

**THE CAR  
AND THE LADY**

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The Car and the Lady by Percy F. Megargel & Grace Sartwell Mason

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**PERCY F. MEGARGEL & GRACE SARTWELL MASON**

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BY  
PERCY F. MEGARGEL  
AND  
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## FOREWORD

THE true history of a transcontinental automobile race underlies nearly every detail of the following story. It is a romance seen through the log-book of an actual journey. Hence the particulars of equipment and the description of difficulties met and overcome. The authors hope that, with the progress of good highways across this fascinating continent of ours, more motorists may feel the lure of the American road. If this class of traveler finds in "The Car and the Lady" a timely word which will make the way easier they will feel that they have been justified in supplementing the purely romantic interest of their story with wisdom gained in the school of experience.

20/1/08

# The Car and the Lady

## CHAPTER I

**A**T a wide front window of the Al-bright drawing-room Jerry Fleming stationed himself as if determined to become a fixture of that pleasant spot. An awning kept out the glare of the August afternoon; the breeze came in through a green screen of climbing vines and potted geraniums; behind this shaded window the noises of the avenue were less obtrusive, though the window stood wide open to the out-of-doors. By long habit Jerry Fleming knew exactly the spot where one should stand to command the street below. He planted himself at this point, his hands thrust in his pockets, his good-looking young face gloomily set, obstinacy in his athletic shoulders. The housemaid who had ushered him in looked at his back. There was a secret sympathy in her Irish eyes. She coughed discreetly.

“How long ago did Miss Betty go out?” he asked, without taking his eyes from the street.

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## THE CAR AND THE LADY

She told him two hours; and moved toward the door.

"Ah . . . when do you expect your sister from Ireland, Nora?"

She came back, her Irish heart touched to confidences.

"An' sure at last, Mr. Jerry, I've sint her the tickets! Next mont' it is she'll be here. Miss Betty says she can stay with me till she finds a place!"

"That's good of Miss Betty, . . . *where* did you say she's gone, Nora?"

Nora twinkled and looked at him with unfathomable sympathy. "She's gone out in a grand new automobile, sir—one the Italian gintleman sint 'round. She—she's been out in it every day for a week, sir. She's like a colleen with a new toy. An' it isn't blamin' her I'd be, either. The iligance of that car, sir—the red leather cushions—the brass, and thim shiny things—the——"

Jerry Fleming made a movement of profound disgust. Gloom of a deeper shade settled over his face. "Brass and shiny things!" he muttered. "That's all a girl knows about an automobile! Brass—" and here he stopped to listen to the musical notes of a Gabriel horn, which, backed up by the exhaust of a