

The Harp.

I heard a murmurous sound of throbbing strings
That quivered in the sunlight by the stream—
Sad notes that fluttered like a young heart breaking.
The dim blue hollows of the woodland waking
With sorrows from the shadow world of dream.
And tales of shadow haunted queens and kings.
Over your harp you bent; but when I came
You lifted your dark eyes, and your song died—
Although your fingers in the strings yet straying
Thrilled the hushed woodlands with enchanted playing—
As you arose to wander by my side,
Breathing the sweet words that set my heart aflame.
From cups of crystal and of amethyst
And golden bowls of summer, samphire lipped.
We drank deep draughts of life, O Love,
Together,
We wandered through dim nights among the heather,
In late September when the young moon dipped
Her amber horn in dewy silver mist.
And now, when winter comes, and wood and fell
In one white whirl are hidden from our eyes,
Dreaming together by the sparkling embers,
You touch, once more, the harp that still remembers—
Though in our hearts no shade of sorrow lies—
The dark eyed sorrows that in dreamland dwell,
I hear once more the tale of queens and kings
Caught in the nets of love; and how they died;
Yet—though for all the sorrow of the telling
Tears of compassion in my eyes are welling—
Because we two have wandered side by side,
My heart may grieve not with the grieving strings.
—London Daily News.

GRAYSON

By H. VERNARD HILLISON
(Copyright, 1905, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)

Cotton was to blame for it all. There is no doubt about that in the mind of anybody who knows all the details. If the miserable little whiff that occupies the city editor's chair on the Palladium had not been so jealous-minded and vindictive he never would have sent Grayson with all his ignorance and ambition and ingenuousness into that den of thieves—and the scandal never would have occurred and the party in all probability would not have been defeated at the polls.

Of course Cotton lost his job and so did Bertram, the managing editor, and so did several others, but that did not prevent the defeat of the party and the loss of hundreds of thousands to old Pelham, the owner of the paper.

Grayson was just out of college, where he had stood equally high in studies and athletics. He was a thor-



"No," said the childlike Grayson.

ough believer in the value of college education for men in every day pursuits and was thoroughly determined to avoid the rock upon which that idea has so often split—assumption of superiority. So he grabbed hold of the hot end of everything like an office boy, saying cheerfully: "You fellows have four years start of me in

this sort of thing, so I'm only a freskie, but I reckon what I got in college may help some sometime."

Cotton hated Grayson because he had been forced upon him by Bertram. It was only office politics, of course, and Cotton wanted to be the whole thing in the city room. But he grumbled about "loading his staff down with dead ones," and then holding him responsible for results. But Bertram was a college man himself and liked Grayson's looks and exercised his authority.

What Grayson went through for the first few weeks was something fierce. Had it not been for his grim determination he would have slapped Cotton's face and quit a dozen times. Bertram began to notice that Grayson wasn't getting any decent assignments and called Cotton down several times.

Then Cotton got mad and made his great mistake. One afternoon he summoned a half dozen of the best reporters he had, and with them Grayson.

"Do you know these stories the Clarion has been printing about the rotten work on the new city hall?" he said.

All nodded acquiescence.

"There may be something in it," he continued. "Now I want some one of you fellows to get out and find out—get absolute proof, then go to Mackey & Rosenheim, the contractors who are doing the most of their work, and try to get them to show up a certain memorandum they have from the mayor, authorizing some of the substitutions of material they are making and the difference in the character of the work. I have reason to believe there is such a memorandum in writing. Of course the mayor has got a string on a part of the swag, and on Mackey's influence with the heelers for next spring. Now this is a delicate assignment—and may be dangerous, because the man doing it must act independently of the paper. Of course, the mayor could shut old Pelham off in a minute. But if you go to the contractors and show that you have the proofs and say you have obtained them personally, and not by direction, of the Palladium, and propose to give the facts to the Reform Alliance unless they can show some authority for their breach of contract, they may give up the secret memorandum in order to save themselves financially and let the mayor stand the brunt. But they are desperate men, and I will send no man on the assignment unless he volunteers."

All six of us older reporters looked aghast at the idea. Every face reflected the puzzled state of the mind above it. It was a fool idea from every standpoint. Even if the story could be procured, the paper dare not print it. And the contractors were known to be keen, daring, resolute and unscrupulous men. It would be worth one's life to attempt to force their hands in such a manner.

Grayson, however, leaped to the bait and eagerly volunteered. There was an expression of diabolical satisfaction on Cotton's face as Grayson rushed out on his first important assignment. Several of the older fellows who liked him, warned him, but to no avail.

I had become particularly fond of the boy and he told me from day to day of his progress. He certainly did work for it in a scientific and thorough manner, going so far as to get a job as a common laborer in order to see certain points of the structure and the method of construction. Within a week he had the most certain and comprehensive claim of positive evidence I ever saw of a rotten public swindle. Nothing was taken for granted. All was in black and white and wholly provable in court.

In his youthful exuberance he took it to Cotton, who could not withhold a glance of admiration, but followed it with a chuckle of malice as Grayson went out.

And then that blessed infant walked right into the Hon's den. It did not take him long to get into the inner office of Mackey & Rosenheim, after a strong hint of his mission was sent in. They thought it was blackmail at first, but when he mentioned

the mayor's memorandum, old Rosenheim turned chalky white and Mackey beet red. And then when he opened up his proofs and showed them what he knew and could actually prove Rosenheim flushed red and Mackey went white with anger.

"Have you sold all this pretty story to anybody?" inquired Rosenheim, mildly. Both leaned forward eagerly.

"No," replied Grayson, "I did not gather it primarily to convict you fellows. If you will show your authority from the mayor, which I know you have, you will go scot free. The



His famous football tackle.

mayor is the fellow I'm after."

The contractors breathed easier and Mackey excused himself for a moment and went out.

"Of course you have duplicates of these notes?" suggested Rosenheim.

"No," replied the childlike Grayson.

At this moment Mackey returned. With him were three of the toughest looking customers Grayson had ever laid eyes on. The expression on Mackey's face was something fearful to behold. Grayson glanced quickly at Rosenheim. The thin face was alive with venom and the piercing little eyes held murder in their glance. Grayson was not a dull person and he saw the trap at once. For an infinitesimal second he cursed himself for a blind idiot, and Cotton for a murderer. Then all his splendid faculties, mental and physical, rose to their keenest pitch. He rose abruptly and turned naturally back to the wall.

"Who are these gentlemen?" he asked sternly. "This interview was to be private."

"Mr. Grayson," said Rosenheim, rising with livid face, "as friends of yours we deem it necessary that you take a long trip for your health. Your nervous system is evidently shattered. These gentlemen are about to depart for a trip to Frisco, around the Cape. They leave this afternoon on a sailing vessel and have consented to take you with them. You will land in Frisco next July, about three months after the city election. If you have then recovered your health and forgotten these delusions you have been talking to us, you will be set ashore. If not,—" and Rosenheim indulged in a ghastly gesture.

"And if I refuse?" asked Grayson.

"I cannot answer for the result," replied Rosenheim.

"Better fix it right now," growled Mackey.

"No," replied Rosenheim, "I think the young man is reasonable. In the meantime I will keep your papers and go over them carefully."

Grayson thought fast, then said: "Oh, well, I'm up against it. I will go. I'm not ready to cash in yet, and you hold the cards."

"It will be necessary to administer a soothing potion," remarked Rosenheim, "to guard against a possible attack of hysteria on the street. Just sit down. It will not hurt you, I promise."

Grayson sank into a chair, facing the three ruffians who gathered in front of him while Rosenheim reached for a drawer in his desk.

Suddenly, without warning, Grayson dropped out of the chair on one knee, and grabbed the nearest thug with his famous football tackle, throwing him with terrific force against one of the others. Both went down in a heap and before they struck the floor, Grayson had given the third thug a kick in the stomach that sent him gasping and screaming into the far corner. Quick as lightning he landed a blow from his fist square on Mackey's neck, putting that worthy to the floor. Then turning on Rosenheim, who had had barely time to rise from his chair, he grabbed him by the throat and literally dragged him to where Mackey lay. Rosenheim was a small man and Mackey a large, heavy set one. Grayson placed one foot squarely on Mackey's throat before he had recovered himself sufficiently to rise, and flung Rosenheim between himself and the sluggers. Mackey made a struggle or two, but a hard crunch from Grayson's foot upon his throat was sufficient to silence him. Of the sluggers, the one kicked was permanently out of business. A glance at the writhing form showed that. Of the other two, however, one was already on his feet and had drawn an ugly knife, while the other was pulling himself together. Grayson pressed his thumbs into Rosenheim's skinny throat until the eyes rolled and the tongue protruded.

"Call off your dogs," he said, sternly, "or I'll choke you to death, so help me heaven!"

He let up on his grip and Rosenheim shrieked: "Stop! Plevitz. Stop! Mulligan."

The man on his feet sprang forward, knife in hand, and Grayson's fingers again closed on Rosenheim's throat, while his foot crunched down on Mackey's, who emitted a heart-rending groan.

"Advance one step more and I'll kill them both!" he said, sharply.

The fellow recoiled at sight of the ghastly face and protruding tongue of his employer.

Again Grayson let up and Rosenheim gasped, "Plevitz, if you move a step I'll have you hanged."

The rest was easy. Grayson dictated the terms of peace. He demanded the mayor's memorandum, which was produced after Rosenheim had enjoyed one more choking. Then Plevitz dragged the still squirming third ruffian into the ample vault and was followed in by Mulligan, after which Grayson reached down, grasped Mackey by the collar, lifted him to his feet and shot him like a cannon ball after them. Then he threw the shivering Rosenheim in, slammed the door and turned the lock.

Then he carefully brushed his clothes and walked out through the main office as unconcerned as an ordinary bill collector.

If there ever was a surprised man it was Cotton when Grayson brought in the mayor's memorandum. Nor would Grayson let go of it until its publication, together with the balance of his story was ordered by Pelham.

Then he went and telephoned Mackey & Rosenheim's office that somebody would better open the vault. And the funny thing about it is that while Cotton and Bertram were fired, the old man kept Grayson.

Constable Aged but Efficient.

Constable W. D. Currence of Valley Head, near Elkins, W. Va., was 82 years and 8 months old last week, when he went to Elkins to take the oath of office as constable of Mingo district for the fourth term, having already served twelve years. "Uncle Billy," as he is familiarly known, still gets over the mountains of his district as spry as ever and brings the offenders of law to justice in short order.

Still Bitter.

"She says she was dying to speak to you yesterday when we saw you," remarked the peacemaker.

"Well," replied the belligerent girl, "why doesn't she then?"

"You mean you'd be glad to have her speak to you?"

"No; die."