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Surprise!

It Resulted In Another One

By CLARISSA MACKIE ******************

A succession of darkly wrapped forms scudded up the snowy path to Mrs. Peter Weldrake's side door and disappeared within a brief glimpse of ruddy lighted room. Each time the door opened to admit another arrival there were much laughter and noisy conversation before the door became a dark blank again.

"Everybody here?" demanded Mrs. Weldrake, emerging from her kitchen, large, beetle browed and commanding of aspect. She was dressed in a stiff. black taffeta silk skirt of generous width and a white lawn waist. She wore a large white apron, and as she came into the sitting room there hov-ered about her a defined odor of freshly made coffee and recently fried doughnuts.

"Everybody here?" she repeated, reviewing the chattering groups of women and the awkward men hovering about the door.

"All except Althea Laden and her mother," spoke up a young girl, "They oughter been here by this time. I saw them drive away from their house long before we left." There was an embarrassed silence

before Mrs. Weldrake answered: "Well, we needn't wait for Althea Laden and her mother. They ain't coming." She vanished into the kitchen. "Not coming?" asked the girl who

had spoken before. "They wasn't asked," whispered a woman guardedly.
"Not asked?" echoed the girl.

"'Tisn't likely, is it?" giggled a wo man with a nod of her head toward the kitchen door, and the girl, glancing at Mrs. Weldrake's daughter, Stella, nodded understandingly.
"Althea Laden wasn't asked, to the

minister's surprise." The words ran around in low murmured disapproval, for Althea and her mother were village favorites, and the invariable "Why? and its answer followed. All of the women already knew that the Ladens had not been invited, but under the stern injunction of Mrs. Weldrake none had dared to break the seal of secrecy imposed upon the especially in vited, for this surprise on the bachelor minister of Thornville had found its in-ception in the brain of matchmaking Mrs. Weldrake, and Althea Laden was not to be invited. Fat, good natured Stella Weldrake and pretty Althea La den had always been warm friends, and according to Stella's discriminating parent that stout, amiable damsel was quite outrivaled by Althea's more delicate charms; hence this surprise party, from which the Ladens were omitted and where Stella was expected to shine undimmed and perchance capture the minister's unsuspecting heart.
"It's 9 o'clock," announced Mrs. Web

drake, bustling into the sitting room arrayed in warm shawls and with a knitted "fascinator" over her iron gray hair. "I guess we better be going. see a lamp lighted in Mr. Whitney's study." She lifted a window curtain and peered across the snowy fields toward the parsonage. "He don't sus-

pect a thing." "And, so far as I know, nobody else outside this room knows about the surprise," added Mrs. Dora Hatch trium-phantly as the party trooped forth. each one bearing burdens of toothsom viands. Big Peter Weldrake brought up the rear with a steaming can of cof-

The surprise party creaked across the snow with much smothered laughter mingled with deference as they ap proached the parsonage from the path across the fields.

A green shaded lamp beamed from the study window, but there was no sign of the minister's dark, well shaped head outlined against the bookcases.
"He's stepped out a minute," breath

ed Mrs. Weldrake hoarsely. "Most likely's he's locking the door after Jennie Plumb. That's why I waited till 9 o'clock, after she'd got the dishes done.

She's mortal slow.' "There she goes now!" The group stood huddled by the back porch watching the bulky form of the black woman who came in by the day to "do" the minister's housework When Jennie Plumb had tramped out of sight the surprise party tiptoed care fully around the path to the front door, Mrs. Weldrake leading and her hus-

band bringing up the rear.

A dim light burned in the hall, but save for a green glimmer from the study beyond the parlors were quite dark. Mrs. Weldrake rang the bell once, twice, three times, without re-

"I guess M

Whitney ain't to home, whispered a doubtful voice. "That's all the better," snapped back

Mrs. Weldrake, trying the doorknob. "This door's unlocked, and we can go right in and give him the surprise of his life." The women heaped their wraps in

the hall in the manner of those who were accustomed to the business of surprising unsuspecting persons in their homes and bore their bundles of refreshments kitchenward, their mouths rounded to shout "Surprise!" at the bapless minister if he should prove to be in the house after all and should come upon them unexpectedly. The men, feeling some compunction at this invasion, hung awkwardly

about the front door as if ready to make a sudden exit in case disaster should overtake their more intrepid women folks. They might understand one of the laity, but this encroachment upon the minister's privacy was more novel than enjoyable.

Dora Hatch had flitted from room to

room and returned to announce that there wasn't a soul in the house, but that Jennie Plumb was outshining herself as a housekeeper, for the whole house was in apple pie order. "Even flowers in every room—carnations at 50 cents a dozen from the city," she ended.

"You don't suppose he suspected, do you?" asked Stella, who looked like a big pink and white baby in a white muslin gown with blue ribbons.
"I don't know who could have told

him," said Mrs. Weldrake decisively from her executive position before the kitchen range. "I don't believe anybody would be mean enough to tell The fifteen women vociferated their

innocence from tale telling, and those who were married exonerated their husbands, and those who were yet unchosen defended their sweethearts. Stella Weldrake looked troubled for a brief instant and then shook off whatever oppressed her mind and smiled across the room at Timothy Weed, who had peered bashfully in at the door. Timothy blushed and drew back, but

he had answered Stella's smile with a very betraying one, if any one had seen it. Mrs. Weldrake blew out the light in

the kitchen, and ushered the surprisers

into the back parlor. "Now, all sit around as quiet as mice, and when he comes into the front hall the boys will light the lamps and all the rest of us can holler 'Surprise!' and I guess he will be surprised. It was pretty good luck having him step off down street just at this time.". Mrs. Weldrake was feeling satisfied with herself and the result of her planning. She had maneuvered the men out of the front hall, out of their overcoats, relieved them of their hats and marshaled them into the back parlor. Several of them were stationed with matches held ready to strike at the critical moment so that the full nature of the surprise might be revealed to the astonished and delighted minister on his return.

All at once there came the sound of

thoroughly surprised minister. If Mr. Whitney was surprised the

owners of the thirty voices were equally astonished, for their cries died on their lips, and they stood staring foolishly at the minister and his compan-ion, Althea Laden, who had not been invited to the party! Althea stood in the doorway looking very lovely in a long pale gray cloak, beneath which showed a white dress. There were white flowers in her golden hair and on her breast. She looked like a bride, and it suddenly dawned upon the sur-prisers' party that Althea Laden was a Nobody looked at Mrs. Peter Weldrake.

Mr. Whitney recovered his self posession and stepped forward. There was a look of serene happiness on his fine face, and his dark eyes glowed warmly as he thanked them.

"My friends, it seems that my marriage to Miss Laden has become known to you, and out of the warmness of your hearts you have come to bid her welcome as my wife. I shall ever remember this occasion with the great-

"Married?" interrupted Mrs. Weldrake, arising with a magisterial air from the chair into which she had fallen at the first shock of the surprise that had come to her share.

Mr. Whitney smiled and reddened and went on with his little speech of thanks, unconsciously stripping the surprise party of its motive and viewing it in the light of a carefully pre-pared welcome for himself and his bride. He explained that a public mar-riage would have been in order at a later date had not Mrs. Laden been summened that very morning to the bedside of a dying relative in the west and he had urged an immediate marriage with Althea, who was to be left

To have the children sound and healthy is the first care of a mother. They cannot be healthy if troubled with worms, use Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator. The state of the s

behind. They had all driven over to Meadville and been married by a min-ister there and had then seen Mrs. La-

den off on her western journey.
"The bride cake must come later," he ended with a smile.

Of course they all came forward and kissed Althea and congratulated the minister. They were heartily glad of the marriage, for Althea was vorite, and it was something of a distinction to be one of a surprise party that had turned into a wedding party.

Mrs. Weldrake held herself well in hand, brushed Althea's cheek with her lips, majestically accepted their thanks as the organizer of the party and led refreshments.

As they made their way homeward that evening Mrs. Weldrake felt a strange sense of defeat. The minister's brief interest in Stella had been her only hope that that babyish girl would ever be married. Her husband and enter into a surprise party upon trudged beside her, swinging the empty one of the laity, but this encroachment coffee can. Stella was walking in the rear with Timothy Weed.

At the front door the Weldrakes turned and looked back.

Young Timothy Weed had his arm around Stella's capacious waist. "I guess you'll have a wedding on your hands after all before spring, ma," chuckled her husband as they went inside.

And Mrs. Weldrake blushed that he had understood her scheming, but she felt strangely comforted.

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STUDIES OCEAN STRATA. Nansen Says Only Real Gulf Stream

Is That Passing Florida.

Dr. Nansen gave a summary of his investigations on the subject of the gulf stream before the Academy of Science in Christiania recently. After having acknowledged his indebtedness to the observations which had been made by Norwegian, Danish and German expeditions, Dr. Nansen said that he had arrived at the conclu-sion that the gulf stream had very little or nothing to do with the real gulf stream passing through the Straits of Florida. Dr. Nansen-maintained that by a

closer study of the position and in-clination of the layers (strata) in transverse sections of the ocean it was possible to obtain reliable infor-mation about the direction followed by the water masses at different depths and in the different regions of the ocean. The inclination of the strata in the eastern part of the north between the surface layers and a depth of 800 fathoms, flowing north-ward from the region between Madeira and the Azores and along the west

All at once there came the sound or sleighbells that stopped before the door.

The front door opened and closed lingeringly. Then the three lamps were simultaneously lighted, and thirty voices screamed "Surprise" at the thoroughly surprised minister.

and the Azores and along the west coast, of southern Europe.

Some part of the water masses flowing in southerly and southeasterly directions joined the northward-flowing current west of Madeira, while the northward-flowing water masses thoroughly surprised minister. northwest of the Azores found, to some extent, their way eastward as a surface current across the ridge in about 50 degrees latitude, and the waters of this surface-current joined along the southern southwest coast of Europe. Thus arose the warm Atlantic current west of the British Islands, which passed between the Shetlands and the Faroe Islands into the North Sea. the North Sea.

How Girl Students Vary.

How Girl Students Vary.

An English woman with experience of girl students in many European countries, summed them up thus recently. French women she found much more literary than English. One could hear French girl students discussing among themselves English authors about whom English girls know nothing. English girls, she thought, have ability, "but they appear to be far less developed from a literary point of view than the French. They are not so fond of argument and They are not so fond of argument and discussion either. The Scottish girls are more like the French as regards intellectual curiosity, and the desire to probe to the bottom of things. Scandinavian students are very good—steady and persevering.

Scandinavian students are very good
—steady and persevering.

"Russians and Poles, on the other
hand, are somewhat badly balanced,
and are inclined to go to extreme. At
first, as a rule, when they begin they
are full of enthusiasm and ambition,
eager to learn everythis at once, but
at the end of a month you will find
them in a state of despair, and talking about throwing the whole thing
up. The Russian character is extraordinarily difficult to understand.

"German students are very docile
and amiable."



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