

The FLYING MERCURY

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SYNOPSIS.

The story opens on Long Island, near New York city, where Miss Emily French, a relative of Ethan French, manufacturer of the celebrated "Mercury" automobile, loses her way. The car has stopped and her cousin, Dick French, is too muddled with drink to direct it aright. They meet another car which is run by a professional racer named Lestrage. The latter fixes up the French car and directs Miss French how to proceed homeward. Ethan French has disinherited his son, who has disappeared. He informs Emily plainly that he would like to have her marry Dick, who is a good-natured but irresponsible fellow. It appears that a partner of Ethan French, wanting an expert to race with the "Mercury" at auto events, has engaged Lestrage, and at the French factory Emily encounters the young man. They refer pleasantly to their meeting when Dick comes along and recognizes the young racer. Dick likes the way Lestrage ignores their first meeting when he appeared to a disadvantage. Lestrage tells Emily that he will try to educate her indifferent cousin as an automobile expert. Dick undertakes his business schooling under the tutelage of Lestrage. Dick is sheer grit, and in making a test race meets with an accident. Lestrage meets Emily in the moonlit garden of the French home. Under an impulse he cannot control he kisses her and she leaves him, confessing in her own heart that she returns his love. The uncle of Emily, learning of her attachment to Lestrage, informs her that the man is his disbarred son, whom she has never seen before being adopted by him. He claims that his son ran away with a disolute actress, refuses to acknowledge him, and orders Emily to think of Dick as her future husband.

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 French, 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 Lestrage waved gay return, making his way through the officials and friends who pressed around him to shake hands or slap 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 Lestrage 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 Lestrage. "Keep cool, French; I've got half an hour and I could start now. I'm ready."

He was ready; clad 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 grinning over to give his clasp.

"Get a move on; what you been doin' all day, dear child? They've been givin' your manager sal volatile to hold him still." He nodded at the agitated Dick in ironic commiseration.

"Go get out your car, Darling; I want to beat you," chaffed the next in line.

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

Laughing, retorting, shaking hands with each comrade rival, Lestrage 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! Lestrage—"

But Rupert was already emerging from the tent with Lestrage'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 Lestrage 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 Lestrage 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 Lestrage 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 Lestrage's swooping advent on the track. Handkerchiefs and scarfs were waved; his name passed from mouth to mouth.

"Popular, ain't he?" chuckled a me-

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 chubby figure. "Break off with you, Les—"

"Go on. My name is Lestrage now and always."

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

"I'm glad you're my kin, Lestrage," 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."

Lestrage 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 tranquillizing 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 ul-

give him absolute orders to do so 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," Lestrage 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 Lestrage sprang to his place.

The hours passed on the wheels of excitement and suspense. When Lestrage came in again, only a watch convinced Dick that it was midnight. "You gave the order?" Lestrage 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, French, 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 read over my last lesson from the chauffeur's correspondence school. Oh, see what's here!"

A telegraph messenger boy had come up to Dick.

"Richard French?" 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 French 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 Lestrage was drinking cheap black coffee while an impatient young surgeon hovered near.

The hour's rest was characteristically spent. Washed, bandaged, and refreshed, Lestrage 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.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Preserve Us From Jealousy.

I have often wondered why the litany did not include a prayer for preservation from jealousy. Undoubtedly of all the terrors that walk by night or by noonday, jealousy is one of the most destructive. Jealousy of a petty kind is less common among women than it used to be, though, strangely enough, it seems to be increasing among men. Some women are jealous of every attribute possessed by others—beauty, social success, wit, charm, or character.

Often, too, there is a certain type who love to think that other women are jealous of her. It is an obsession with her. She may be disagreeable, selfish, conceited, and irritating, yet it never occurs to her to attribute her unpopularity to that cause. Jealousy and jealousy only, she is firmly convinced, lies at the root of the other woman's dislikes. This species of femininity is happily dying out. The modern woman of fascination is as popular with women as with men, and takes no delight in arousing jealousy in another line. She is well aware that popularity with her own sex is an important point to gain.—Chicago Tribune.

Which?

Bacon—Did you ever notice how long a woman is in coming to a point? Egbert—Well, do you mean when she is telling a story or sharpening a lead pencil?—Yonkers Statesman.

Hard to Get Rid of Pest.

Japan has adopted various devices for getting rid of flies, but finds them a great pest, nevertheless.

COMFORT IN KITCHEN

MODERN INNOVATIONS DO AWAY WITH MUCH LABOR.

Time-Saving Appliances Have Been Introduced and Become General—Fireless Cook Stove Proves Genuine Boon.

Nowadays the men who make things have turned their attention to providing the home, and especially the kitchen, with as efficient labor and time saving appliances and tools as an up-to-date factory can boast. The modern kitchen can be a thing of beauty and a joy even to the woman who works in it, so great have been the improvements made.

Take, for instance, the evolution of the fireless cook stove, a miracle working contrivance which banishes heat, steam, smells and standing over the stove watching the slow, tedious cooking process.

Lined with seamless aluminum, rust-proof, tarnish proof and durable utensils to use with it, and a cunningly contrived steam valve attachment which allows the roasting of meats and fowls, the baking of bread and pies, as well as boiling and stewing. It is indeed a wonderful convenience.

All that is necessary is to heat the soapstone radiators either on a gas or electric stove. Then the food, meats, vegetables, or whatever is to be cooked—cooks just as it is, and it is forgotten until the clock says it should be done.

It probably isn't known that every branch and variety of the cooking art can be successfully employed with the fireless cook stove.

The earlier models of these cookers showed a very cumbersome box that took up a lot of space in a small kitchen, but they have now been reduced to occupy waste space, and some of the later designs show them swinging on hinges under the kitchen table, where they may be pushed out of sight and out of the way while the rest of the meal is being prepared.

Another innovation for kitchen efficiency is a porcelain table with rounded corners and edges, which is seamless, unbreakable and unchippable, and at once becomes a molding board for pie baking or a meat board or bread board for cooking and slicing.

This is far superior to the old wooden table tops which became the "catch all" for grease and other substances, owing to the surface being scored from knife blades while preparing meals.

The best thing of all about a kitchen table of this kind is that it can be kept spotlessly clean—really hygienically clean—by wiping off with a hot wet cloth.

Squash Pie Without Eggs.

Use dry squash (the Hubbard or others of same quality). Cut in suitable pieces and cook in a steamer only just long enough to soften so it can be pressed through a sieve. Too long cooking will make it watery and spoil it for a pie. Now heat milk to the boiling point only and turn immediately on the strained squash—using just enough to make a thick mixture—much thicker than when eggs are used. Add salt and sugar to taste; flavor with ginger or pure extract of lemon is good for a change. In deep plates this pie will take an hour for baking. Remove from oven when it ceases to bubble in center. Oven should be quite hot.

Stock Pot Handy.

The stock pot is the mainspring of a well-managed kitchen. In it should be collected bones, poultry, carcasses, trimmings and vegetables, for any scrap is welcome. A piece of shin beef may sometimes be added for extra strength. There will be no lack of soup, gravy and sauces if this is kept constantly going; it is the foundation for them all.

Italian Celery Soup.

Melt two rounding tablespoons of butter in a saucepan; add a small onion sliced and two cups of celery cut fine. Cook together until beginning to yellow, cover with water and cook the celery until soft. Press through a sieve and add two cups of cream. Beat the yolks of two eggs with a tablespoonful of milk; add to the soup, carefully keeping it under the boiling point. Serve the soup with croquettes and grate a little Parmesan cheese over the top the very last thing before serving.

Apricot-Apple Pie.

Line your pie plate as usual with nice crust, put in a scant layer of halved apricots (canned), then fill the pie with sliced apple and finish as usual and bake. The mingled flavor of the two fruits is very nice and appetizing.

Iron Wrong Side.

When ironing between buttons on a shirtwaist place the buttons down on a folded towel and iron on wrong side. The result will be very pleasing to both ironer and wearer.



"Water," He Demanded Tersely.

chanic 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," Lestrage 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 of glow.

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

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

"Of course, I'm not going back to Frenchwood. 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. French has dismissed me." His firm lip bent a little more firmly. "The work I was doing is in

tramodern and classic in antiquity of conception.

At eight o'clock Lestrage came flying in, sent 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-smearing mechanic patronizingly explained:

"You can't have cars manfuring 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 Lestrage, slipping out to relax, and meditatively contemplating the alternate driver, who was standing across the camp. "French, 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