

Future Chariot Racer

M.D. Smith, IV 575 words

Chapter I

Sam Richards trained for months before traveling back three thousand years in time to 44 BC. He made the pick of new chariot drivers for the Blue team in the chariot races at Circus Maximus. He called himself Sabinus.

Sabinus lost his first big race against the brutal and unscrupulous Gallas of the Red team, a few weeks earlier. Between then and present, he met and fell in love with the beautiful Antonia, daughter of Senator Tiberius. The Senator discovered their love affair and threatened to feed Sabinus to the lions if he ever saw them together again. Sabinus and Antonia kept things very private after that. He longed to be with her all the time. Her lips electrified him.

Cesar's Birthday Race was for bonus standing and prizes. With seven laps ahead and falling of the bronze dolphins marking each one, the furious race was on. Sabinus was behind four other chariots of eight total, but after other crashes and skill on the turns, Sabinus, wearing Antonia's blue scarf, was almost even with Gallas when the final dolphin at the top of the Circus Maximum tipped, signaling the last lap.

As with most drivers, Sabinus was strapped with his leather harness to his four horses, lest he drop a rein. On the last turn, Gallas deliberately and illegally cut his horses into Sabinus's team, and Sabinus's lead horse bolted and fell. The chariot lifted in the air, and a deadly crash was imminent, so he pressed the glowing green button on his wrist. In moments he was back in his own time of 2966 in the *Time, Incorporated* lab.

Chapter II

“Sam, what happened, you used the emergency ‘bail-button?’” His close associate and friend Marc held on to his unsteady friend, still in his chariot dress from the race.

“I was going to die. I had to bail. But I also had to leave the great true love of my life. I have to go back to a time after the race and explain it all to her. I want to stay there on my next trip.”

Marc looked worried. “You know if she becomes a great ruler or something that changes history, you’ll warp the future world, don’t you?”

“Yeah, but if she’s a nobody, then I could go back, we marry, no kids, and we won’t change a thing.”

“That’s true. Do you want me to run a history check on her? Our time-history department is quite detailed?”

Sam was ecstatic. “Absolutely.”

Chapter III

The next day the two met. “I got good and bad news,” Marc said to his friend.

“Let’s hear it.”

“She didn’t play an important role in history. That’s the good news. Seems the young Antonia was attending a chariot race on Cesar’s birthday. At the end of the last race, for some unknown reason, she leaped onto the course, and one of the slower chariots ran over and killed her.”

Sam immediately knew what had happened. He collapsed in a bawling heap on the floor.

When Sam had finally composed himself, he looked his friend square in the eye. "Marc, I'm selling everything I own to make one more jump back into time. It's got to be exact, five seconds before I left the last time. That'll give me time to pull my horses short. I'll lose the race, but not the love of my life." He added in Latin, "Vitae est denique. Carpe diem."

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