

SERIAL STORY

The Isolated Continent

A Romance of the Future

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CHAPTER I.

Astra's Inheritance.

A gloomy foreboding of approaching disaster hung over the capital.

Hannibal Prudent, ex-President of the United Republics, was dangerously ill. The people walked quietly and talked in subdued tones, as though they feared to disturb him.

Hannibal Prudent, the scientist whose invention had saved the country, was eighty-four years old, but he had carried the weight of his years lightly and had worked unceasingly. On a flying trip to Labrador he had contracted a severe cold which developed into pneumonia. Just as the disease was nearing the crisis a curious thing happened, something that had not happened in the half-century which had passed since he had put an isolator between America and the other continents.

A wireless message had come from Europe.

The great man had been awakened by the ringing of the 4,500-mile bell on the small electro-stylograph that stood by his bedside. To his astonishment the indicator that automatically registered the sending station pointed to Berlin, Germany. He stared in amazement at the instrument and saw spark following spark on its small, square, milk-glass plate.

He put forth a shaking hand and adjusted the receiving horn. The electric sparks then formed a picture—a moving picture that talked! A man in military uniform looked at him from the picture and a clear voice with a German accent said in English: "Professor Prudent?"

"Yes, sir, Hannibal Prudent." The figure bowed reverently. "I am Count Von Werdenstein. As you see, I have bored through your isolating rays with my sparks of electricity. This is the beginning. The next time I talk to you there will be nothing to keep the fleet of consolidated Europe from entering the ports of the Americas. I am giving you this warning because I admire you—you were my honored father's teacher."

The figure on the plate bowed again, then vanished.

Hannibal Prudent gazed curiously at the glass of the apparatus, trying to believe that he had experienced a vision; but when he saw the words of Werdenstein clearly printed by the magnificent instrument on a sheet of paper by the stylus he faintly. The vitality that could combat physical suffering could not bear the menacing news that the little instrument had brought.

When he opened his eyes his daughter Astra stood at the bedside and the house physician was counting his pulse. The scientist still held Werdenstein's message crumpled up in his old fingers—the message that conveyed such crushing news. Impatiently, as one who knows his time is short, he asked to be left alone with his daughter. As the door closed behind the doctor he cried out in agony: "All my hopes and all my life work are threatened. I had hoped that here where I had established peace would abide—peace that has spread comfort, contentment and happiness over our continent; peace that created and conserved fortunes greater than any ever before known to man; peace that permitted developments so high that even the boldest would not have dared to dream them fifty years ago."

"All this will go," His voice faltered for a moment. "Read this." As the startled girl read Werdenstein's messages he cried bitterly: "They want vengeance." He felt his own pulse, watching the large chronometer on the wall opposite his bed. "My will is in the safe in my library. Here is the key. The Europeans think that the Z-ray alone hinders them from entering our beloved country, but they are mistaken." He gasped for air. "I will defy them again. Astra, write what I have to say."

His breath came gaspingly; his clear eyes grew dull; a whirlwind seemed to possess the great brain that had been able to create peace in America for half a century.

Astra watched him with apprehension; she did not speak, as she realized that it would be a waste of time, and the short time left her adopted father was precious indeed. The old man rested a moment, then seeing Astra was ready, he said:

"When the isolation has been broken through or destroyed (both are possible, if one knows how), then new isolations must be created, one ray after another. We can gain a year that way, and that year must be used to prepare for war. War! That horror will destroy the work of a peaceful country. But we are forced to it; we will win, and peace will come for-

ever. Plans are ready for a new craft that will be invincible. Navigation of the air will solve the problem." His voice had grown so weak that Astra could hardly understand him, but she had taken every word down in shorthand.

"Don't grieve when I am dead. I died in peace. All my life I have been a true apostle of that gospel—but hurry! Hurry to the island of—" He drew himself up with his last strength; an inarticulate sound came from his lips; he beckoned to Astra for the pencil and paper and forced his shaking hand to write one word: "Ciryntih," ran the zigzag lines of the shaking old hand, then the pencil fell from his fingers. Calm stole over the face of the man who had lived for one great idea, "Peace." He had found it, but his last words advised "War." Astra looked sorrowfully at her father. Tears filled her eyes as she called the doctor.

But Hannibal Prudent had reared her, and after the first burst of grief she remembered her duty. Taking the message from Europe and her notes, she hurried to her father's library. With a steady hand she transcribed her notes on the typewriter, but when she came to the word written by Hannibal Prudent, "Ciryntih," the tears came again.

She could not understand the meaning of the command: "Hurry to the island of Ciryntih." Was there an island of that name? She had never heard of it.

While Astra was in her father's library the sad news spread through the city. The stylographed extras began to appear at the automatic news stand. The short paragraph telling about the wireless message from Germany alarmed everybody.

More than fifty years before, in the year 1919, the now prosperous and peaceful United States had experienced a great disaster. New emigration laws and the new tariff had precipitated an international conflict that had involved not only the leading European monarchies but Japan and China as well. The ultimatum came from the East and the West. Europe was mobilizing on one side; the orientals on the other; all the nations against one. The question was whether it was best to bow before the will of the united enemy, or to lose independence. Congress seemed unable to decide.

The time given the United States for consideration was rapidly passing. The President was in despair. He gave orders to the fleet and land forces, but in his heart he cried, "What is the use?"

The night before the day of final answer he stood before the window, looking hopelessly into the starless darkness. Suddenly a man's head appeared at the window. The next moment the intruder jumped into the room.

Before the surprised executive could cry out the intruder exclaimed: "For three days I have tried to gain an audience with you, but in vain. Since I know that tomorrow will be too late I have forced my way to you."

"What brings you here?" the President asked.

"My desire to save my country, to repulse the enemy. I can defend the entire continent against any invasion. Don't think me mad—I am not; I have invented the greatest power. To be exact, I have discovered it. A man who solves one of nature's problems is not an inventor but a discoverer. My discovery is an invisible power that resists all attack. Don't doubt me before I have finished. I will create

around me a circle that will defend me and will ask you to try to touch me."

He took a small instrument from his pocket, and stepping back from the president, the continued:

"When I motion toward you try to touch me."

He manipulated springs on the instrument, then signaled to the President. The executive stretched his arm toward him. An invisible force bent first his hand, then his arm back. He could not touch the man from any side.

After several experiments the astounded President was convinced of the importance of the discovery.

The intruder removed the force from about him and told of his plans to save the country. They talked until long after the first rays of the morning sun shone through the windows.

When the midnight visitor had finished his confidences the President's face was brighter than it had been for many days. The careworn expression was gone. He escorted his visitor to the gate, putting his hand familiarly on his shoulder as he bade him good morning.

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The midnight visitor was Hannibal Prudent, the greatest scientist of the new world.

The President spent the morning preparing dispatches for the representatives of the European and oriental nations. He gave them twenty-four hours to order their vessels from American waters, advising them that if they had not obeyed the order in that time the United States would not be responsible for their future.

The new laws that had been formulated by the United States government and which were so objectionable to the powers would stand, and the United States would see that they were enforced.

Three days later Hannibal Prudent created a current of the impenetrable Z ray that isolated the whole American continent from the rest of the world.

Fifty years had passed; fifty years of independent peace. The Central and South American republics had joined the great United States and a confederacy was formed that secured their independence and the freedom of commerce.

Those fifty years of peace had created wealth, happiness and a scientific progress such as had never been equaled.

Now the man whose genius had made this possible lay dead, and his last words urged preparation for war.

Astra sat before her father's desk; before her lay a document that demanded careful study—the will of her adopted father.

She did not look at the long list of bonds and stocks; she did not care for the vast wealth that from now on would belong to her alone. The paper she was reading contained far-reaching instructions, prophetic insight into the future. The last page was a farewell letter:

"My dear Astra, knowing that I am nearing the limit of human existence, and that rest awaits me after a long and full life, I set down such facts as will enable you to make the best use of the knowledge that I, the old tree, wish perpetuated in the blossoming plant; it is you who will be responsible for the coming prosperity of the country. God gave you a broad mind that has developed to its fullest capacity under my care and I am proud of you, dear girl; you are chosen to do great things for your country and humanity."

"There is only one man on earth who is worthy of calling you wife; you will find this man, or he will come to you, as you two are ordained mates, comrades."

"When I go to my rest I feel that I will leave turbulent times behind me. My Z ray will not remain impenetrable forever, and when the day comes that it is destroyed, the country will need a brave, competent man to drive away the dreadsnaughts. He will come, as he has been fully instructed. Trust in him, my dear daughter."

"This country was not developed to be blasted by war; the adventures of warfare and strife are not for it. Our Creator selected this country to promote freedom, equality and science. Thundering cannons shall never more sound on our shore; our land shall be a land of love and peace."

"I have labored hard to spread this gospel. After I am gone the task is your inheritance, dear Astra."

"Before I die I will tell you where to find the one man competent to assist you and will further instruct you in your duty."

"God bless you, my daughter, you have ever been my joy and pride."

Astra put down the paper, and, starting out into the beautiful garden, murmured to herself: "Hurry to the Island of Ciryntih! Ciryntih! I have never heard of the place, and he left no specific instructions."

The entrance of John, a faithful old servant, woke her from her reveries. With shaking lips he announced that a reporter for the Hourly Stylograph wished to see her.

Folding up the documents, Astra locked them in the safe, then said, "I will receive him at once in the green room."

The servant left. Astra hesitated for a moment, then she said aloud, with quiet determination:

"Father, I will accept the inheritance. I will wait for him to come and help me; I will take the burdens on my shoulders and faithfully carry out your teachings. God help me to!"

CHAPTER II.

Nominee of the Continentals. Morning found the great capital in the splendor of deep mourning. The elevated sidewalks, the roof gardens, the terraces were crowded by people dressed in black. The newspaper roof terraces were especially crowded; there, on electromic opal glass plates sparks of electricity printed the latest news and illustrated the happenings of the moment with moving pictures.

On the main tower of the new capitol building (a colossal creation of pure American architecture) the Bell Orchestra, comprising four hundred players, played the march of "Coming Peace," a march that thrilled the hearts with its melody, that elevated the souls with thoughts of Heaven, that drove away evil thoughts with its exquisite harmony and foretold the happiness awaiting beyond. Resonant horns spread the melody farther and farther, until it soothed the mourning people in neighboring towns.

The fourteen-hour San Francisco limited had just slid into the central depot of the Tube Lines; the broad glass doors were swung open and the passengers hurried out.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

He Was the Hungry One. "What's the trouble at your house?" "Hunger strike for a new bonnet." "Your wife refuses to eat?" "No; she refuses to cook."

HOUDAN FOWL IS ECONOMIC

Not Only Is It Excellent Table Breed, but Is Also Good Layer of Eggs and Non-sitter.

Of all the French breeds the Houdan is undoubtedly the most economic. Not only is it a good table breed when judged by the quality of its flesh, but it is an excellent layer of good sized white eggs, and is a non-sitter. Newer breeds of fowls which have been introduced during recent years have rather overshadowed it, but few if any of these can lay claim to superiority over it in utility points. No doubt the crest had much to do with the decline suffered by the Houdan, many poultry keepers not caring for crested fowls, owing to the fact that in wet weather the head ornaments got saturated and caused colds among the birds, but a little consideration for them in the way of shelter during periods of rain would have minimized any prejudice against them concerning wet crests and colds. When the Houdan stood high in popular favor there were fewer or no scratching sheds in existence, and they either had to face the weather, when such was inclement, or idle about the interior of the roosting house, and no wonder many birds, and especially the crested ones, often got saturated with rain and caught cold and contracted roup. Today every well arranged poultry yard has its scratching-sheds or day shelters to which the fowls can resort in bad weather, and on that account the Houdan might be given a better position than it now occupies among utility poultry. The crest of the Houdan is an advantage rather than a disadvantage, inasmuch as it guards the head of the bird against the severest frost during the winter time, and thus it improves the fowl as a winter layer. Rightly bred, fed and sheltered the Houdan is a good winter egg producer.

TO DESTROY NOXIOUS WEEDS

Success of Rotation of Cultivated Crops Depends Entirely Upon Persistence of Cultivation.

A good system of rotation, that includes cultivated crops, offers the best means of combating the common weeds; but its success is almost en-



Field Dodder.

tirely dependent upon the manner and persistence with which the soil is cultivated. To insure reasonable success, the disk and the harrow should be used frequently while the weeds are still small, and the crops while growing should be given frequent cultivation.

Fortunately, the same tillage operations that are used in putting the soil in a condition to receive and conserve rainfall, to prepare the seed-bed and to liberate plant food, are likewise useful in combating weeds.

To Avoid the Runty Pig. Runty pigs stand a poor show at the feeding trough with a bunch of their husky brothers and sisters. As they are crowded out of place naturally they do not get enough to eat to keep them growing, and they stay runty.

A trough arranged with V-shaped partitions set strongly in the trough would give the little fellows an equal show with the big ones, and the weaker ones would get their share of food. A handy man can make such a trough arrangement in an hour or so, and even the growth of his pigs would more than pay for his trouble.

Blanching Celery. With celery for early use this may begin as soon as the stalks are a foot high or even less. The first work is in getting the stalks in an erect position, gathering them together with the hand and packing a small quantity of earth around the base to hold them upright.

In a few days a little more earth may be added, always doing the work while the plants are dry, being careful to hold the leaves or stalks together so that none of the earth will go between the stalks; also being careful not to put the earth above the growing heart of the plant.

Valuable Weed Eradicator. Probably no animal is so valuable as a weed eradicator as the sheep. They not only eat a large variety of weeds and grasses, but they masticate so thoroughly that almost all the seeds are destroyed or digested, and do not sprout from the manure.

Important Consideration. The ability of an ewe to properly nourish her lamb is one of the most important considerations in selecting breeding stock.

Secure Good-Sized Lambs. It is generally conceded that if the ewes are in good condition at mating time a larger proportion of twin lambs can be secured.

HIGHLY COLORED BATHING SUITS



THE latest bathing and beach costumes show novel touches of high color, Bulgarian and Russian, which add a distinctive note to costumes of dark colors. The bathing wrap, matching the suit in material and color, is a new idea in America, brought from the fashionable watering places of France.

LOOSENESS IS FIRST ORDER DRAPERIES OF THE MOMENT

Lines of Regulation Russian Blouse Not Followed When the Material is Laced.

The lines of the regulation Russian blouse are not followed out when the material is laced, no matter whether it is heavy or thin. The excessive looseness and drag of the material is emphasized in lace even more than in cloth because all the garments above the waist are continually made in this fashion, although there is an effort to bring back the round, tight bodice of Victorian days.

The neck should be cut high at the back and low in front, if it is possible for a woman to stand this kind of exposure in the afternoon hours. It can be as low as she wishes as far as fashion is concerned, for it seems to put no limit on the daytime décolletage. This makes dressing easier for the woman of moderate means who wishes to wear one gown before and after candle light without the trouble of adding a gump, for gumps have a way of riding up even when made in the best regulated manner, and under any kind of a boned foundation they are most satisfactory.

Not that the lace Russian blouse should have a boned lining unless one's figure demands it, for we have arrived at the most negligible type of clothes that women have worn since the Grecian era; even if there is a boned lining and a corset below the sagging, drooping, slipping off waist, neither of the supports must be visible.

Rose Drops. Put in a small granite saucepan three and a half ounces of sugar (sifted granulated sugar is best), add a tablespoonful of water, four drops of cochineal, and four drops of essence of rose. Stand over the fire, and as the mixture begins to melt stir gently for two or three minutes and then take from the fire. Have ready large sheets of oiled paper, and pour the sirup in drops about the size of large peas in rows on the paper. As soon as they are firm and hard, remove the drops with a lumber knife or spatula, place on a sieve in a warm place until thoroughly dry, then pack in glass jars, or tight boxes.

Lingerie Hat. The popularity of the embroidered linen hat is well deserved, and a flowered model is especially attractive. The design on the crown is a wreath of forget-me-nots done with the solid stitch, the center of which is punched work.

About the brim at intervals are embroidered motifs of forget-me-nots and punched work combined. The extreme edge of the brim is scalloped and buttonhole-stitched. Beneath this is sewn a frill of lace. A wreath of tiny flowers encircles the crown and a rosette and streamer of pale blue ribbon adorns each side. Why not make one?

Supports for Flowers. Did you ever fit a piece of pasteboard into the top of a tall vase to support a tall, graceful flower? It would show too plainly to be of use in a glass vase, other than the smoky glass, says Harper's Bazar. The lead supports to be used in shallow bowls or jars, Japanese fashion, are invaluable. You will like them for tulips, daffodils, or iris. It matters little whether they are beautiful in themselves or not, since the flowers usually conceal them.

Flowers in Finger Bowls. It is a pretty touch to have a flower like those used for the decoration of the table floating in each of the finger bowls. A bit of old-fashioned herbage, which sometimes takes the place of the time-honored rose geranium leaf, is a spring of lemon verbena.

DETAILS TO WHICH WOMAN MUST CONFORM IF SHE WOULD BE CONSIDERED "SMART."

Long lines are emphasized in the most successful draperies, giving height and dignity to wearers. In skirts the fullness is kept either decidedly up around the hips, with a narrow lower line, or down around the feet.

Slashed skirts have their fullness draped up and caught under clusters of flowers or held in under straps of material or beads.

Skirts with tunics or overskirts frequently have them plaited along the central front line, held flat under stitched bands. This gives a decidedly oriental effect.

Draped skirts that show an upward line at the bottom of the dress have inset panels of accordion plaited chiffon.

Net and lace on bodices are draped into the "scarf sleeve," into butterfly bows and in graceful, loose lines that are attached to train around the arm by means of loops or hung in loops across the gown as a tulle scarf might be held.

Lines of chiffon and silk roses are garlanded or draped over sleeves and corsage of bodices.

Tulle figures largely in the over-drapery on evening gowns. The main rule in drapery is to drape on the figure with an unlimited amount of goods and an eye to "la ligne"—that most important feature in the spring gown.

BEAUTIFUL EVENING GOWN



Model of white silk veiled with black chiffon and applique and white lace.

Silk and Linen. Silk coats with linen skirts are popular in Paris. These jackets are often of figured silks. The weave of the linen used is open and soft and is known by the name of crash. The coat is one of those little basque effects reaching the top of the hips. Only the youthful figure should attempt this type of costume.

Colored Crepes for Hats. Colored crepes are used principally as a covering or facing applied flatly on the straw, or as neat little bands, bows and wings. These crepes are in all the fashionable colors.