

Gradually I drew away from the little horse. I heard his rider, Archie, speak to him coaxingly once, but the little fellow did not respond; he had faith in me.

Just at the corner of the straight there was a mad scramble for places. Robin Hood's big thundering hoofs were pounding the course to dust at my side. I could feel Sting's hot breath on my quarters, and knew that his nose was pushing close up for the place I had promised him.

Table Top, Robin Hood, and First Water came with a rush on the outside; whips cracking, colours snapping in the wind, and a hurricane of sand being thrown up by the eager, crunching hoofs. That was where the race was to be settled they knew; if they could not swing into the stretch well in line with me, they were done for.

Suddenly I swerved to the left. With an oath Jim put all his strength on my right rein. Further out I bored, until I bumped up against Robin Hood. The scramble was fierce.

Then the golden nozzle of my little friend showed on my right. I could hear Archie chattering eagerly to the gallant horse. Next he was clear of them, and galloping a length in front of me, still on the inside close to the rails. Jim jabbed his sharp spurs into my flanks as I straightened out for home, but I paid no attention to that—I did not blame him.

Up the straight we raced like that—Sting's powerful hoofs driving the hot earth into our faces.

As we neared the stand I could hear the roar of voices; it was like the sound of the waves beating against the ship I crossed the ocean in. I kept

my head just in front of Robin Hood; I could hear his rider cracking at the big horse's great sides with the whip.

Nose and nose, Robin Hood and I raced; slowly we were drawing up on Sting; inch by inch we gained on him. I thought of swerving again on Robin Hood, but Table Top was on my right now—his head lapped on my shoulder; I had to take care of them both. It was terrible.

Sting was gradually coming back to us. Would it all be thrown away? He had not far to go; surely he would last out long enough to win.

I saw him falter—Archie's whip went in the air; the gallant little horse swerved, pitched forward, and suddenly disappeared as we drove by him in our mad rush. The hot blood mounted to my brain—it was all Robin Hood's fault. *He* should not win, anyway.

The bit was loose in my mouth; there was no restraining pull. I shot forward as I had in the finish for the Nizam's Cup, a length ahead of Robin Hood.

When I pulled up and walked back, I saw a big crowd on the course. They were standing about Sting. I looked at the seat where Miss Jess had sat when I went out. Her face was buried in her handkerchief, and I wished that I had dropped instead of my gallant chum.

It was all thrown away, for Sting was dead—a dozen lengths from the finish. The vet said he had broken his heart. Game to the last—the Gladiateur blood.

I couldn't count at that time, but there was more than one heart broken—three I think.

