

SCARLET RUNNER

CHAPTER I: JANUARY

THE CAR AND HIS MAJESTY

IT was such an unusually beautiful and striking car that everyone looked at it, then turned to look again.

This was what Christopher Race had counted upon.

"Good old Scarlet Runner!" he said, as he drove.

"Good old girl, you're making your impression."

Slowly the red car moved up Regent Street as far as Oxford Circus, where it turned to roll back, like some great, splendid beast pacing the length of a vast cage.

It was past seven o'clock ; but the sky was a blue and silver mosaic of stars, and electric globes pulsed with white lights that struck and glinted on the rich scarlet panels of the automobile.

The army of workers pouring home from shop and factory, the army of pleasure-seekers pouring into restaurant and theatre, all looked at the car, straining their eyes to make out the crest—gold and dark blue painted on scarlet; and those among the crowds who were women looked also at Christopher Race.

He drove alone, but he was dressed like a gentleman, not in the glorified livery of a chauffeur. He was a thin, dark, eagle-faced young man, with an air of breeding