## The Friend Of the Stranger

A Memorial Day Story By HOWARD FIELDING

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HERE'S a young lady over there whom I know," said Graydon in a tone which inprise. "I believe I'll run across and one by the other and have reached the speak to her." He was upon the point of rising when his companion laid a restraining hand upon his arm and asked, "Where?"

"In the little whiz cart just by the end of the reviewing stand-white hat with a black plume. See her?"

"Yes," was the reply; "I see her. you."

Graydon turned, with a puzzled look.

"Why not?" he asked.

"You'd better get some of the names of the dignitaries on the reviewing stand before the speechmaking begins. You won't have more than five or ten minutes."

"I guess you're right," said he. "I'd Mr. Blake," he added, poising his pen- well. ell, "if you'll give me a few of those olessing of the stranger,"

mewspaper work?" asked Blake.

offered me a regular job after graduation. I've done a few theaters, concerts, Bectures and that sort of thing, and it touched Graydon's arm and directed him"seemed to me that a Memorial day cel- his attention to the motor car, whose ebration wouldn't offer any great difficoccupants the young man had been were in a carriage with him at the unenkles, especially as I write shorthand mercifully permitted to forget for a and can get all I want of the speeches few minutes. Graydon was just in card to us while General Harwell was without bother. But in regard to inci- time to see Kirby reach across and speaking. He wrote on it, 'If you will dents and people I'd have been all at take from her hand something that promise not to make any use of the insea if you ha in't picked me up at the looked like a visiting card. He glanced formation before tomorrow I will tell slepot. You see, I was never here before and don't know a soul"-

"It's queer that your city editor should have sent a stranger," remarked | had received a blow from a club. Blake, "Couldn't he get hold of some one who know this town?"

"Everybody else was busy," replied crazy?" Graydon, "and the city editor had a row with our regular correspondent swer. "It's a tragedy." here and fired him yesterday."

At this moment the girl in the automebile looked in their direction and made the smallest possible gesture of recognition.

"Upon my word!" grumbled Graydon, reaching into the bottom of the had dropped in his hurry to raise his me so?" hat, "She didn't recognize me. She

bowed to you." quaintance," said Blake, with a graveven mysterious.

He was about to address a question Kirby's jealousy." to his companion, but Blake seemed to perceive his intention and to avoid the the dignituries upon the reviewing over there by and by." stand. Graydon jotted down the names mechanically, but his mind was busy with another matter. Why did Blake use this peculiar tone in speaking of Miss Lorritner? There was a vague was hedged about by some peculiar misfortune.

"I met Miss Lorrimer at class day to his purpose. two years ago," said Graydon in the airst pause, "and I've seen her half a



"I WOULDN'T GO OVER THERE."

dozen times since then at the houses of friends in Boston, but the last time was nearly a year ago. I've led the life of a gailey slave of late, with my confounded work on the paper and a sand harrowing melodrama that I've

been trying to write. I navent been the station on the way to me teregraph anywhere nor seen anybody. Do you know the gentleman who is with her?"

having spoken the words, he shut his lips together in a straight, hard line. Graydon's notebook slid off his knee, but he did not stoop for it. He stared at the mass of people on the stand, and

excited clamor. "Who is he?" he asked. And he was amazed at the change in his voice. "John C. Kirby," responded Blake,

with the manner of a sullen and angry

witness in court. The sentiments of Blake in regard to this matter constituted a puzzle which might have interested Graydon powerfully except for the greater interest in dicated a very agreeable sur- his own. He might have interpreted natural conclusion that Blake had been in love with Miss Lorrimer, perhaps without realizing it until too late. This was not quite his own situation, for there had been moments when the promptings of his own heart had been unmistakable.

That Blake could ever have hoped to win Mis; Lorrimer's love seemed hard-But I wouldn't go over there if I were ly probable, for he lacked the qualifications, so far as Graydon could judge,

by so brief an acquaintance. "I think I will go over and speak with Mrs. Kirby for a moment after

the exercises," said Graydon. "Is Kirby afflicted with jealousy?"

asked Graydon, half in jest. "Yes," was the grave response. "It's a mighty sad story."

At this moment there was a call to better stick to my job. What the deuce enler, and the assemblage slowly grew I should have done without your help I quiet. With the aid of Blake's local really don't know. I've no more no knowledge Graydon was able to follow tion about reporting an affair of this the preliminaries leading up to the orakind than your horse has. And now, tion of the day by General Philip Har-

There had been a rumor that the mames you will carn once more the general would deal with up to date polities in a somewhat lively manner, and "How long have you been doing Graydon was fearful that important points would escape him because of his "Nearly two years. But I've never dense ignorance of political matters. done any general reporting. I began to But those who had started this rumor write book notices for the paper during had maligned Harwell. He stuck to story himself. He was fired from the my last year in college, and the editor the theme and lessons of the day and made a really admirable address.

at it and then glared like a dragon. you who wrote that bank story.' Uncle Raising his head, his eyes met Gray- looked at him and gave his promise don's and the young man felt as if he

"What's the matter with that old villain?" he whispered to Blake. "Is he

"Something of the sort," was the an-

"But why-why in the world did she

marry him?" Blake shook his head.

"She is an orphan, as you know," sald he; "she had no one to advise her." "Advise her!" echoed Graydon. "That man's face is advice enough, I should wagon to pick up his pencil, which he think. Why the deuce does he glare at

"It's queer, and that's a fact," said Plake. "Can it be possible that one of "I have the pleasure of a slight ac- her friends has recognized you and has sent that card to tell ber that you are ity which struck Graydon as odd and here? Some silly girl may have done it, and that would be enough to excite

Graydon was beginning to be angry. "There's no reason why I should be subject hastened to give the names of afraid of him," said he. "I'm going

"To please yourself," said Plake gravely, "and to raise a trivial unpleasantness for her."

The obvious justice of this criticism affected Graydon for the moment and suggestion in it that the young lady he devoted his attention to the proceedings. But there was a streak of obstinacy in his disposition and he held

drive you down to the depot, and you can put your stuff on the wire for Boston in time for the late afternoon editions of your paper."

"I'll be with you in three minutes," responded Graydon as he sprang from

He made his way toward the automobile, and as he approached he was greeted with a frightful frown from Kirby, while the lady gave him a hasty nod and turned her face away. It was her manner which decided Graydon's course. He sadly acknowledged her salute and pressed on, making a circuit through the departing throng and returning to the point where his service- that." able chance acquaintance awaited him.

During the ride to the depot he devoted himself wholly to business, setting his notes in order so that he could transcribe them more rapidly and add- the singing"ing various details suggested by his companion.

"You can sit in the wagon and write with the operator. Then come back. along."

now," said Graydon. "Then I'll come copy-"these are the women!" back and do the speeches."

As he entered the waiting room of "In another minute," he said hourse-

office he gianced through a window opposite and saw Mr. and Mrs. Kirby. "Her husband," said Blake. And, Their heads were framed as in a picture. In a moment they vanished, one

to the right and the other to the left. Graydon ran across the room and went out upon the platform under the grimy, vaulted roof of the shed. Mrs. their murmur seemed to rise into an Kirby, alone, was walking slowly toward some seats where the usual human miscellany was waiting for trains. Graydon overtook her just as she was about to sit down.

"I beg your pardon," said he. "I"-She turned, startled, and glanced at him and then beyond him in a manner most significant. Obviously she expected Mr. Kirby to appear at any mo-

"Mrs. Kirby," said he, "I couldn't go away without speaking one word"-She stared at him blankly.

"Mrs. Kirby?" she repeated. "Who is Mrs. Kirby?"

"Why - why - you, of course," he stammered. "I den't understand," said she. "But

you mustn't stop to explain. My uncle is coming, and he will be very angry."

"Who-who is your uncle?" "The gentleman who was with me." "Is Mr. Kirby your uncle?"

"I don't know any Mr. Kirby. My uncle's name is Lorrimer-James Lorrimer. I have mentioned him to you."

"But what have I done to him?" "Don't do it," said Blake laconically, gasped Graydon. "Why is he angry heart he is the kindest of men." with me? "My goodness!" she replied, with

spirit. "Why shouldn't he? You practically accused him of robbing the \*17"

"The story that you wrote in your paper about the Farmers' bank of this city simply made him furious."

"But I didn't write it," he protested. "I never even read it. I saw the headlines, but I didn't know there was anything in it about him."

"Mr. Stearns says you wrote it." "Mr. Stearns? I don't know him."

"He is your paper's correspondent here, and he says"-

"The rascal! He probably wrote the paper yesterday. That's why I'm here today. I'll look Mr. Stearns up before Just at the close of the address Blake | I go back to Boston and gently reprove

"But you were with him today. You veiling of the monument, and he sent a



SHE STARED AT HIM BLANKLY.

with a nod. Then Mr. Stearns pointed "You'd better stick to me," said Blake to you. And uncle was crazy, because when the speaking was done. "I'll if he hadn't promised he would have gone over and talked to you."

Graydon pressed his hand to his forebead.

"Let's think," said he. "Let's see what this means. That fellow met me here this morning. He introduced himself under the name of Blake and said he was on the press committee and would take care of me. I was very about this business and hadn't an acquaintance in the city. He has stuck to me ever since and has given me points"-

"What kind of points?" "The names of people and-and all

"Let me see some of them."

Graydon gave her a sheet of copy. "You may know some of these," he said. "They're the ladies in charge of

Miss Lorrimer glanced at the paper and burst into uncontrollable laughter. "I happen to know them," she said your stuff out," said Blake. "When as soon as she could speak, "because you get a batch ready go in and file it their names have been in the local paper here a great many times in the Perhaps I can help you out as you go last few days. There has been a very amusing strike of the scrubwomen in "I can file my introduction and the Carvell & Co.'s dry goods store, and names of the committees and notables these"-she pointed to the sheet of

Graydon was pale with rage.

ly, "I should have telegraphed this awful nonsense to my paper. It would have cost me my job, and Mr. Stearns. alias Blake, would have been very neatly revenged upon our city editor who fired him. If I hadn't met you"-

"That was what Mr. Stearns was anxious to prevent," said she. "Of course I should have told you who he was, and that would have spoiled the plot."

"He was clever, very clever," said Graydon between his teeth. Then he suddenly extended his right hand, poluting.

Miss Lorrimer caught a glimpse of the face of Stearns, alias Blake, at the corner of the depot, and the next moment she was alone and anxiously awaiting the noise of combat.

Five minutes later Graydon returned, wrathful and disappointed.

"I missed him," he said. "He dodged me somehow." He glanced at the sheets of copy and the notebook which she had gathered up during his absence. "What in the world shall I do about this yarn?"

"It is sublimely ridiculous," said she, "so far as I can judge. There isn't a name that's right, and some of your 'facts' are uniquely twisted. But I know most of the people, and we can fix it up together. Uncle will be here in a few minutes, and he'll help us." "Uncle!"

"Oh, I'll engage to manage him," said she. "He has a hasty temper, but at

"I don't much care what he is," said Graydon, with deep feeling, "so long as he's your uncle-only your uncle."

In Time.

"What did you do at the kindergarten this morning?" asked Ethel's mother the other day.

"We sewed a clock," answered Ethel. Then, as if a new thought had struck her, Ethel asked, "Mother, is that what people mean when they speak of taking 'a stitch in time?"

Why He Couldn't.

Doctor (to Gilbert, aged four)-Put your tongue out, please.

Little Gilbert protruded the tip of his tongue.

Doctor-No, no; put it right out. "I can't, doctor. It's fastened on to

It Fell Down.

Ellen, aged six, had some chewing gum, but while chewing it accidentally swallowed it. When asked how it happened she replied: "I couldn't help it. It fell down."

The Bruius' Call.

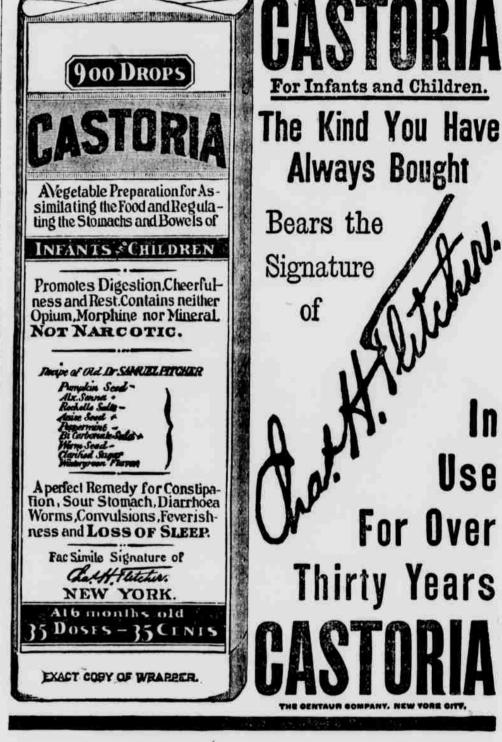
Mr. and Mrs. Bruin went To make a party call; Mr. B. was rather big. But Mrs. B. was small.

They might indeed have hired a cab. But they preferred to walk, And so they did and passed the time In edifying talk.

Said Mrs. B., "That coat, my dear, Is just the thing for you. "Thank you, my love," said Mr. B.

"Your furs are fetching too." Twas 6 o'clock, and very late,

But the friends they went to see Were all at home and so polite The Bruins stayed to tea. -New York Herald.



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