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EXPRESS

A Comedy of Love

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Trentham people always called the 6:36 train "the Cupid express," because it invariably carried one or more bridal couples.

It was the close of a March day, exactly 6:36 p. m., and the Cupid express had just snorted away cityward with two of Trentham's fair brides and incidentally the newly made husbands.

The Faber twins had just been mar It was a double wedding, and all the town had turned out to send them off with a suitable merrymaking.
"Where is Edith?" inquired Mrs. Wil-

liam Blake, craning her neck around the carriage. "Where is Edith?" she repeated sternly as her niece took her place in the surrey. Cora Morris' voice was guilty.

"Edith is walking home," she said. 'Walking?" she interrogated. Cora nodded, but her face beneath the

white hood of her cloak was serious. "Not alone?" declared Mrs. Blake in the decisive tone of one who knew.

"With Harley Lane," confessed Cora. "Ah!" Mrs. Blake's tone was freez She sank back in her seat and was silent. Bitter thoughts crowded

It was like an unkind fate to decree that her only child, Edith, should fall in love with Judge Lane's son.

She had always tried to keep them apart and was openly rude to young Lane. And Harley was disconcertingly polite to her.

"Mrs. Blake would be the jolliest woman in the world if she would only forget her grouch against the world," said her would be son-in-law to his father one day.

But the judge had frowned and looked very uncomfortable.

"I wonder why your mother is so set against me," remarked Harley as he tucked Edith's hand under his arm and marched down the street.

Edith's eyelashes flickered as the surrey passed them at a corner where a street lamp shone brightly. "I don't believe she really hates you,

Harley," she said, "but some one has whispered a bit of ancient history to Years ago mother was engaged to marry your father. They quarreled. and neither forgave the other. Both married. There you are, sir!"
"The deuce!" whistled Harley; then

he added hastily: "They've both been widowed for fifteen years. Why didn't each oth

"I don't know," sighed Edith. "They

couldn't really have cared." "Dear, do you know I was wishing that you and I had courage to throw conventions to the four winds and elope on the Cupid express some day!"

"They would never forgive us, dear," murmured Edith, "and we couldn't really be happy if they didn't."
"I know it. There's only one thing

to do, then-to convert them to our way of thinking." "How can we do that?"

"I didn't have an idea until you told me that once they had been sweethearts. Listen to this scheme."

Mrs. Blake saw them lingering at the front gate. Her handsome face grew sterner, and her lips straightened into

Her hands smote sharply together in a passion of wounded pride. "His son-of all men!" she moaned

softly. One April afternoon Mrs. Blake returned from her euchre club to find

the house strangely silent.
"Miss Edith?" repeated Jane, the maid. "Why, Miss Edith left the house an hour ago. She carried a suit

case and"-"A suit case?" interrupted Mrs. Blake. "Did she say where she was going?"

"No, ma'am. I wouldn't have known about it only I heard the front door close, and I looked and saw Miss Edith running down the walk. A cab was there. She jumped in and was off!" "Very likely she has been called over to her cousin's in South Trentham.

She will telephone to me no doubt," The clock in the hall chimed the quarter after 6, and mingled with it was the sharp, insistent tinkle of the telephone bell.

Winona Blake's voice shook a little as she lifted the receiver from its hook. "Yes?" she inquired.

It was Edith's voice, speaking in tremulous excitement. "Mother, dear," she quavered, "would you consent to my-my marrying Har-

An instant's silence, then the moth-

"No daughter of mine ever will man

"Mother!" Edith's voice was stricken. "Where are you?" asked Mrs. Blake.

"The railroad station." "Wait until I come!" ordered Mrs. Blake, and, hanging up the receiver, she rushed from the house, still wearing her hat and her most becoming

afternoon gown. There was no time to call Thomas. Before he could harness one of the lazy blacks into the runabout the Cupid ex press would be away from the station! As Mrs. Blake hurried up the stairs she heard the thunder of the approaching train. Her lips tightened.

"I will go along, too!" she thought. 'Edith is a minor, and"-

"Here, madam!" A conductor almost lifted her to the steps, and as she staggered across the platform into the eoach a shower of small particles fell itingingly upon her face.
"Rice!" called somebody from the

coach behind. "Where's the bridegroom?" some one

isked in a loud whisper. "The old party in the gray overcoat.

See the confetti on his hat?' And at this moment Mrs. Blake collided with some one in the aisle. They grasped each other and swayed with the moving train.

"You?" glared Mrs. Blake.
"You?" glared Judge Lane.

A murmur ran through the car. Smiles spread from face to face, for was not this the honeymoon train, and did they not recognize a bridal couple? They did.

There was the handsome middle aged pair in gala attire; there was the confetti, rice. Somewhere in the rear a light headed youth whistled the wed-ding march from "Lohengrin."

Furiously embarrassed, angry and quite helpless in the face of so many whole hearted strangers, Judge Lane accepted the nearest proffered sent and pushed the equally embarrassed, angry and helpless lady into it.

"We may as well sit down," he snapped.

"Yes!" she gasped. "Of course you know why I'm here?"
"I'm on the same errand. I was searching the train when I met you. Harley telephoned me for my blessing

before they were married. Bah!" "Tickets, please!" smiled the conduc-Mrs. Blake suffered a cold chill. Her

pocketbook was at home. Could she accept money from John Lane? She did, for without asking her permission he opened a bulging pocket-book and paid for both tickets.

Grinningly the conductor punched the rebate checks and gave them to the man.

"Congratulations, judge," he said as he moved along. "I knew the Cupid would catch you some day!"

A cold horror settled upon the two in the seat. So they were supposed to be a newly wedded pair!

Both were thinking of one day thirty years ago when they plighted their troth in the apple orchard beneath a

It was before the day of the Cupid express, but they had planned a wedding journey, and it had never come

And now, each one in pursuit of an eloping child, they had met after all these years. People believed they

were a honeymoon couple! "Absurd!" declared Mrs. Blake aloud. "Ridiculous!" hoskily agreed the

"Perhaps you had better see if they are on the train," suggested Mrs.

Blake after awhile. "That's a good idea!" and Judge Lane escaped to the rear coaches.

After awhile he same back. "They are not on the train," he said slowly.

"How odd!" cried Mrs. Blake. "But. then, Edith didn't say she was married. She only asked permission, and as she was telephoning from the railroad station I concluded they were going to take this train."

"So I inferred from Harley's message," responded the judge stiffly.
"I hope they are not married. It is Blake.

out of the question!" went on Mrs. "Out of the question," agreed the

judge. A silence fell between them, and then Mrs. Blake felt a blush creeping

over her smooth, pale cheek. Was he looking at her? Slowly her eyes turned toward him, until, through her lashes, she could

see his blue eyes regarding her with an odd wistfulness. "Absurd!" she chided herself sharply.
"Winnie," he whispered suddenly,

"you haven't forgotten, after all?" "I never could, John," she whispered

in return. "Then let this be our wedding trip," he urged after awhile. "But we must return tonight," she cried hastily. "I must be sure about

"And Harley." he added. "About Edith and Harley," she gently corrected herself.

When the 11:15 train from town

found two auxious young people pac-

"They will never forgive us for luring them aboard that Cupid train."

said Edith nervously, "They might," Harley smiled cryptically, "Here they are, Edith! To-gether-and looking sheepish! Why, father," he said reproachfully, "I've been worried to death about your

Where have you been?" The judge blushed and clung to his wife's hand. "Why, we've been getting married!"

"Married!" echoed Edith. "Without saying a word to me? Why, mother! "But you and Harley have married

without consulting us"-"Married?" interrupted Edith innocently. "Why, mother, dear, I wouldn't marry without your blessing. And I want a home wedding, with all my friends and heaps of presents-and we shall take the Cupid express, shan't we, Harley?"

A smile flickered on Harley's face. "Sure we will, if dad doesn't ob-

But the bride and bridegroom, walking ahead, were so absorbed in each other that they never answered the question ... But as Harley told his sweetheart, it was one of those questions that answered themselves.

WANSTEAD

A very enjoyable gathering was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Morris on Thursday evening. March 22nd, when about 50 of their friends and neighbors joined with them in celebrating the tenth anniversary of their marriage. Dancing was indulged in, the music being supplied by an orchestra from Sarnia. All joined in wishing Mr. and Mrs. Morris many happy returns of the

day.

The monthly meeting of the U.F. W.O. was held at the home of Mrs. Albert Thompson on Wednesday, March 21st, with a good attendance In the absence of the president, who was indisposed, the chair was taken by the vice-president, Mrs. McPhedran. A splendid paper on poultry was given by Mrs. Thompson, which was afterwards discussed by the members. The meeting closed with the National Anthem, after which the hostess served a dainty lunch. The next meeting of the club will be held at the home of Mr. Orville Ram-

The next meeting of the Farmers' Club will be held in the school on Wednesday evening, April 4th. A full attendance of members is re-quested. Mr. W. P. Macdonald, Pe-

trolia, will be present.

Mr. Arch Williamson will ship hogs

on Saturday, March 31st. Note the change from Monday.

The regular meeting of the W. Y.P.O. met on Tuesday, March 20, with a splendid atendance. The meeting opposed by engineering the company opposed by t meeting opened by singing "O, Canada," which was followed by the minutes of the previous meet-ing being read. Miss Blanche Cooper having resigned, Miss Edna Williams is the new sec.-treas.. After musical and vocal selections a de-bate followed: "Resolved that the girls have a better time that the boys." Mr. Ross Anderson and Miss Dorothy McPhedran were captains Jno. E. Capes, Ross Anderson and Arthur Visicour Arthur Vickers were the affirmative debaters, while Jennie Alexander, Margaret Lampman and Ethel Mills put forth the negative side in fine style. J. E. Capes, leading the af-firmative side scored the girls in a terrible manner both in leading the debate and replying for the good time they had, but the judges, Mary McPhedran, Mrs. R. Millar and Bruce Robinson, gave the decision in the negative by a couple of points. Next meeting April 17th. Mr. Russell H. Anderson, of Mc-

Master University, Toronto, took the service in Calvary Baptist church on Sunday last, a goodly number turn-ing out to hear one of alvary's own

sons. He will be home until Easter.
The S.S. of Calvary Baptist church
was given a rare treat at the home of the superintendent, D. N. Anderson, by way of a taffy pull. The evening was spent in singing, games and music. At the conclusion of the evening's enjoyment, Miss Kathleen Simpson, who leaves for Welland on April 2nd to train for a nurse, was April 2nd to train for a nurse, was presented with a beautiful brooch. The basket ball team also presented her with a ring. The best wishes of the community follow Miss Simpson in her new undertaking.

Spring is here and the weather is ideal. Robins are chirping everywhere. The farmers are busy having

The basket ball girls of Wanstead met at the home of Miss Mary Mc-Phedran Tuesday afternoon and engaged in quilting, during which time they presented Miss Cassie Simpson with a beautiful little ring, onyx and

pearls, as a token of remembrance.
A concert will be given in Wanstead schoolhense on Friday, April 6, by the Young Feople's Society. entitled "The Young Village Doctor." Music and vocal selections. Admission 25c. and 15c.