave it to the boy to be sent. But he thrust the yellow envelope into his pocket before turning to the tent where Lestrange was drinking cheap black coffee while an impatient young surgeon hovered near.

The hour's rest was characteristically spent. Washed, bandaged, and refreshed, Lestrange dropped on a cot in the back of the tent and pushed a roll of motor garments beneath his head for a pillow. There he intermittently spoke to his companion of whatever the moment suggested; listening to every sound of the race and interspersing acute comment, starting up whenever the voice of his own machine hinted that the driver was disobeying instructions or the shrill klaxon gave warning of trouble. But through it all Dick gathered much of the family story.

"My mother was a Californian," Lestrange once said, coming back from a tour of inspection. "She was twenty times as much alive as any Ffrench that ever existed, I've been told. I fancy she passed that quality on to me—you know she died when I was born—for I nearly drove the family mad. They expected the worst of me, and I gave the best worst I had. But," he turned to Dick the clear candor of his smile, "it was rather a decent worst, I honestly believe. The most outrageous thing I ever did was to lead a set of seniors in hoisting a cow into the dean's library one night, and so get myself expelled from college."

"A cow?" the other echoed.

"A fat cow, and it mooed," he stuffed the pillow into a more comfortable position. "Is that our car running in? No, it's just passing. If Frank doesn't wreck my machine, I'll get this race. And then, the same week, my chum and roommate ran away with a Doraflora girl of some variety show and married her. I was romantic myself at twenty-one, so I helped him through with it. He was wealthy and she was pretty; it seemed to fit. I believe they've stayed married ever since, by the way. But somehow the reporters got affairs mixed and published me as the bridegroom. Have you got a cigar? I smoke about three times a year, and this is one of them. Yes, there was a fine scene when I went home that night, a Broadway melodrama. I lost my temper easier then; by the time my father and uncle gave me time to speak, I was too angry to defend myself and set them right. I supposed they would learn the truth by the next day, anyhow. And I left home for good in a dinner coat and pumps with something under ten dollars in odd change. What's that!"

"That," was the harsh alarm of the official klaxon, coupled with the cry of countless voices. The ambulance gong clanged as Lestrange sprang to his feet and reached the door.

"Which car?" he called.

Rupert answered grim:

"Not ours. Number eight's burning up after a smash on the far turn."

"Jack's car," identified Lestrange, and stood for an instant. "Go flag Frank; I'll take the machine again myself. It's one o'clock, and I've got to win this race."

Several men ran across to the track in compliance. Lestrange turned to make ready, but paused beside the seat Dick to look over the infield toward the flaming blotch against the dark sky.

"He was in to change a tire ten minutes ago," observed Rupert, beside them. "Tell Lestrange I'm doin' time catchin' him," he yelled to me. "Here's hoping his broncho mache pitched him clear from the fireworks."

When the Mercury car swung in, a moment later, Lestrange lingered for a last word to Dick.

"I'm engaged to Emily," he said, gravely. "I don't know what she will hear of me; if anything happens, I've told you the truth. I'm old enough to see it now. And I tried to square things."

CHAPTER IX.

In the delicate, fresh June dawn, the French limousine crept into the Beach inclosure.

"We're here," said Bailey, to his traveling companions. "You can't park the car in front by the fence; Mr. David might see you and kill himself by a misturn. Come up to the grand-stand seats."

Mr. Ffrench got out in silence and assisted Emily to decend; a pale and wide-eyed Emily behind her vell.

"The boys were calling extras," she suggested faintly. "They said three accidents on the track."

Bailey turned to a blue and gold official passing.

"Race off, all right?" he asked.

"On the track, Lestrange driving," was the prompt response. "Leading by thirty-two miles."

A little of Emily's color rushed back. Satisfied, Bailey took her to a [illegible] of seats, almost empty at this hour, Pearly, unsubstantial in the young light, by the huge oval meadow and the track edging it.

"I've sent over for Mr. Dick," Bailey informed the other two. "He's been here, and he can tell what's doing. Four cars are out of the race. There's Mr. David coming!"

A gray machine shot around the west curve, hurtled roaring down the straight stretch past the stand and crossed before them, the mechanician rising in his seat to catch the pendant linen streamers and wipe the dust from the driver's goggles in preparation for the "death turn" ahead. There was a series of rapid explosions as the driver shut off his motor, the machine swerved almost facing the infield fence and slid around the bend with a skidding lurch that threw a cloud of soil high in the air. Emily cried out. Mr. Ffrench half rose in his place.

"What's the matter?" dryly queried Bailey. "He's been doing that all night; and a pretty turn he makes, too. He's been doing it for about five years, in fact, earning his living, only we didn't see him. Here goes another."

Mr. Ffrench put on his pince-nez, preserving the dignity of outward composure. Emily saw and heard nothing; she was following Lestrange around the far sides of the course, around until again he flashed past her, repeating his former feat with appalling exactitude.

It was hardly more than five minutes before Dick came hurrying toward them; cross, tired, dust-streaked and gasolene-scented.

"I don't see why you wanted to come," he began before he reached them. "I'm busy enough now. We've leading; if Lestrange holds out, we'll win. But he's driving alone; Frank went out an hour ago, on the second relief, when he went through the paddock fence and broke his leg. It didn't hurt the machine a bit, except tires, but it lost us twenty-six laps. And it leaves Lestrange with thirteen steady hours at the wheel. He says he can do it."

"He's fit?" Bailey questioned.

Dick turned a peevish regard upon him.

"I don't know what you call fit. He says he is. His hands are blistered already; his right arm has been bandaged twice where he hurt it pulling me away from the gear-cutter yesterday, and he's had three hours' rest out of the last eleven. See that heap of junk over there; that's where the Alan car burned up last night and

"Here Goes Another."

sent its driver and mechanician to the hospital. I suppose if Lestrange isn't fit and makes a mistake—we'll see something like that happen to him and Rupert."

"No!" Emily cried piteously.

Remorse clutched Dick.

"I forgot you, cousin," he apologized. "Don't go off; Lestrange swears he feels fine and gibes at me for worrying. Don't look like that."

"Richard, you will go down and order our car withdrawn from the race," Mr. Ffrench stated, with his most absolute finality. "This has continued long enough. If we had not been arrested in New York for exceeding the speed limit, I should have been here to end this scene at midnight."

Stunned, his nephew stared at him.

"Withdraw!"

"Precisely. And desire David to come here."

"I won't," said Dick flatly. "If you want to rub it into Lestrange that way, send Bailey. And I say it's a confounded shame."

"Richard!"

His round face ablaze, Dick thrust his hands in his pockets, facing his uncle stubbornly.

"After his splendid fight, to stop him now! Do you know how they take being put out, those fellows? Why, when the Italian car went off the track for good, last night, with its chain tangled up with everything underneath, Lestrange got out and piled in and you'd come down on Lestrange when he's winning— I won't do it, I won't! Send Bailey; I can't tell him."

"If you want to discredit the car—" he began, Mr. Ffrench, you can do it without me," slowly added Bailey. "But it won't be any use to send for Mr. David, because he won't come."

The autocrat of his little world looked from one rebel to the other, confounded with the unprecedented.

"If I wish to withdraw him, it is to place him out of danger," he retorted with asperity. "Not because I wish to mortify him, naturally. Is that clear? Does he want to pass the next thirteen hours under this ordeal?"

"I'll tell you what he wants," answered Dick. "He wants to be let alone. It seems to me he's earned that."

Ethan Ffrench opened his lips and closed them again without speech. It had not been his life's habit to let people alone and the art was acquired with difficulty.

"I admit I do not comprehend the feelings you describe," he conceded, at last. "But there is one person who has the right to decide whether David shall continue this risk of his life. Emily, do you wish the car withdrawn?"

There was a gasp from the other two men.

"I?" the young girl exclaimed, amazed. "I can call him here—safe—"

Her voice died out as Lestrange's car roared past, overtaking two rivals on the turn and sliding between them with an audacity that provoked rounds of applause from the spectators. To call him in from that, to have him safe with her—the mere thought was a delight that caught her breath. Yet, she knew Lestrange.

The three men watched her in keen suspense. The Mercury car had passed twice again before she raised her head, and in that space of a hundred seconds Emily reached the final unselfishness.

"What David wants," she said. "Uncle, what David wants."

"You're a brick!" cried Dick, in a passion of relief. "Emily, you're a brick!"

She looked at him with eyes he never forgot.

"If anything happens to him, I hope I die too," she answered, and drew the silk veil across her face.

"Go back, Mr. Dick, you're no good here," advised Bailey, in the pause. "I guess Miss Emily is right, Mr. Ffrench; we've got nothing to do but look on, for David Ffrench was wiped out to make Darling Lestrange."

Having left the decision to Emily, it was in character that her uncle offered no remonstrance when she disappointed his wish.

When Lestrange came into his camp for oil and gasolene, near eight o'clock, Dick seized the brief halt, the first in three hours.

"Emily's up in the stand," he announced. "Send her a word, old man; and don't get reckless in front of her."

"Emily!" echoed Lestrange, too weary for astonishment. "Give me a pencil. No, I can't take off my gauntlet; it's glued fast. I'll manage. Rupert, go take an hour's rest and send me the other mechanician."

"I can't get off my car; it's glued fast," Rupert confided, leaning over the back of the machine to appropriate a sandwich from the basket a man was carrying to the neighboring camp. "Go on with your correspondence, dearest."

So resting the card Dick supplied on the steering wheel, Lestrange wrote a difficult two lines.

He was out again on the track when Dick brought the message to Emily.

"I just told him you were here, cousin," he whispered in her ear, and dropped the card in her lap.

"I'll enjoy this more than ever, with you here," she read. "It's the right place for my girl. I'll give you the cup for our first dinner table, tonight.

"DAVID."

Emily lifted her face. The tragedy of the scene was gone. Lestrange's eyes laughed at her out of a mist. The sky was blue, the sunshine golden; the merry crowds commencing to pour in woke carnival in her heart.

"He said to tell you the machine was running magnificently," supplemented Dick, "and not to insult his veteran reputation by getting nervous. He's coming by—look."

He was coming by; and, although unable to look toward the grand-stand he raised his hand in salute as he passed, to the one he knew was watching. Emily flushed rosily, her dark eyes warm and shining.

"I can wait," she sighed, gratefully. "Dickie, I can wait until it ends now."

Dick went back.

The hours passed. One more car went out of the race under the grind-ing test; there were few equal incidents of blown-out tires and temporary withdrawals for repairs. Twice Mr. Ffrench sent his partner and Emily to the restaurant below, tolerating his seat. Perfectly composed, his expression perfectly self-contained, he watched his song.

The day grew unbearably hot toward afternoon, a heat rather of July than June. After a visit to his camp Lestrange reappeared without the nose-reading mask and cap, driving bare-headed, with only the narrow goggles crossing his face. The change left visible the drawn pallor of exhaustion under stains of dust and oil, his rolled-back sleeves disclosed the crimson badge on his right arm and the fact that his left wrist was tightly wound with linen where swollen and strained muscles rebelled at the long trial.

"He's been driving for nineteen hours," said Dick, climbing up to his party through the excited crowd. "Two hours more to six o'clock. Listen to the mob when he passes!"

The injunction was unnecessary. As the sun slanted low the enthusiasm grew to fever. This was a crowd of connoisseurs—motorists, chauffeurs, automobile lovers and drivers—they knew what was being done before them. The word passed that Lestrange was in his twentieth hour; people climbed on seats to cheer him as he passed by. When one of his tires blew out, in the opening of the first hour of his driving and the twenty-fourth of the race, the great shout of sympathy and encouragement that went up shook the grand-stand to its cement foundations.

Neither Lestrange nor Rupert left his seat while that tire was changed.

"If we did I ain't sure we'd get back," Rupert explained to Dick, who

Reappeared Without the Suffocating Mask and Cap.

hovered around them agitatedly. "If I'd thought Darling's mechanician would get in for this, I'd have taken in sewing for a living. How much longer?"

"Half an hour."

"Well, watch us finish."

A renewed burst of applause greeted the Mercury car's return to the track. Men were standing watch in hand to count the last moments, their eyes on the bulletin board where the reeled-off miles were being registered. Two of the other machines were fighting desperately for second place, hopeless of rivaling Lestrange, and after them sped the rest.

"The finish!" some one suddenly called. "The last lap!"

Dick was hanging over the paddock fence when the car shot by, amid braying, klaxons, motor horns, cheers, and the clashing music of the band. Frantic, the people hailed Lestrange as the black and white checked flag dropped before him in proclamation of his victory and the ended race.

Rupert raised his arms above his head in the signal of achievement, as they flew across the line and swept on to complete the circle to their camp. Lestrange slackened speed to take the dangerous, dusty, furrowed turn for the last time, his car poised for the curving flight under his guidance—then the watching hundreds saw the driver's hands slip from the steering-wheel as he reached for the brake. Straight across the track the machine dashed, instead of following the bend, crashed through the barrier, and rolled over on its side in the green meadow grass.

"The steering-knuckle!" Bailey groaned, as the place burst into uproar around them. "The wheel—I saw it turn uselessly in his hands!"

"They're up!" cried a dozen voices. "No, one's up and one's under." "Who's caught in the wreck—Lestrange or his man?"

But before the people who surged over the track, breaking all restraint before the electric ambulance, Dick Ffrench reached the mangled thing that had been the Mercury car. It was Lestrange who had painfully struggled to one knee beside the machine, fighting hard for breath to speak.

"Take the car off Rupert," he panted, at Dick's cry of relief on seeing him. "I'm all right—take the car off Rupert."

The next instant they were surrounded, overwhelmed with eager aid. The ambulance came up and a surgeon precipitated himself toward Lestrange.

"Stand back," the surgeon commanded peremptorily. "Are you trying to smother him? Stand back."

But it was he who halted before a gesture from Lestrange, who leaned on Dick and a comrade from the camp.

"Go over there to Rupert."

"You first—"

"No."

There was nothing to do except yield. Shrugging his shoulders, the surgeon paused the necessary moment. A moment only; there was a no protests, but he himself never left scattering of the hushed workers, a metallic crash.

From the space the car had covered a small figure uncoiled, lizard-like, and staggered unsteadily erect.

"Where's Darling Lestrange?" war hurled viciously across the silence. "Gee, you're a slow bunch of workers! Where's Lestrange?"

The tumult that broke loose swept all to confusion. And after all it was Lestrange who was put in the surgeon's care, while Rupert rode back to the camp on the driver's seat of the ambulance.

"Tell Emily I'll come over to her as soon as I'm fit to look at," was the message Lestrange gave Dick. "And when you go back to the factory, have your steering-knuckles strengthened."

Dick exceeded his commission by transmitting the speech entire; repeating the first part to Emily with all affectionate solicitude, and flinging the second cuttingly at his uncle and Bailey.

"The doctors say he ought to be in bed, but he won't go," he concluded. "No, you can't see him until they get through patching him up at the hospital tent; they put every one out except Rupert. He hasn't a scratch, after having a ninety Mercury on top of him. You're to come over to our camp, Emily, and wait for Lestrange. I suppose everybody had better come."

It was a curious and an elevating thing to see Dickie assume command of his family, but no one demurred. An official, recognizing in him Lestrange's manager, cleared a way for the party through the noisy press of departing people and automobiles.

The sunset had long faded, night had settled over the motordrome and the electric lamps had been lit in the tents, before there came a stir and murmur in the Mercury camps.

"Don't skid, the ground's wet," cautioned a voice outside the door. "Steady!"

Emily started up, Dick sprang to open the canvas, and Lestrange crossed the threshold. Lestrange, colorless, his right arm in a sling, his left wound with linen from wrist to elbow, and bearing a heavy purple bruise above his temple, but with the brightness of victory flashing above all weariness like a dancing flame.

"Sweetheart!" he laughed, as Emily ran to meet him, heedless of all things except that he stood within touch once more. "My dear, I told them not to frighten you. Why, Emily—"

For as he put his one available arm about her, she hid her wet eyes on his shoulder.

"I am so happy," she explained breathlessly. "It is only that."

"You should not have been here at all, my dear. But it is good to see you. Who brought you? Bailey? Watching sight of the man behind him. "Good, I wanted some one to help me; Rupert and I have got to find a hotel and we're got very active."

Emily would have slipped away from the clasp, scarlet with returning recollection, but Lestrange detained her to meet his shining eyes.

"The race is over," he reminded, for her ears alone. "I'm going to keep you, if you'll stay."

He turned to take a limping step, peering his hand cordially to the speechless Bailey, and faced for the first time the other man present.

"I think," said Ethan Ffrench, "that there need be no question of hotels. We have not understood each other, but you have the right to Ffrenchwood's hospitality. If you can travel, we will go there."

"No," answered David Ffrench, as quietly. "Never. You owe me nothing, sir. If I have worked in your factory, I took the workman's wage, for it; if I have won honors for your car, I also won the prize-money given to the driver. I never meant so to establish any claim upon Ffrenchwood or you. I believe we stand even. Dick has taken my place, happily. Emily and I will go on our own road."

They looked at each other, the blindness between them most apparent. The similar determination of men which wiped laughter and warmth from the younger man's face. However coldly phrased and dictatorially spoken, it was an apology which Mr. Ffrench had offered and which had been declined. But—he had watched

"I Am So Happy."

Lestrange all day; he did not lift the gauntlet.

"You are perfectly free," he conceded, "which gives you the opportunity of being generous."

His eyes moved, flashing through his pallor.

"I wish you would not put it that way, sir," he objected.

"There is no other way. I have been wrong and I have no control over you; will you come home?"

"There was no other argument but that that could have succeeded, and the three who knew Lestrange knew that could not fail.

"You want me—because I am a Ffrench," David rebelled in the final protest. "You have a substitute."

"Perhaps I want you otherwise. And we will not speak in passion; there can be no substitute for you."

"Ffrench and Ffrench," murmured Dick coaxingly. "We can run that factory, Lestrange!"

"There's more than steering-knuckles needing your eye on them. And you love the place, Mr. David," said Bailey from his corner.

From one to the other David's glance went, to rest on Emily's delicate, earnest face in its setting of yellow-bronze curls. Full and straight her dark eyes answered his, the convent-bred Emily's answer to his pride and old resentment and new reluctance to yield his liberty.

"After all, you were born a Ffrench," she reminded, her soft accents just audible. "If that is your work?"

Very slowly David turned to his father.

"I never learned to do things by halves," he said. "If you want me, sir—"

And Ethan Ffrench understood, and first offered his hand.

Rupert was discovered asleep in a camp-chair outside the tent, a few minutes later, when Dick went in search of him.

"The limousine's waiting," his awakener informed him. "You don't feel bad, do you?"

The mechanician rose cautiously, wincing.

"Well, if every joint in my chassis wasn't sore, I'd feel better," he admitted grimly. "But I'm still running. What did you kiss me awake for, when I need my sleep?"

"Did you suppose we could get Lestrange home without you, Jack Rupert?"

"I ain't supposing you could. I'm ready."

The rest of the party were already in the big car, with one exception.

"Take a last look, Rupert," bade David, as he stood in the dark paddock. "We're retired; come help me get used to it."

Rupert passed a glance over the deserted track.

"I guess my sentiment isn't has given out," he sweetly acknowledged. "The Mercury factory sounds pretty good to me, Darling. And I guess we can make a joy ride out of living, on any track, if we enter for it."

"I guess we can," laughed Dick Ffrench. "Get in, opposite Emily. We're going home to dry."

THE END.

Dorothy's Campaign

* * *

By JOHN PHILIP ORTH

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State Senator John Andrews, widower, with a daughter Dorothy, had heard things, but had been too busy starting his campaign for re-election to investigate them. Those things had been about his daughter, and what they were he finally got around to say:

"Look here, they tell me you have gone into this nonsensical suffragette business."

"Yes, father," was the quiet reply. "I want you to drop it."

"I will just as soon as my committee reports."

"Committee?"

"Yes. We have a committee on legislative graft, and I am the chairman of it. We have uncovered some things to astonish the [illegible]."

"Eh? Eh?" queried the senator as he sat up.

"I think we shall be able to convict one or two senators."

"Do, eh? Well, you won't, and I don't want you fooling with such things. All this talk about graft is pure moonshine. Who has been telling you a lot of stuff?"

"Mr. Rayburn. He's a young man on the 'Examiner,' you know."

"What, you are acquainted with any one on that [illegible] paper? It almost howled the father.

"Just Mr. Rayburn, and he's awful nice!

"Nice! Nice! Why, he's a pile pack of them on that paper are liars and scoundrels! Don't you know that they are pitching into me in almost every issue?"

"Yes, but I've heard you say that your record was so pure that they couldn't tarnish it."

"Of course they can't," replied the senator as he hitched uneasily, "but one doesn't want the cure a yapping at his heels all the time. You just drop that young Rayburn like a hot potato!"

"I think he is thinking of calling on you."

"If he does I'll throw him through a window!"

"Thinking of calling on you to ask for my hand!"

The senator gave three jumps. The first carried him ten feet from his

"Never! Never! Never!"

chair. The second turned him around. The third jumped him back to where he started from. Then he shouted:

"Never! Never! Never! Warn him not to come! Tell him he'll walk into his own grave if he does! I believe it was his hand that penned the article slandering me last Sunday. If you read it it should have made your blood boil."

"Oh, I don't know," replied the loving daughter. "You see, we, as suffragettes, get used to such things. Then George can't come and ask for my hand?"

"No! No!"

"All right, father. He'll naturally be disappointed, but he must put up with it."

"Then you are not going to elope?"

"Oh, no. I shall not marry without your consent.'

'And you'll never get it to marry Rayburn or any one else that has ever worked on the 'Examiner.'"

That closed the interview for three days. Then Miss Dorothy made opportunity to say:

"Father, dear, I think it is my duty as an affectionate daughter to say that Mr. Rayburn has got hold of a document that seems to concern you."

"Concern me, how?"

"It seems that he knows—or knew—a man named Tim Donahue. He went to the house the other night to smoke a pipe with him, and found him dying."

"What! Tim Donahue dying!" exclaimed the senator.

"And your Tim had something on his mind to confess. It seems that he was connected with some senatorial graft a year or two ago, and he felt it his dying duty to expose it. He made a written confession, and Mr. Rayburn has it in his pocket. I think your name is mentioned, but of course, as your record has been whiter than snow—"

"It has—it has, but hang Tim if he gave me away! That is, if he died about me! I want you to get that document for me!"

"I will try, but—I don't know. I told Mr. Rayburn how you felt toward him, and naturally he was hurt."

Three or four days passed, with the senator trying hard to appear indifferent, but really anxious, and then he felt compelled to ask:

"Well, Dorothy, what about that wonderful death-bed confession?"

"I am sorry to tell you, daddy, that there is still worse news. Mr. Rayburn happened to be on the spot the other day when a man named [illegible] was run down by a street car. Mr. Rayburn is tender-hearted and generous, and he consoled the injured man and sent his wife $50. He couldn't be saved, however, but before he died he made a confession. He was a member of the legislature when the good roads scandal came out. Perhaps you knew him?"

"The infernal rascal! Did he mention my name?"

"I think he did, daddy. I think he confessed that he and you divvied up on something."

"It's a lie, of course, but I want that document as well as the other. There'll be some fools that will believe that a dying man says of an honest politician. Perhaps that Mr. Rayburn—"

"I don't think he would come to see you, daddy. You know you threatened him."

"Then he can stay away. I can get half a dozen good men to swear that Shane was a liar."

The senator walked around with his chest thrown out and a self-satisfied air, but he was worried. He was being written up in his party organs as the snow-white candidate. He wanted to seem defiant, even to his daughter, and it wasn't many days before he asked in what he thought was a jocular tone:

"Well, suffragette, any further alarms?"

"Why, yes, daddy. That is, you may not think it worth minding, owing to your snow-white record, but Mr. Rayburn considers it a great find."

"Dang Mr. Rayburn!"

"So I say, but you see he has got another death-bed confession. He drove out the other day to see Farmer Bramble [illegible] 12 M. He claimed owned land where the aqueduct is to run, and by the aid of a certain politician and state senator he was enabled to get $12,000 for land worth about $2,000. Of course, there was a divvy in it."

"They can't prove it," shouted the senator.

"Perhaps not, but you see the farmer had been kicked by a mule and lay dying. He couldn't die in peace until he had confessed that the senator got two-thirds of the graft. Mr. Rayburn has the document."

"And it says I'm the senator, does it?"

"I think it does, daddy—I think so. Is there such an expression as dead-to-rights?"

"I believe so."

"Well, I think that Mr. Rayburn thinks that that document gets you dead-to-rights. Don't they sometimes say that a man is caught with the goods on?"

"Yes."

"And there is something about a man's goose being cooked?"

"Um!"

"And with the three death-bed confessions in Mr. Rayburn's pocket, and with the suffragettes investigating, and with the "Examiner" hot on the trail, I think, daddy, dear—I think that you will be snowed under ten feet deep at the coming election!"

But he wasn't. What does a poor, innocent girl know about the tricks of snow-white politicians? The senator fixed that thing in a day. When Mr. Rayburn came calling again he seemed to feel perfectly at home, but he did sigh as he observed:

"You are worth it ten times over, but really I almost hated to do it."

And Dorothy's answer was:

"But if you were a suffragette you would understand that graft must be met with graft. Daddy grafts the public and we graft him!"

For Law and Order.

Stricken Pugilist—Hi, police, stop this sparring match; it's going to degenerate into a prize fight!—Punch.