

The Luck of the Babe

were riding to win, thought it was either rare horsemanship—this waiting race—or else stupidity. If the native won, it would be stupidity; if either of the jockeys won, his backers would label it “splendid horsemanship.”

It *was* stupidity.

As the gray just tottered under the wire first, the other two finished like lions, nose and nose in a dead heat, for second money.

Then pandemonium broke loose in the stand. All the backers' money was burnt up—no, not all; “Babe” Tobyn had eighteen thousand to draw out of the flames.

There he stood, the only winner among all those clever racing men: the Babe.

Imagination needs no word prick to picture what the owners of Amir and Rocket thought and said.

Down at the Mess that night there was no hilarity when Babe walked in; only the hush of awe.

Such luck as that clearly indicated the finger of Allah. He had passed through his novitiate, and they were abashed.