

These words will appear many times in this story. If you learn them before you start to read, it will be easier to read quickly.

axles long metal rods that connect a car's wheels to

each other

checkpoint a place where you must stop in a rally race

co-driver a person who helps the driver in a rally race

compass a tool that shows you where North, South, East

and West are

engine the motor in a car, boat, or airplane

exhaust to become very tired; to finish

ferry a slow boat that carries people and other things

gasoline (gas) oil-based fuel used in most cars and airplanes

grassland flat fields with tall, thin plants (not trees)

headlights the lights in front of a car

hood the flat part in front of a car that can be

opened to reach the engine

map a flat drawing of roads or other important

information to show you where places or

things are

mechanic a person who fixes cars and other machines

official a person in charge of organizing something

off-road not on a road (e.g., "An off-road vehicle can drive

over rough ground.")

rally a kind of long-distance race between regular cars

rebel someone who fights against a government

route a way or plan to go somewhere

sports car a very fast road car, usually with only two seats

tire the tough rubber full of air that covers the wheels

of cars

vehicle a machine that is used for carrying people and

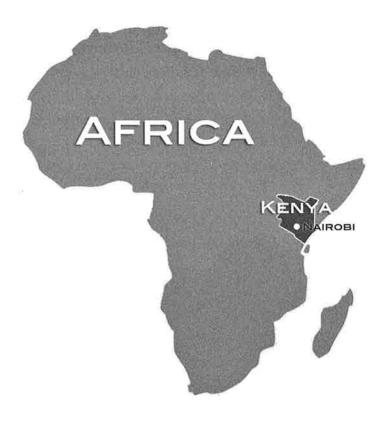
things (e.g., car, boat, airplane)

windshield the large piece of glass in front of a car, through

which the driver can see



inspection only



You are a race car driver.

Your father and uncle were race car drivers too. They raced for the famous Ferrari and Renault teams, many years ago in Europe. When you were tall enough to see over the wheel, they started to teach you all about cars and driving.

You grew up in the Arizona countryside. From the age of twelve, you drove off-road with your father in his old Jeep. At sixteen, after you got your driver's license, you also started driving his fast Honda S2000 over the flat desert roads.

Cars became part of your life. That's why today you are in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. You are going to race in the First African Road Rally.

This is your first international race.

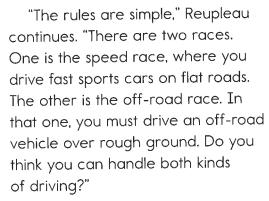
At the starting line, many people are standing beside fast-looking sports cars and tough-looking off-road vehicles. They talk excitedly. These are the drivers, the co-drivers the mechanics, and the car owners who are in the race. Like you they are here to win.



You find the race officials' table and sign in. Unlike most of the other drivers, you did not come with a team. The race officials will match you with a car and a co-driver.

"Welcome," a friendly looking official says to you. "I'm Michael Reupleau, the race manager. Here are your race

papers." He shakes your hand and gives you a thick envelope.



"Yes, I think so," you say, smiling.

"Okay then," Reupleau continues.
"In each race, you will choose your own course. You must drive from checkpoint to checkpoint until you finish. You will be timed. Remember, you will not be racing head to head with the other cars. In fact, you may not even see the other cars at all, since each team starts thirty minutes apart. Got it?"

"Yes."

"Good. And one more thing," Reupleau says, looking at you sharply. "You can't use GPS, computers, and other high tech items in this race. There are paper maps and other items in your car. There is also a satellite phone, but that is only for emergencies. If you use the phone for other reasons, you will lose points in the race. Do you understand these rules?"

"Yes," you say one more time.

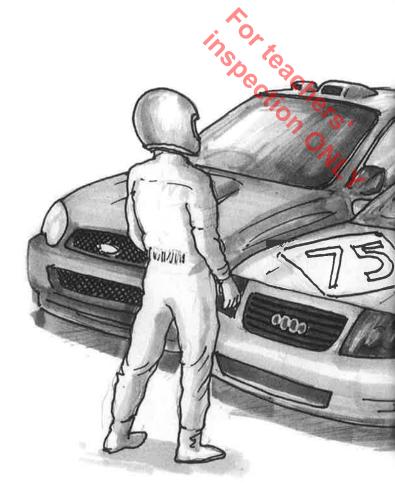
"Okay, then sign here," Reupleau says, smiling again. "You will meet your co-driver in a moment. Now, you must choose which race you want to do first. Will you start with the speed race or the off-road race?"

You are about to make your first choice! Make your choice before you turn the page.



If you choose the speed race first, turn to page 6. If you choose the off-road race first, turn to page 48.





The speed race is tough. It is not like racing inside a closed track. You will start in Nairobi and travel through Kenya. You will drive along dirt roads through animal parks, the flat highlands, and some hilly areas. Then, you will circle around to the finish line, which is back in Nairobi. You will be out on the road at least one night, maybe two.



inspection on only

You eye some of the other teams. The Germans are dressed in dark blue racing suits. Although they are smiling, they look very serious. They will be racing the fast-looking BMW M3. The team from South Africa is wearing light brown. They have made an unusual choice for a rally—the powerful Chevy Camaro.

Your choice is between two race-prepared sports cars: the Subaru WRX or the Audi TT. Which one do you choose?



If you choose the Subaru WRX, turn to page 12.