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MISS DANA'S SURPRISE PARTY.

she had put out a sign on her house that sign had read, "Mrs. Kruller's Family" it would have only advertised the truth.

"The dear old creature! She is forty, clean and pious—fourty years that make the best of Christians. I intend to stay with her until I die, or married."

when Chipper said this he inverted the thought of Amelia Dana. In fact he thought of that young lady—right a good deal of the interests of the drug store of which he was clerk. His was his angel—prim and precise—good angels are likely to be—creatures whom he worshipped from afar, and whom his thoughts centered even in the made pills and mixed potions. Indeed, Chipper was in love.

"Bless your heart, she is a practical, unromantic teacher in one of the city schools, a self-willed, and headed, unpoetical little woman of fifty-five, with an ambition for a man's work. Did she know nothing of the study? Perhaps it did not run in her family, or she did not have it along with the measles and mumps and whooping-cough. Anyhow it was not one of the passions of her girlhood, for she had no money in which the patty income for the indulgence. Love to Miss Dana is apparently only a something that she had passed; it, again, it was a case of dyspeptic emotions. She had a heart, a good heart, too; but it had not been used in a hot bed of sentimentalism. Chipper, therefore, ogled and sighed and gazed in vain over this woman with wavy brown hair, great brown eyes, pinched but cunning little nose, and smiling lips of unfulfilled promises. She had cared for him, if she cared at all, because he passed her the potatoes or a bread, or invited to her plate an extra dish of sweetmeats, and acted as a table as a useful friend at her elbow. Of course Mrs. Kruller had other members in her "Happy Family." Her members numbered twelve altogether. One of them had been with the genial lady ever since Mr. Kruller was so unfortunate as to die when his funeral expenses bore the heaviest upon his widow. Chipper and Miss Dana belonged to that class of boarders. Bittler, of Oshkosh, was, however, a late comer. He was a young man of thirty, who had abandoned the aromatic pine forests into which he had cut his way; thrown down the setting pole of the log raft on the fall; kissed at corn huskings for the first time the robust Venuses of the farm; taken out the hay-seed from his hair, and came to the city to be a lawyer. He said to himself; he had self assurance; he had wind; he had the impetus of an avalanche; he had also the impudence of professional canvasser. What more did he need for success?

Bittler brought his six feet two altitude to lodgment at the table of the "Happy Family." Chipper introduced him, and he paid the penalty of his rashness by being his acquaintance begin, at once, to make love at Miss Dana. Amelia smiled upon him. And was this to be Chipper's reward for his table servitude? He resented the neglect and stopped eating the butter and urging, the sauce spooner; he refrained from surreptitiously sacrificing the tenderloin, when he was any given to him, to her appetite. He became morose and abandoned the use of perfumes. He even had his hair go dry by total abstinence from pomades. He meditated for hours on the generalship of Bittler, whose command and victorious ha! ha! ha! sent to his heart day after day, like explosions of dynamite.

The last feather that broke down his peace was when his rival actually tried and went to the opera with his family. He (Chipper) had never dared think of such extravagance as that. He had his revenge, though, when he found the couple had perched, like owls, in the second gallery, and that Miss Dana was annoyed by the height she rose at night, and he referred to that situation, but always with delicacy and tact, whenever Bittler was out of hearing, but Chipper was not afraid of the ex-planation and chopper.

"Tell you what, Bittler, he began, that's the freshest at Mac's theater. I envied you your view of it. It isn't every one that gets so near. How did the Cupids like you, Miss Dana?"

"She didn't answer, but Bittler spoke to her."

"Chipper, they reminded us of your business. Cupids are put up drugs on the market, you know. Don't you remember, I mentioned it to you at the time, Miss Dana?"

"She hit her lip, but said nothing."

"I've seen them ere things," broke in Mordaunt, the bachelor, "and I've thought they ought to be put in the drug circle. They're too bald for comfort."

"Anything to get them out of Bittler's neighborhood," piped Chipper. The per-son referred to frowned ominously. After he met his adversary in the hall.

"Chipper," he said, "your a nice little fellow, an ornament to your counter, per-son to your family, and possibly a real necessity to the drug business; but"—he pushed up his coat sleeves—"if I make any further allusions to Miss

Dana and myself I'll shake the teeth out of your head, I will, ha! ha! ha!" and walked away.

The laugh was like a blow in the face of Chipper; it was so insultingly exultant. He did not know much, but he was what sporting men call "gamey." He danced after the gentleman from Oshkosh and caught his sleeve.

"See here, Bittler, I can't live in a state of apprehension. You were kind enough to promise me a shaking. Let us go into the alley, now, and fight it out. We will both feel better for it."

"Don't annoy me," said Bittler, passing him. "If I was on the Wolf now, I'd throw you into the water for your impudence."

Chipper looked at him in a very queer way, and then remarked:

"Very well, sir. You're only a coward. Bittler, look out for yourself!"

"I have always done so," remarked the other, with a laugh.

Mrs. Kruller's "Happy Family" was thus cracked, as in Paradise, by a woman. But poor little Miss Dana didn't know it. She went on teaching school and sewing half the night. She did not care for Bittler nor for Chipper, nor for anybody save Amelia Dana and good Mrs. Kruller who had been a mother to the lone girl.

Of course she was pleased when either Chipper or Bittler was kind to her, but as for love, that was unthought of.

Mr. Chipper was something of a diplomatist, and after his unpleasantness with the gentleman from Oshkosh he began to plot against him. It was a mean and contemptible spirit for the man to show, but Chipper was prosaically mortal. He knew nothing about chivalry and that sort of mythology that went out with the knights two hundred or more years ago. He belonged to the nineteenth century, an age that exorcises the devil, invents new crimes, and honors the criminals. He did not plan to abduct anybody, to cut his throat or imprison the object of his dislike in a dungeon; but he proposed to make him ridiculous. First he would over Dot Kruller, the mischievous daughter, then Mrs. Kruller, the mother, and then two married ladies. The conspirators proceeded with their work. They secured a man's suit of clothes and sewed the garments. They attacked a pair of boots to the dummy and put under the bed of Miss Dana, with the feet just visible, and then awaited the return, at dark, of that lady, who was down town on a shopping excursion. The only purpose of the ladies was to secure the means of a good laugh at the expense of the teacher when she should discover, as she would, the famous "man under the bed."

Mr. Chipper was not very clear as to what this plan would accomplish. He wanted it to produce, in some way, a laugh against the object of his spite. If Miss Dana should be alarmed, well and good. If he could scare Bittler, he would take care that his fright should be known. He said to himself: "If this plan works all right, this rustic with sun burned hair will hear Miss Dana's alarm, rush to her rescue, be hoaxed, and never hear the last of it. Or he may be a coward, which will be the worse for him. Whatever belittles Bittler aids me in having revenge. It's fun with a purpose!"

Everything being arranged, the conspirators waited in the parlor for the excursion. They were full of humor and eagerly able to repress their feelings. Mrs. Kruller, however, was fidgety. Her imagination suddenly began to depict disasters as a result of this plan, and she apprehended a danger which might follow the discovery of the supposed man by Miss Dana. Suppose the teacher should drop down dead or go crazy! The more she thought of these possibilities the worse she felt, until at last, no longer able to endure her fears, she left the room, skipped up the back stairs and withdrew the dummy. Meantime Bittler arrived and was reading an evening paper. Dot Kruller was playing an accompaniment to Chipper's singing; and Mrs. Kruller, returned, was smiling over the trick she had prepared. Old Mordaunt, with his snuffle and cough, came in and proceeded direct to his room. Another person was heard to enter and go up the stairs, but no attention was paid to it. Then followed Miss Dana, who poked her nose into the parlor, inquired if she was late for supper, and hastened away to prepare for the meal. Mrs. Kruller laughed behind her back at the impatience of the other plotters. They were quiet and listening, and Bittler, hungry as a bear, walked up and down the room.

Suddenly there was a terrific cry. A door was slammed shut and somebody dashed down the back stairs, shrieking at every step. Chipper and Dot began to laugh. Mrs. Kruller, who could not comprehend the outcry, turned white with fear. Bittler halted in his march and listened. Then they all rushed into the hall. At that same instant Miss Dana burst through the rear door and ran towards them, her hair streaming behind her, her eyes distended with terror, and her face ghastly.

"He's under the bed! He's under the bed!" she shouts. In her terror she dashes by the astonished group, up the stairs, opens the door again, looks into the room and comes back through the hall and down the back stairs, repeating, "He's under the bed! He's under the bed!"

At this return, Mrs. Kruller, speechless with wonder over a happening which seems to her incomprehensible, catches the crazed woman in her arms, and Miss Dana falls to the floor in a swoon. Matters looked serious. No such a disturbance had been anticipated.

"Run for a policeman," said Chipper, huskily, to Bittler.

"Go yourself," answered Bittler, pushing the little fellow aside and going up the stairs three steps at a time.

Chipper, losing his nerve, sinks back against the wall and waits. The women begin to shriek.

Bittler, who in a second had reached Miss Dana's room, opens the door. He sees at the bureau a tall man. He is dressed in Bittler's Sunday suit, with Bittler's best tie on his head, and Bittler's \$20 valise in his hand, and the lawyer recalls the footsteps that preceded those of Miss Dana. Then he sees the thief sweeping Miss Dana's jewelry, her rings, her watch, her ear-ring, her breast-pin, her porte-monnaie, her everything, into that valise. It was done almost with the crook of the arm. Mr. Bittler does not wait, but dashes upon the thief, who turns, grasps the water pitcher and brings it down upon the head of his assailant, who drops to the floor without a cry, and lies motionless, with the blood streaming from an ugly cut on his forehead.

Then follows a most extraordinary retreat. The women, yelling like panthers, attack the thief at the foot of the stairs. He does not strike them, but hustles this way and that way, and sometimes strikes their heads together. Then Chipper, plucky and savage, only to disappear—flung from the hall into the parlor, as if shot from a catapult.

The thief smiled all the time he was doing this, just as if he was taking a little exercise. His hand was upon the door handle, and he seemed to be waiting for the sound of a door to have been out of doors, when a snort was heard, and something half tumbled, half slid down the stairs, landed on its feet on the floor, and held to the face of the thief the gleaming barrel of a revolver. The figure was that of Mr. Mordaunt, who, hearing the uproar, had armed himself and come to the front with startling agility.

"Don't move! I beg of you to hold up hands," he said to the thief, poking the muzzle of the pistol under the thief's nose, and puffing from his exercise in such a way that it was dangerous for the most innocent of men to be in front of the weapon. "I don't want to spoil this carpet with your brains," he continued, "nor to alarm the ladies by firing a pistol. Ah! Chipper, you there? Please search this man's pockets. Don't be afraid, Chipper, I'll keep him from hurting you."

Chipper had worked nimbly and had just unloaded the freight of the captive, when steps were heard without. It was a policeman. Transferring the prisoner to him, Mr. Mordaunt surveyed the scene. The tableau was an impressive one. Mrs. Kruller was holding Miss Dana's head in her lap, fanning her with one hand and keeping a bottle of salts to her nose with the other. In her unconscious condition it suddenly struck the bachelor that Miss Dana was very pretty, and he seemed slow to take his eyes away from her. But Mrs. Kruller broke the charm.

"Where is Mr. Bittler?" she asked, "has anybody seen him?"

Sure enough, where was he? Mr. Mordaunt came back to practical life from his admiring consideration of Miss Dana and went hurriedly upstairs.

"Better run for a doctor, Chipper," said some one, and Mr. Chipper, with a vague idea that his revenge was murderously complete, and that he was in a sad plight as a result of his plot, started for the physician.

Mr. Bittler was found unconscious upon the floor. The shattered pitcher had made several bad wounds which had bled profusely and weakened him greatly. Mr. Mordaunt dragged him to his own room and attended to his cuts. In the meantime Miss Dana had revived.

"Has he gone?" she asked, opening her eyes.

"Who gone, my dear?" asked Mrs. Kruller, kissing the little woman.

"That man under the bed. Oh, how frightened I was! There was silence for two or three moments, and then she spoke again. "I saw in the glass his feet as they stuck out from under the bed."

"Impossible, Amelia," said Mrs. K., thoughtlessly, "I put it away in the closet."

"What away?" asked Amelia.

"Mr. Chipper's dummy, my dear; he made it too scarce you just a little. But I burst through the rear door and ran towards them, her hair streaming behind her, her eyes distended with terror, and her face ghastly."

"nanny; but I saw him scratch one foot with the other. Then I ran."

"So you did, my dear; I never saw such running."

"And you were trying to scare me, were you?" asked the young lady, sitting bolt upright. "Now, I never take such practical jokes, and that man Chipper and I can not live in the house together!"

"Oh, Amelia!"

"I mean it," said the teacher. "I have been imposed upon. I would not be so scared again for all the men in the world. Chipper is a miserable, mean fellow. That man from Oshkosh is a hero beside of him, and I will not stay if Chipper remains."

Just at that moment there was a knock at the door. It was the doctor. He had a note for the landlady. It read:

"MY DEAR MRS. KRULLER—The event of this evening—the result of my folly—has been of such a character that I can not return to your house. I will send for my trunk in the morning. I have not the courage to face the victims of my joke."

Very truly yours,
CHARLES S. CHIPPER.

Mr. Kruller would not, in her dilemma undecieved him; and so Amelia Dana remained—remained until Bittler was cured, until Mordaunt made a fool of himself for her; until, in fact, a middle aged gentleman named Smith came from California and married her, spoiled the sequence of her surprise party, and broke up the circle of the "Happy Family."

No Cross, No Crown.

Decorations are dangerous distinctions sometimes. A Parisian photograph dealer was invested with the cross of the Legion during the siege, an honor secured by his gallantry, which had ended by his having his jaw smashed by a rifle ball. Unfortunately his conduct in civil life did not bear out his military record, and in 1873 a decision of the council of the Order deprived him of the right to wear its symbol.

He took no note of the ban under which he was placed, continuing to ornament his lapel with the red ribbon so dear to the Gallic heart. He did more. On the basis of a letter once received from a General F—, of the French army, he forged a most bombastic and fulsome epistle, addressed to himself, whom he beset with praise. On the strength of this letter and the ribbon, he succeeded in swindling a number of confiding tradesmen out of heavy sums. When they began to clamor for payment, he kept out of their way till one of them accidentally encountered and dunned him. His proud spirit chafed under the indignity, and he boxed the dummer's ears most magnificently. The solid commercial man then had him arrested.

He talked so much of his exalted estate before the magistrate that the latter became suspicious of a gentleman who thought so much of himself, and finally investigated him to the extent of discovering his imposture. He is now in the hands of the police awaiting trial on charge of forgery, false pretenses, and illegal wearing of the decoration. Having borne his cross he is likely to secure a crown, too, but a thorny one.

Is Grant Becoming Inane?

Rumors are afloat that General Grant shows signs of a malady that is hereditary in his family. It is said that his father, Jesse Grant, was afflicted with the softening of the brain before he was fifty years of age, and that during the last years of his life he was little more than an imbecile. Orville Grant, whose eccentric conduct in California less than a year ago will be remembered, has since been in an New Jersey insane asylum. It is also said that one of the General's sisters has been afflicted in the same manner. Many people who have seen General Grant since his arrival in San Francisco, have noticed an occasional wild, strange look in his eye. Often when conversing with gentlemen, and even with old friends, he stopped short in the middle of a sentence and hesitated, sometimes for a full moment, before completing it. At San Jose he was introduced to a number of men who fought under him at Donelson. Instead of greeting them cordially, he turned half around, and slyly stared at them over his shoulder, as never said a word. Again at Stockton and Madria word, he was presented to a number of his old comrades in the Mexican war, but the General treated them in the coolest manner, and in a way that left the impression on every one present that he was displeased at meeting them. These, and many other instances of a peculiar conduct go to show that it is sad probability that his mind is commencing to weaken. While in the presidential chair, General Grant was noted for his able greetings to all his visitors, and on other hypothesis can the great change in his manners be placed than there is something wrong in his mental faculties. Perhaps the great strain upon him for the ten years of

his eminent public career has had something to do with the change in him that is now so painfully observable. Another evidence of his approaching affliction is the unevenness of his conversations. At times he will talk with fluency and ease, and then in a few minutes relapse into an attitude of perfect silence, and only answer questions by a "Yes," or a "No."

We most sincerely hope that the great calamity of "a mind o'erthrown" may never be visited upon the illustrious general and statesman whom San Francisco and all the world has delighted to honor. It would be a national affliction were he to become incapacitated for future usefulness.—San Francisco News Letter.

An Electrified Pine Forest.

St. Elm's Fire is the name given by mariners to a weird glow and lightning like flames sometimes seen around the spars and rigging of ships at sea. It is in reality a species of lightning, in the form of a silent discharge of electricity from the loftiest points of the ship into the atmosphere; and it is produced by a mass of electrified clouds or air over the ship, inducing a charge of opposite electricity on the sea underneath, and drawing it off by the masts of the vessel, which in this case acts as lightning rods. A splendid instance of the same phenomenon was lately witnessed in the Jura at St. Geroges, where a whole forest of pine trees was seen to be aglow with light, like a phosphorescent sea in the tropics. A thunderstorm was raging at the time, and at every flash of lightning the illumination suddenly disappeared, but soon shone forth again until the next flash came. Before the appearance of this St. Elm's Fire, heavy rains had fallen and soaked the forest, so as to render it conductive of electricity, and the thunder-cloud overhead heavily charged with electricity had induced an opposite charge, on the ground below, which discharged itself into the air by the pointed needles of the pine trees.

The Power of Judgment.

Surmises and suppositions cannot fill the place of opinions formed by penetration and discernment. A man of penetration is as slow to decide, as he is quick to apprehend, calmly and deliberately weighing every opposite reason that is offered and tracing it with a most judicious penetration. All these one must possess to have the judgment of Plutarch, to discriminate between right and wrong; while to have the clear perception of Goeth one must be willing to breathe a foreign atmosphere, and, freed from prejudice, feel the inspiration of other scenes and conditions. If, in fact, we wish our life structure to be perfect, we must give our personal care, lest, while we sit with folded hands and placid minds, the tottering structure over us falls with crushing violence to the earth, burying us amid the ruins.

When the President of a Court martial or the Chief of Police have occasion to cross a public square in St. Petersburg they duck their heads and assume a dog trot. It is not pleasant to be made a target for the pop guns of Nihilists.

"Sympathetic pipes" are a recent novelty. The bowl of a meerschaum may be colored in five minutes, by first tinting it with a solution of nitrate of silver in ether and alcohol, to which essence of roses and camphor are added. Figures of any pattern are produced by the heat of the tobacco, and when produced are permanent.

Law, physic and divinity are well supplied with feminine members in the United States. The lady doctors number 630, and feminine dentists 420, while 68 preaches and five practice as lawyers. Some ladies adopt two or three callings at once. A Mrs. Gibbs, living in St. Louis, notifies on her door plate that she is an "elocutionist, poetess, washer, and an ironer."

A Londoner of fortune, named East-lace, has committed suicide in a singular manner. He filled the pockets of his coat with stones, tied a rope to the center seat of a boat, fastened the other end round his body and then threw himself into the water. In a note found upon the body the suicide explained that he had resolved to be "tormented no longer by the riddle"—some question in natural history or geology which he had vainly tried to solve.

In the Northwest there has been discovered a curious bug that lies concealed in flowers and seizes bees and wasps, which it holds at arms length, and from which it sucks the life. It also destroys plant lice, beetles, butterflies, caterpillars and all such insects. They have also been known to inflict a painful puncture or sting on the human hand. The bug is generally of a yellow color, but sometimes is of a greenish and brown shade.

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