

SERIAL STORY

STANTON WINS

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CHAPTER I.

The Man Who Dared.

The official starter let his raised arm fall and leaned forward, peering across the blended glare and darkness. "What?" he shouted, above the pulsating roar of the eleven racing machines lined up before the judges' stand. "What?"

There was a flurry around the central car, whose driver leaned from his seat to stare down at the man who had slipped from beside him to the ground. The great crowd congesting the grand-stand pressed closer to the barrier, starting also, commenting and conjecturing.

"The mechanic of the Mercury is off his car!"

"Fainted—"

"Fell—"

"The automobiles hadn't started; he must be sick."

The referee was already pushing his way back, bringing the report from the hastily summoned surgeon.

"Heart disease," he announced right and left. "Stanton's mechanic just dropped off his seat, dead."

But Stanton himself had already swung out of his car, with the energetic decision that marked his every movement.

"My man is out," he tersely stated to the starter. "I've got to run over to my camp and get another. Will you hold the start for me?"

The question was rather a demand than a request. There was scarcely one among the vast audience who would not have felt the sparkle gone from this strong black wine of sport they had come to sip, if Ralph Stanton had been withdrawn from the twenty-four-hour contest. He had not only fame as a skilful and scientific racer; he had the reputation of being the most spectacularly reckless driver in America, whose death could be but a question of time and whose record of accidents and victories verged on the appalling. He knew his value as an attraction, and the starter knew it, although preserving impassivity.

"Five minutes," the official conceded, and drew out his watch.

Already a stream of men were running toward the Mercury camp with the news. Stanton sprang into his machine, deftly sent it forward out of the line, and shot around into the entrance to the huge oval field edged by the beach track; a mile of white ribbon bordering a green meadow.

The row of electric-lighted tents, each numbered and named for its own racing car, was in a turmoil of excitement. But most agitated was the group before the tent marked "9, Mercury."

"Durand's down and out—give me another man," called Stanton, halting his noisy, flaming car. "Quick, you—"

But no one stepped forward, from the cluster of factory men and mechanics. Only the assistant manager of the Mercury company responded to the demand:

"Yes, go; one of you boys, I'll make it right with you. You, Jones."

"I'm married, sir," refused Jones succinctly.

"Well, you then, Walters. Good heavens, man! what do you mean?"

For the burly Walters backed away, actually pale.

"I'll dig potatoes, first, sir."

"Why, you used to race?"

"Not with Stanton, sir."

There was a low murmur of approval among his mates, and a drawing together for support. Stanton stepped down from his car, snatching off his mask to show a dark, strong face grim with anger and contempt.

"You wretched, backboneless cowards!" he hurled at them, his blue-black eyes flashing over the group. "Do you know what I am and the company stand to lose if I'm disqualified or lack of one of you jellyfish to sit beside me and pump oil? Isn't there a man in the camp? I'll give fifty dollars myself to the one who goes, a hundred if I win."

"I'll promise twice that," eagerly supplemented Green, the assistant manager. He had private bets on Stanton.

Not one of the clustered workmen moved.

"Dama you!" pronounced the driver, bitterly and comprehensively. "I'll repeat that offer to the man who will go for the first three hours only, and meanwhile we'll send to New York and find a red-blooded male."

The men looked at one another, but shook their heads.

"No? You won't? You work your miserable bodies three months to earn what I offer for three hours. What's the matter with you, don't I risk my neck?" He turned, sending his powerful voice ringing down the line. "Here, hunt the paddock, all of you—"

two hundred dollars for a man to ride the next three hours with me!"

"You can't take a man from another camp, Stanton," protested the frantic Mr. Green. "He might trick you, hurt the car."

His appeal went down the wind unheeded, except for one glance from the racer's gleaming eyes.

"He won't trick me," said Stanton.

The crowded stands were a bulk of swaying, seething impatience. The paddock was in an uproar, the Mercury camp the center of interest. But no volunteers answered the call. The panting machine, its hood wrapped in jets of violet flame, headlights and tail-lights shedding vivid illumination around the figure of its baffled master, quivered with impotent life and strength. Raging, Stanton stood, watch in hand, his face a set study in scorn.

Suddenly the harsh rasp of the official klaxon soared above the hubbub, warning, summoning.

"Four minutes," panted the despairing assistant manager. "Stanton—"

Some one was running toward them, some one for whom a lane was opened by the spectators from other camps who had congregated.

"Get aboard," called ahead a fresh young voice. "Get aboard; I'll go."

"Thank Heaven for a man!" snarled Stanton, as the runner dashed up.

"Why, it's a boy!"

"Floyd," Mr. Green hailed hysterically. "You'll go?"

"I'll go," assured Floyd, and faced the driver; a slim, youthful figure in a mechanic's blue overalls, his sleeves rolled to the elbows and leaving bare his slender arms; his head, covered like a girl's with soft closely cropped curling brown hair, tilted back as his steady gray eyes looked up at Stanton.

"You? You couldn't crank a taxicab," flung the racer, brutal with disappointment and wrath. "You'd go? A boy?"

"I'm as old as the driver of the Singer car, and scant five years younger than you—I'm twenty-one," flashed the retort. "And I know all there is about gasoline cars. I guess you're big enough to crank your own motor aren't you, if I can't? You've got thirty seconds left; do you want me?"

Met on his own tone, Stanton gasped, then caught his mask from the man who held it.

"Why don't you get on your clothes?" he demanded savagely. "Are you going to race like that? Jump, you useless cowards there—can't you pass him his things? Telephone the stand that I'm coming, some one."

There was a wild scurry of preparation, the telephone bell jingled madly.

"Yes Floyd is one of our new factory

dancing behind the goggles, the red young mouth smiling below the mask, the shining young curls which the cap failed to cover. He stared, then slowly relaxed into a smile, and went forward.

"The talking done while I'm up, is done by me," stated Stanton forcibly. "Remember."

"Don't you ever need a rest?" queried Floyd.

Stanton opened his lips, and closed them again without speaking. His trained glance went to sweep his opponents, gaging their relative positions, their probable order on the first turn, and his own best move. The successive flashlights on either side were blinding, the atmosphere was suffocating with the exhaust gasoline and acetylene fumes. It was as familiar to him as the odor of sawdust to the circus dweller, as the strong salt wind to a habitant of the coast; the unusual element lay in the boy beside him. Man, he refused to acknowledge him.

The sharp crack of a pistol, the fall of a flag, and the whole struggling, flaming flock sprang forward toward the first turn, wheel to wheel in death-edged contest. And Stanton forgot his mechanician.

The Mercury led the first circuit, as usual. It was very fast, and its pilot took the chances more prudent drivers avoided. Still, the lead was less than the car's own length, two of its closest rivals hanging at its flanks, when they passed the tumultuous grand-stand. Just ahead lay again the "death curve." There was a swift movement beside Stanton, the pendent linen streamers floating from his cap were deftly seized and the dust swept from his goggles with a practiced rapidity.

"Car on each side an' one trying to pass," the clear voice pierced the hearing. "No room next the fence."

Stanton grunted. The boy knew how to rise in a speeding machine, then, and how to take care of his driver, he noted. Nevertheless, he meant to take that fence side.

And he did. As the other drivers shut off power to take the dangerous bend more slowly, Stanton shot forward at unchanged speed, cut in ahead and swept first around the turn, taking the inside curve. The spectators rose with a universal cry of consternation; the Mercury swerved, almost facing the infield fence, skidding appallingly and lurching drunkenly on two wheels, then righted itself under the steering-wheel in the master's hands, and rushed on, leading by a hundred feet.

The people cheered frantically; the band crashed into raucous music. Stanton's mechanician got up to lean over the back of the flying car and feel the rear casings.



Stanton Stood, Watch in Hand, His Face a Set Study in Scorn.

men," hurried Mr. Green, in breathless explanation, as Stanton took his seat. "He's a gas-engine wonder—he knows them like a clock—he tuned up this car you've got, this morning—"

The klaxon brayed again. A trim apparition in racing costume darted from the tent to swing into the narrow seat beside the driver, and Stanton's car leaped for the paddock exit with a roar answered by the deafening roar of welcome from the spectators.

"Seven minutes," snapped the starter, as the Mercury wheeled in line.

Stanton shrugged his shoulders with supreme indifference, perfectly aware of his security, since the start had not been made. But his mechanician leaned forward with a little gurgle of irresistible, sunshot laughter.

"Don't worry," he besought. "Really, we'll get in seven minutes ahead."

His mocking young voice carried above the terrific din of the eleven huge machines, and Stanton turned upon him, amazed and irritated at the audacity. The starter also stared, just as a flashlight flared up and showed fully the young gray eyes

"You're tryin' to tres," he imparted, his accents close to the driver's ear.

That was the first time that Stanton noticed that Floyd lisped and blurred his final "g" in moments of excitement. It might have sounded effeminate, if the voice had not been without a tremor. As it was—

At the end of the first hour, the bulletin boards showed the Mercury five laps ahead of its nearest rival. And then Floyd spoke again to his driver.

"What?" Stanton questioned, above the noise of the motor.

"We've got to run in; I'm afraid of the rear inside shoe. It won't stand another skid like the last."

Stanton's mouth set in a hard line.

"I will not," he stated. "Get back in your place. You can't tell."

"I can."

Stanton deigned no reply, sliding past one of the slower cars on the back stretch. To go in meant to lose the whole time gained. As they took the back turn Floyd again leaned over

FOOD "DUTY FREE"

HOUSE DEMOCRATS WILL MAKE AS NEAR APPROACH TO THAT AS POSSIBLE

FARMERS SURE TO OPPOSE IT

Compensations, However, Will Be Offered Agricultural Interests in the Way of Reductions on Articles That They Must Buy.

By GEORGE CLINTON.

Washington.—It is said by members of the ways and means committee of the house at last constituted and who will continue to hold membership in that body in the new congress, that the first and great effort of the new tariff legislation will be "to reduce the cost of living." This is interpreted as meaning that among other things there will be as near an approach to "duty free food" as is possible. The house unquestionably will put sugar on free list, but also unquestionably the senate will decline to agree and will make a compromise on the present duties. The cane and beet sugar makers are protesting to congress, just as they protested last summer, that free sugar would kill their industries.

A tariff for free food means that the duties will be taken off many eatables that now pay high rates, although it is known that the rates will be maintained on such foods as come under the head of luxuries, the "palate ticklers" of the present customs laws.

The Democratic leaders know of course that if an approach to free food is attempted there will be opposition from the agricultural interests of the country or from a large part of them. The intention of the Democrats, therefore, is to offset with compensations any damage which will be done to the farmer, the truck gardener and the fruit raiser. Their argument is that if a man gets a smaller price for his products he can afford the loss provided the things which he buys for his home use, clothing and other articles, are reduced in cost.

Provide for Compromise.

It is a delicate table of balances which the ways and means committee members will have to prepare, and they must prepare it with full knowledge that changes unquestionably will be insisted upon by the senate. The chances therefore seem to be that the house will make greater cuts in some of the rates than it would have made did it not know in advance that the senate would insist upon raising them. The plan of the house majority, and it is a very human plan, is to make the rates so low that the basis of compromise will be correspondingly low; in other words, that they can yield considerably more than they would have yielded if the rates had not been put very low with the full knowledge that it was necessary to prepare in any call for a margin of compromise.

The Democrats say they understand fully the opposition which may come to efforts to put certain kinds of foods on the free list or make them almost free. They declare they are going to make an effort in their tariff bills to so reduce the cost of other articles that the men who raise food stuffs for the markets will find they are better off at the end of the year even under reduced prices for their products than they are under the present tariff arrangements.

All this the Republicans, of course, say remains to be proved and they predict for the Democratic party great trouble in bringing down the duties on manufactured articles to a point to offset the losses to the farmers because of free food, and to do it without putting the manufacturing concerns out of business.

Tariff Hearings Hold Good.

There has been some curiosity expressed in letters received in Washington as to how the last congress could go ahead holding hearings and making preparations for tariff legislation which must be passed by an incoming congress. The matter is simple enough in itself because the majority of the members of the ways and means committee of the present house will continue to be the majority in the next committee, and of course their findings and their preparations will be endorsed by the same men who have just endorsed them, although their findings will have to be passed upon by a house differently constituted in its personnel than was that of the last session.

It is of course possible that the great influx of new members, mostly Democrats, could by a combination with hold-over members force re-hearings on tariff measures and pass an entirely different kind of a bill than it is the present intention of the ways and means committee to recommend for adoption. There is not one chance in ten thousand, however, that this will occur.

Extra Session Program.

When congress gets together April 1 the house immediately will elect a speaker to succeed Champ Clark and the chances are that the man to succeed will be Mr. Clark himself. Then when the committee memberships definitely are assigned the members will get down at once to tariff tinkering.

It is pretty generally expected in Washington that the administration will ask congress to take up currency legislation at the extra session, but it may be that the advice of some of the elder members of the banking and currency committee of the house and of the finance committee of the senate

will be listened to and monetary legislation will be put over until the first regular session, which begins the first Monday in next December. There are reasons for the desire of a good many of the Democrats to do nothing with the currency until six or eight months' additional time has been given the financial experts to study a plan which they think will meet with the approval of the county.

As for the tariff, the Democratic majority says that it is not going to "tinker with it," for the term implies simply patching and repatching. The Democrats apparently think that they have already outlined a tariff program which will prove to be constructive and which will stand the test of time and business. What the dominant party fears more than anything else, and its members are free to say so privately, that some of the provisions of the new tariff law, when they go into effect, materially will hurt labor.

A good many of the Democrats do not express the fear in just this way. Some of them actually believe that if the excuse of an experimented low duty is offered that some great concerns may discharge parts of their working forces, lay it to the tariff, and trust to the discontent which is aroused to reopen the whole tariff agitation and possibly to bring back high tariff conditions once more.

House Majority for Reductions.

The Democratic house leaders in the congress just ended and who unquestionably will be the leaders in the next house do not seem to be in the least disturbed about the ability of the Democratic party to put through the lower chamber "quickly and in order" just such tariff measures as the ways and means committee shall outline.

Take the house all in all and a vast majority of its members as the body is at present constituted is in favor of tariff reductions. There are among the representatives, as among the senators, some Democrats of high tariff tendencies, but the majority of the members of that party in both houses, and a great majority in the lower house, are in favor of reductions, and with them stand Republicans of the house and senate of the Cummins and LaFollette school, and also the members of the Progressive party, of whom in the new house there are 19 and in the senate three or four.

It can be seen from this that the house will have little difficulty in putting through such tariff measures as the Democratic ways and means committee shall prepare, and it is believed that the measures will call for radical reductions in some cases and have what may be called conservative radical reductions in other cases. The senate, however, as it will be constituted, will not stand for the deep cuts which the house intends to make, and so the chances are there will be a compromise.

Sounding New Members.

Members of the new lower house of congress are coming into Washington in numbers day by day. The Democratic and Republican leaders are sounding out the sentiments of the incoming members of their parties, primarily in a most delicate way, to find out definitely just what their "factional affiliations" are. The Democratic leaders want to know whether the incomers are extremely conservative, just plain conservative, progressive, or radically progressive, and the Republican leaders are trying to find out just about the same things.

The leaders of the house Democracy is a man of marked conservative tendencies. He says so and his acts prove him so. It must not be understood, however, that he is not progressively inclined along lines which he considers safely progressive. His opponents in his own party say that he considers few things safely progressive and that therefore he is definitely conservative. The great majority of the Democrats in the next house will be men who call themselves progressives and who are known at home as such. This majority will have a marked influence on legislation and on the upholding of President Wilson's policies, which everybody here believes will be advanced. It is not thought in Washington that even the conservative leaders of Democracy in the house will attempt to prevent the passage of legislation that Mr. Wilson may recommend, even if it appears to them to be "over radical."

Aside from the tariff, which will take up a large part of the time of the extra session, and aside also from currency legislation, which may or may not be given consideration, there will be thousands of bills dropped into the "hopper" of house and senate before ten days of the extra session have gone by. These bills will make provision for a multitude of things which attempts have been made to provide for before, but which have failed for one reason or another.

Few new members of congress reach the capital without full belief in their breasts that they are ordained to be the makers of legislation which the statesmen call "constructive." About one member in a thousand perhaps leaves a lasting name in legislation, and so it will be seen readily enough how many of the newcomers will be disillusioned, and doomed to know their disappointment before many weeks of the new session have passed. Bill preparing is a regular industry among congressmen. The measures are drawn, put into the measure basket, read by titles, printed and referred to committees, but the overwhelming majority of them never comes out of the committee room with any kind of a report.

Result of His Researches.

Investigator.—What, in your opinion, is the secret of good roads?

Downstate Chauffeur.—The secret of good roads is to find 'em!

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR MARCH 16.

THE TEST OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH.

LESSON TEXT—Gen. 22:1-18.
GOLDEN TEXT—"I desire goodness and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."—How. 5:4.

The birth of Isaac ("laughter") 17:19, and the setting aside of the son of the bond woman, a story so rich with suggestiveness, forms the connection between the lesson of last week and the one of this week.

I. Sacrifice Required. "God did prove Abraham" (R. V.) vv. 1-2. Abraham's ready response, "Behold me, here am I," gives evidence of his life long habit of obedience. He was ready for sacrifice or service. His habit of taking God at his word prepared him for this final act of testing, and perfecting, of his faith. The revised version "prove" is a better rendering than the authorized version "tempt." God does not tempt, i. e., solicit men to evil Jas. 1:13, but he does "prove" men; see Ex. 20:20 and 1 Peter 1:12. Abraham had been tried before but what father is there who will not say this was the supreme test, for he is called upon to give up his "only son, whom thou cherishest."

Abraham's Faith.

Superficial critics have taken occasion to make light of a God who would make such a demand upon an earthly father. We need to remember that Abraham had doubtless witnessed human sacrifices in Chaldea and that having seen God's faithfulness and his past deliverances, he had enough faith to believe that God could in his own Providence deliver Isaac. Further, attention has been called to the exact language of the text, viz., God's demand was that Abraham "offer" (not "kill") Isaac as a sacrifice. The literal language is "make him go up" upon the altar, doubtless in symbol. We read elsewhere, Heb. 11:17 that "Abraham offered up Isaac," but we know he did not kill Isaac. Those who stumble at that part of the story miss the great lesson God intended to teach in the record of this incident. However, Abraham was ready to do (v. 10) what God himself did actually do when he gave his "only son," John 3:16, Rom. 8:32. Isaac was the child of the promise, hence the only son (cf. Gen. 21:12). This makes the text more severe for Ishmael had been sent off, 21:14. God today is calling upon fathers to sacrifice their sons, and fathers are sacrificing though not always unto God. We must put our children upon the altar. Matt. 10:37.

II. Sacrifice Granted. "Abraham rose up early," vv. 3-10. The writer of Genesis has left us to fill in the emotions and the mental agony that must have surged through Abraham's heart, yet we again see a wonderful illustration of prompt obedience, cf. Ps. 119:60.

Abraham's Devotion.

Attention has been called to Isaac as a type of Christ (cf. John 10:17-18). (1) His name, given before birth; (2) His birth, supernatural, predicted; (3) His offering, a, by his father; b, voluntary; c, risen from the dead; (4) His marriage; a, a bride selected by his father; b, servant calls the bride; c, meeting of bride and bridegroom. In this connection we behold Isaac bearing the wood (v. 6) a reminder of Christ bearing his cross, John 19:17. The test to Abraham's faith was full even to the point that "he took the knife to slay his son" when God intervened. The repetition, "Abraham, Abraham," suggests the urgency of God to save and the devotion of Abraham in that he was not easily turned aside nor looking for a way of escaping a disagreeable duty. Abraham was sustained to the end (Rom. 4:20, 21 R. V.) and out of it all he is abundantly rewarded, vv. 15-18 and 26:4-5.

III. Sacrifice Provided.

"A lamb caught in the thicket," vv. 11-15. Again God spoke to Abraham through "an angel," an old Hebrew way of saying that God made himself known. It has been suggested that at this point the Hebrew broke away from human sacrifices. There is nothing in this story to sustain any claim that God justifies human sacrifices, but the exact contrary, for God gave Isaac back to Abraham (Heb. 1:19 R. V.) and that he is constantly doing to those who surrender their all and their best to him, Mark 10:29-30; Prov. 11:24-25. Abraham did not leave the mountain until he had offered a sacrifice and who can question but that his heart was filled with great joy and thanksgiving unto God, 2 Cor. 9:15. Without the shedding of blood we cannot approach God.

Abraham is a type of true piety and is constantly held up by New Testament writers as the ideal of religion, the reason is that religion never changes, it is the attitude of the soul to God. Read Horace Bushnell's experience as related in "Dissolving of Doubts." Some men seem to pass through life without much testing, the question is suggested, are they worth testing, are they of sufficient value. "Trials are God's vote of confidence." This is also a great illustration of substitutionary sacrifice, ask Isaac if he believed it? Ask the question, "How do we show our faith?"