



## Post-Race Party aboard the Yacht, “Bella Fortuna,” of Sr. Carmena-Motta *April 1934*

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### Part III: After Dinner, Dancing & Discussion

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As dinner aboard the yacht wound up, **Louis de Montignac** indeed made his exit. Pulling on a pair of black gloves and donning a top hat, he set down the gangplank to his waiting car. Having arrived late, in a huff, he was now leaving early. Yet his departure did not dissuade the crowd from returning to the fantail of the yacht for dancing and more drinks and soon the party was in again full swing, the yacht's larger orchestra playing many fine and modern dance songs.

Most of the racing pilots, however, seemed little interested in dancing and they were soon in conversation with many of the most important guests who had come to the celebration. **Aristide La Fontaine** was soon discussing his experiences on the circuit with **Olaf Hammarsfjold**, the well-known Norwegian metallurgical engineer. He was overheard discussing his crash and asking about improvements to his car, including ways to strengthen the body for the upcoming race at the Grand Prix in Nice. With little time left until then, he would have to make rapid changes during the voyage home, if any could be accomplished. Hammarsfjold seemed to take it in and offered his assistance where possible in making a few changes to the car, but wondered if it was possible in time for the GP Nice.

Aristide was also seen thanking France's Grand Prix Committee Chairman, **Claude d'Etoile, and his wife, Genevieve d'Etoile** for their assistance with the new prototype Michelin tires. As well, Aristide made a fine gesture toward Amb. Watanabe Tomitani, Japan's Ambassador to Italy, presenting the speedometer off of his race car as a gift for the Ambassador's collection.

For his part, **Tavho Myrsky** began questioning Otto Klüge for advice and tips for the next race in Nice but received little help, since the circuit had opened long after his retirement.

**Rutger “Hajen” Hägglund** chatted with **Sven Magnusson** about the size of the fuel inlet and its relationship as a function of engine temperatures. Much progress was made toward cementing their friendship and professional relationship. In addition, the Swedish driver thanked the **Japanese Ambassador Tomitani** for his support leading up to the start of the race. The Ambassador stated that he was looking forward to the upcoming Grand Prix in Nice, which he would be attending also.



As the night wore on, **Vitez Rychly** broke out a box of cigars and handed them out to those guests had assembled around the bow of the ship. They discussed the race, of women and France. Rychly appeared to be in a good mood, talking cheerfully to everyone, save the German driver, **Godeschalk Hegkman von Grebeneck**, who passed by at one point. In contrast to Rychly's pre-race activity, now with the race past, it was as if he had decided to allow his actions on the track speak for him. His manner since taking second place on the field appeared more confident, and not as abruptly.

As **Rychly** smoked his cigars with the others, **VV** made her way to the dance floor. She was left on her own. Cautiously, she seemed to be working her way over toward **Sebi Orsi**, who hadn't noticed her presence. Instead, Orsi was concentrating upon the nearby **Lady Swindon-Harpe**. And so it was that VV's advance upon the Italian was forestalled even before it began.



As **Sebi Orsi** approached the **Lady Swindon-Harpe**, many noticed that her "chaperones" moved swiftly to interpose, using their bodies to block the Italian's path. Yet Orsi seemed to have anticipated this. Undeterred, he stepped between them, his body deftly feinting to the left but his feet carrying him to the right between the nearest two who were drawn off by his fast footwork. Even VV, who is now watching from the side of the dance floor, was impressed at how gracefully he had cut through to the Lady's inner circle.

The **Lady Swindon-Harpe** herself was dressed in clothes befitting the dress of men – a daringly tall top hat jauntily perched atop her head and a tuxedo with pants declaring her willingness to take command in a society dominated certainly not by the ladies. Yet her clothes were still fashionably cut and feminine. None doubted her beauty and elegance, even as her attire made clear that she was not a common lady of Britain, but of a special, higher class.



**Sebi Orsi** seemed undeterred by her appearance and stepped up to greet her, “My Lady, you are looking particularly beautiful this evening: a striking black and alabaster tower in a field of pansies, I think. I trust you are enjoying the party?”

The Lady seemed equally amused and curious as to Orsi’s tack, and so replied, “Oh, yes, very much, thank you.” She paused, regarding him, “And I feel that I must thank you for the flowers – although I suspect you should have paid more attention to the start, than to sending flowers to me at the course.”

Orsi bowed and offered, “I will consider your advice, but it was my car, not me that stalled at the green flag. I am afraid it is unlikely that I will be able to redirect my priorities. I have actually come to ask you for a dance.”

The Lady shook her head gently and gestured toward Orsi’s leg, “Ah, but Mr. Orsi, it seems you can barely walk.”

“I can dance better than I can walk. I can dance better than I can drive.”

Again, with a new suspicion showing upon her brow, the Lady countered more directly, “You are aware, I assume, that you are widely reputed – ”

He cut her off, “I promise that my reputation will not rub off on you. And I am quite sure that you are capable of defending your honor – although I assure you that will not be required.”

As he again reached out to escort her to the dance floor, the **Lady Swindon-Harpe** waved her entourage aside, some of whom appeared ready and even eager to intercede and now escort the Italian away. An Englishwoman of the finest families, it was also clear that she could not so rudely refuse Orsi’s request for a dance. Thus, with a gracious nod, she extended her hand and they moved to the dance floor together. Clearly, the Lady was also more than confident in her ability to keep the Italian at bay if need be, particularly given his injuries from the race itself.



Yet **Sebi Orsi's** limp quickly vanished as he took her firmly into his arms for the dance. Gracefully, he moved across the dance floor, as only a few others were dancing despite the quality of the orchestra on board. The orchestra increased its tempo to match the Italian's fervent stride.

Seemingly taken aback, the Lady commented, "You do dance very well, Mr. Orsi."

"As do you," he said before spinning her outward lightly to the full extension of their arms, then he pulled her back into the dance.

With little choice as Orsi lead the dance, she used words to add new distance between them, "Are you trying your advances upon me then after all, Mr. Orsi?"

"Not at present."

Her eyebrow went up, surprised at his answer. Then she asked toyingly, "But in the future?"

"Please, my lady, we are just enjoying a dance." Again, Orsi seemed almost matter of fact in the tone of his voice.

With that, the **Lady Swindon-Harpe** gestured across the room toward the Czech driver's fiancée and asked, "And what shall you do then with VV?"

"VV?"

"Surely, you do not think that we cannot see that you appear somewhat untoward in your intentions toward her, yes? Perhaps it is she that you would be better to dance with tonight?"

"VV, I believe, has a fiancé," **Sebi Orsi** noted blandly.

"And that restrains you?" she laughed.

Now it was Orsi's turn to smile, recognizing that the Lady Swindon-Harpe was more than a match for his wit. He wryly replied, "There is not much that restrains me."

"Your reputation is warranted then, Mr Orsi."

"I find that having a reputation is better than the alternative, and fame is a powerful attraction – much more so than a finely made suit."



“Ah, yes, we often say that in London. But I must ask,” the Lady said, “in this game of yours, who is the hunter, and who is the hunted, if I may?”

Orsi considered her question a moment before answering, “Eat or be eaten.” With that he smiled, bowed out of the dance and proceeded toward the bar.

Soon the dance floor was again crowded with guests.



*The view across the harbour in Algiers.*

As the evening wound down, **Aristide La Fontaine** put an exclamation point upon the affair when he asked the band to play a set of salsa dances. To the Latin sounds, he took the floor with **Maria**, who had danced salsa since her childhood. The two appeared to all present to be the best dancers in the room, until suddenly **Vitez Rychly and VV** together also hit the dance floor to exhibit a very intense set of dances, clearly driven by a raw attraction that seemed to bind them together.

Finally, everyone returned home in the late morning hours, preparing for the next day’s departure for southern France – and to face one another again in the upcoming Grand Prix de Nice. The last to leave was **Sebi Orsi** who surprised **Sr. Carmena-Motta** with a gift of the goat’s horns to display upon the ship’s bow.



## **Results**

***Sebi Orsi's close cooperation with Sr. Carmena-Motta has earned the Italian industrialist's support. In the week that followed the race, in preparation for the GP Nice, the Italian's team was able to bring new systems to the car, adding two (2) Brake WPs for the next race.***

***Similarly, the Italian industrialist sent a team of engineers to assist Germany's Godeschalk Hegkman, seemingly recognizing an ancient bond between them. This resulted in a modification that added two (1) Gearbox WP to the German's Bugatti.***

***Otto Klüge was finally able to assist Finland's Tavho Myrsky after all by adding two (2) Brake WP for the upcoming race.***

***Vitez Rychly benefited from finally displaying finer social graces, having secured the assistance of a member of Lady Swindon-Harpe's entourage. During the week following the post-race party, Rychly was thereby able to make a modification to his car, adding one (1) Tire WP to his totals.***

***Aristide La Fontaine was able to benefit from his new relationship with Olaf Hammarsfjold, the Norwegian engineer. During the trip home, a set of drawings are produced and rapidly implemented to the Salmson racecar, resulting in adding one (1) Car Body WP to his totals.***