

Prudence's Daughter

By Ethel Hueston

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"WENT HOME"

SYNOPSIS—PART ONE—At a merry party in the studio apartment of Carter Blake, New York, Jerry (Geraldine) Harmer, Prudence's daughter, meets Duane Albertson, wealthy heir. He admires her tremendously and she likes him. But Albertson gets a bit exhilarated, with unfortunate results.

CHAPTER I—Continued

At three o'clock in the morning they went again to the kitchen for something to drink. His eyes were heavy now, his voice a little thick. He had been drinking more than Jerry realized, for she, having barely moistened her lips with the potent liquor, was still alert with the glamor of youth, and excitement, and romance, her natural brilliance only slightly fanned, not feverishly inflamed, by the seductive drink. Duane filled the small glass for her again, but as she put out a reluctant, unrefusing hand to take it from him, he withdrew it suddenly and placed both bottle and glass on the table behind him.

"Jerry," he whispered, his low voice a little strained, "you beautiful thing!" Irresistibly stirred by her beauty, emboldened by the extent of her drinking, his hand audaciously left her fingers, crept toward her shoulder, pressing in suddenly upon the soft flesh beneath her arm where the flame colored gown drooped away. And then, with increasing eagerness, he bent over her and pressed his hot lips upon the tender softness of her slender throat, and again, before she could move to repel him, upon her innocent and trusting lips. Jerry lay limp in his arms for a moment, and then went suddenly rigid, tearing herself away as though he had struck her.

Humiliation, mingled rage and scorn blazed in her bitter and disillusioned eyes.

"Oh, that," she cried, her voice, though harsh with the pain of her accusation, still carefully controlled that none in the room outside might hear, "That! It's all you think of—any of you—It's—"

A wave of shame, disappointment, swept over her. Tears came to her eyes. "And I thought—I was fool enough to think—"

"Wh-what did you th-think?" he asked encouragingly, rather pleased than otherwise by the initial denial which would give her final yielding only a greater charm. "Wh-what did you th-think, you beautiful thing?"

"I thought it was falling in love—like Prudence." She confessed humbly, crushed by the completeness of her disillusionment.

His infatuation fanned by the frankness of her admission, he reached out a hand to her again, a hand that trembled a little.

"Love!" he repeated. "It is love. This is what love is."

"Don't touch me, you horrible—" Words failed to express the extent of her scorn. "There's no such thing! I was a fool to have expected it."

He was surprised that she waited for no further argument, but whirled about, an outraged, lovely figure in the seductive flame-colored gown, and ran from the room. At the door, though, she paused, turned back. He had reached for the glass upon the table, had it within his grasp.

She spoke to herself, not to him. "And to think I was looking forward to it all my life—sure of it—and now—"

"Sure of wh-what? Expected wh-what?" He delayed to take the glass. "That it would come to me the way it came to—Prudence."

Then she went out. Duane waited a moment. She did not come back. He filled his glass and drained it. Then he straightened his collar, unsteadily, and went into the studio to find her. She was not there. He wandered about the room, aimlessly for a while, waiting for her. She did not come. He crossed to where Rhoda, indifferent, misty-eyed, sat with Carter Blake in the window seat.

"Where is she?" he asked. "Your little friend from Iowa?"

Rhoda lifted her head drowsily from Carter's shoulder. "Went home," she said, and her head drooped again.

"She said she had a headache or something," Carter explained. "Got her cloak and went out like a flash. Korzky's gone down to put her in a taxi."

Duane was irritated. The little quitter! And after the way she had encouraged him all evening. He held it a manifest unfairness to end a game so pleasant in such a silly, childish manner. He went out and down the stairs, hoping to overtake her. On the second landing he met Korzky coming up.

"Has she gone? I was going to take her home," he explained lamely.

"Said she was feeling rotten," Korzky told him. "I fancy she was requiring a shock absorber for her morals. They don't abandon their conscience stays in such a hurry, these Middle Westerners. Take them off one at a time, you might say. Beautiful thing, though, isn't she?"

CHAPTER II

The Going of Jerry

At the tender age of eight years Fairy Geraldine Harmer was deposited in one of the forty seats devoted to the primary department of one of the public schools of Des Moines, Iowa

—a wide-eyed and wondering martyr, along with thirty-nine other wide-eyed and wondering martyrs, upon the altar of education.

"And what is your name, my dear?" questioned a well-meaning teacher with a kindly although stereotyped smile, gazing down into the depths of the solemn blue eyes.

"Fairy Harmer." The voice was soft but confident. Fairy Geraldine was not a timid child.

A wave of muffled giggling swept through the ranks of the thirty-nine. "Beg pardon, dear—what?"

"Fairy Harmer—Fairy Geraldine Harmer," said Prudence's daughter firmly, though hurt, cut to the quick, in this, her first encounter with the thoughtless cruelty of childhood.

A painful flush suffused the fair, soft face as the laughter swept the serried seats again.

The small face, barely visible above her plate, as they sat at dinner that night, was pale with the first great conviction of her life. She looked at her father, looked again to her mother.

"I want another name," she said, in the tone of one long accustomed to the receiving that comes fast on the heels of the asking.

"Will you take it now, or wait until you get married?" queried her father facetiously.

Prudence was never facetious at the expense of a troubled daughter. "Why, sweetest?" she questioned gently. "Why?"

"The teacher said, 'What is your name?' and I said, 'Fairy Harmer.'" The childish bosom rose with the weight of indignation it had borne



"Don't Touch Me, You Horrible—" Words Failed to Express the Extent of Her Scorn.

throughout the bitter day. "I didn't blame them for laughing," she went on in a tone of dispassionate justice. "I would have laughed, too, if it had been anybody else's name."

Her parents digested this in sympathetic silence.

"And when we had recess," the wounded voice went on, "the boys said, 'Fly away, Fairy, cause fairies have wings.' It is a crazy name, mother," she finished with vast conclusiveness.

Prudence was the soul of gentle sympathy, but what could one do? Her baby had been christened in a thoughtless hour for Fairy, the deeply loved sister.

"It might hurt feelings, sweetest, if we should call you something else," she pleaded.

Fairy Geraldine said no more. But she was not dissuaded. She merely waited until the propitious moment to take the bull by the horns. When Aunt Fairy came to Des Moines for the next annual visit, a wheedlesome niece, Fairy Geraldine, sat in the lap of the lovely auntie who had no baby of her own, caressed her with tender dimpled fingers, adored her in pretty childish gurglings, and when Aunt Fairy was reduced to the point of abject worship, she whispered softly:

"Auntie, dear, sweet auntie, would it hurt your feelings if we call me something else besides Fairy?—I think you're the loveliest auntie that ever was, but it is a crazy name, and they laugh at it."

"I've laughed at it myself a good many times," agreed Aunt Fairy amiably. "I don't blame you a bit for changing it. Your uncle says he wouldn't call a nice dog 'Fairy.' Change it, by all means, my dear. Anything from Fay to Fiorietta is better than Fairy."

The "Geraldine" that had been christened neatly in between the Fairy and Harmer obviously suited her purpose to perfection and was solemnly agreed upon and pressed into tardy service.

And in time Geraldine became Jerry, and little Jerry Harmer smiled forgiveness upon the relenting of an unkind fate. It was difficult at first—but the small Jerry was a child of deep purpose and strong conviction.

Every spoken "Fairy" was softly but firmly corrected. "You mean Jerry." And in a surprisingly short

time Fairy was forgotten and Jerry held the day.

Jerry's attitude toward life in general was much like that—what she liked she adored, what she disliked must be changed as quickly as possible. Until it could be changed, she cadured it with Spartan resolution.

When Jerry was twenty years old, having been graduated from the state university, where she had acquired fair honors in things scholastic, unrivaled ones in things social she cast about in her truant thoughts for a legitimate avenue of action for those boundless, effervescent spirits of hers.

She was a long time making up her mind, there were so many places one might go, so many things one might do. "I think perhaps I'd better go to New York and study art," she said. But long before she said it Jerry had quite decided that she would go.

Prudence, with a great sinking in her breast, agreed by all means that she should certainly do "that very thing." So much being settled, Jerry went on to discuss her plans, and to air her views of life in general.

"It isn't that I resent your authority, not in the least," she assured them. "But I want to be thrown on my own, you know—I want to be free."

She crossed the room to the golden cage where a golden canary sang blithely in the sunshine. She opened the door. Upon the instant the bird leaped out into brightness of the room, and circled once about it, with a brave flashing of its yellow wings.

"Like that," Jerry said. "He wants to be free."

The bird flew contentedly back into its golden cage.

Then Jerrold, the father of Jerry, walked slowly across to the cage, his hand outstretched to close the tiny door. But before he could lay his finger upon it the flashing bit of gold leaped out into the brightness of the room, and then back at once into the familiar confines of the cage, still with his sharp eyes on Jerrold's hand, to make a dash for freedom at his slightest movement toward that door. Again and again he reached toward it, and each time the bird leaped out to freedom. And each time returned quickly to the specious cage.

"It isn't freedom itself that he wants," said Jerry's father gravely. "He doesn't know what freedom is. He likes the cage much better than the open spaces, but he hates that closed door. He is glad to come back to the cage, but he wants to think he is free. Is it the same with you, Jerry?"

"You can be free here, Jerry, if that's all you want," Prudence put in quickly. "Do what you wish, go where you wish, think what—"

Jerry shook her lovely head, smiling. "Perhaps you do not do it on purpose," she said. "But you are a closed door, mother, and you can't help it. Prudence either by name or nature is a restraint—no fault of yours, you understand."

Jerry was vastly pleased with her decision to study art. Art seemed of all things in the world the most glamorous avenue to life. She had always taken a pleasant interest in pictures, and in college had been quite a favorite in the art department, where her work both in water colors and in oils, with somewhat of judicious oversight by a friendly instructor in the department, had received warm praise.

Perhaps, however, she was a little troubled in the secret places of her own heart, for she reverted to the subject many times every day, although it was already fully settled she should go.

"One has to do something, you know," she said. "One isn't born just for the sake of living and dying and getting it over with. One has to do something!"

"Of course!" Prudence was very positive in her agreement.

"Give you a job in the plant any time you say," her father offered quickly, who as president of one of the largest motor corporations in the Middle West was in a position to indulge in such largess if he chose.

"You don't understand, father," she said patiently. "Taking a job from a good worker who needs it to give to a poor one who does not need it will never solve any labor questions. It isn't a matter of physical labor, you know. It's adding to the general richness of the world—it's putting something of yourself into circulation."

"Don't get you," Jerrold was frankly puzzled.

"I—I think I know what you mean," Prudence said pleasantly.

"Oh, no, you don't, mother," Jerry contradicted promptly, with laughing, tender eyes—not rudely. Jerry was obliged to contradict her mother many many times, but it was always with laughing tenderness that she did. "You just say so because you think it is your duty, having me for a daughter to try to account for my foolishness."

Prudence blushed.

"Anyhow we have all agreed that I must go to New York to study art."

"I never agreed to any such thing," said Jerrold flatly.

"I—I did," said Prudence weakly.

Jerry laughed softly at her mother. "You didn't, either," she denied tenderly. "You're just siding with me to make father ashamed of himself. You think it makes me less ridiculous when you agree with me."

Prudence blushed again.

Prudence, at forty-four, with a daughter twenty years old, was but a deepened, sweetened, softened mellowing of the Prudence who, at nineteen,

had taken such gay and masterful charge of the parsonage, and the houseful of younger girls, and her gentle father. So slender she was now as to appear almost frail, and she was very pale, with but the slightest hint of rose in her lips, the lips that had the old whimsical, humorous droop of her girlhood days. In spite of the delicate frailty of her face and figure, and the pallor of her creamy skin, Prudence did not look her years, nor did her appearance in any way suggest the dignity of a grown-up daughter to her credit, even with the humorous depth of understanding and the warmth of sympathy that showed in every word and gesture. Prudence at any age would be ageless, old and young, with the youth that has seen both heights and depths, and trembled with great emotions, the age that defies time with a dauntless bravado and a glad acceptance.

To Prudence sometimes, looking backward, it seemed a long way she had come from the cares and the responsibilities of that simple parsonage life. Times had changed conditions, interests had changed. It seemed to Prudence that she alone remained steadfast and the same. Her father had died ten years before, and a ter that Aunt Grace, with Carol and Carol's baby, continued on in the home they had chosen in Mount Mark, remaining there to be near Lark and Jim, on their rich, far-reaching farm.

Aunt Grace had lingered but a few years longer, and then slipped on into the shadows, having left the full of her modest means to Carol, the only one of the parsonage girls to be left alone and without resources. Fairy and Gene, the college lover who became her husband, had suffered a long series of financial reverses in their effort to forge to the front, but finally, after so many years, were comfortably settled in Chicago, seeming at last to have exhausted their store of ill fortune.

The youngest of the sisters, Constance, who had astounded them all by abandoning her dreams of literary fame to marry her prince among cow-boys, Martin Ingram, had never regretted her judgment. Martin's vast and barren Arizona acres had been found to overlay an inexhaustible treasure house of oil, and Connie and her husband with their two small children were now living in affluence, and, better still, in matchless domestic bliss, in Englewood, one of the most charming suburbs of New York.

Jerrold was consoling himself with the knowledge that this level-headed and serene young auntie, supported by an imperturbable husband, would be at hand to see to willful Jerry on her arrival in the terrible city.

"We must write to Connie at once," he said complacently.

Jerry was quick to protest. "Now, father, please! Is that your idea of freedom? Why, if I go to Englewood to settle down with Aunt Connie I might as well move into a parsonage and be done with it! Freedom! Of course I shall visit them very often, but I shall not live with them, by any means. And I think we'd better not tell her I am coming until I am all nicely settled and running on my own. Then she can't talk me out of it, and all those Starr girls are such good talkers."

To Jerrold's surprise, Prudence agreed to this drastic inhibition.

"I must be independent, you see," Jerry explained.

"Of course," assented Prudence.

"I think I shall write to Rhoda La Faye, and ask her to get me a little studio apartment near her."

"Rhoda—Rhoda La Faye—who's that?" Jerrold wanted to know.

"Oh, she's a girl I knew in college."

"Rhoda—See here, Jerry, you don't mean the girl who—"

"Rhoda was a very nice girl if she was expelled," Jerry said. "She—she was a little too—well, emancipated for Iowa, perhaps, but there was nothing in the least bad about her. She was a very talented girl, and now she has a studio in New York, and has illustrations in the very best magazines, and everything. She can help me a great deal, I should imagine."

"Well, I am certainly not in favor—" Jerrold had assumed his most paternally dictatorial voice.

"I am," interrupted Prudence quickly. "I am most heartily in favor of it. Rhoda was not at all an evil-minded person, just mischievous, as I remember it, and her experience will be of great value to Jerry."

"What was she fired for, anyhow?" Jerrold wanted to know, moodily, feeling the handicap of his position between the two of them.

"Well, here's a glimpse of Jerry in home surroundings and of what she wants out of life. Will she find it in New York?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

T. R.'s Three Speeches

Sir William Reuch Thomas, English war correspondent, in his book, "A Traveler in News," tells the following anecdote about Colonel Roosevelt, whom he met in the United States:

"Whether or no he possessed a great brain may be debated, but I never met a man who had so much control over his mental processes. A friend told me that he had heard him address a crowd in the open air on a windy day. Only those toward whom he turned could catch what he said; so he spoke three speeches—one to those on the left, one to the center, one to the right. The three speeches were different and were given in alternate sentences; but he managed the triple feat without confusion, without pausing for a word or thought."

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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Lesson for July 26

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

LESSON TEXT—Acts 15:1-35.
GOLDEN TEXT—"We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."
—Acts 15:11.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Jesus the Friend of Little Children.
JUNIOR TOPIC—A Great Gathering at Jerusalem.
INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—The Council at Jerusalem.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—What Is Christian Liberty?

I. The Controversy in the Church at Antioch (vv. 1-5).

This difficulty was a most serious one for it threatened the disruption of the church into a Jewish and a Gentile division. It was not a question of the admission of the Gentiles into the church. That had been settled some years before when Peter received Cornelius and his household. The question now was, on what ground could they be received? Should Gentile converts be required to keep the Mosaic law as a condition of salvation? This issue was brought on by the coming of certain men from Jerusalem, who declared, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved (v. 1)." The question was so difficult that Paul and Barnabas were unable to put the men to silence. These Jewish legalists had the letter of the Scripture on their side. They could point to the command in which this was enjoined upon believers (Gen. 17:14). Paul could not point to any Scripture where it had been abrogated. If Paul could plead that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised, his antagonists could answer, "Yes, but after justification the rite was divinely imposed." The brethren at Antioch decided to refer the matter to the mother church at Jerusalem. Accordingly, Paul and Barnabas and others were sent as a deputation to Jerusalem. At an informal reception by the church at Jerusalem they rehearsed the things which God had done for them.

II. The Deliberations of the Council (vv. 6-21).

1. Peter's Speech (vv. 6-11).
He argued that God had borne witness to His acceptance of the Gentiles by giving the Holy Spirit to them as unto the Jews (Acts 10:34-47). Since, therefore, God had not made a difference it would be folly for them to do so.

2. Paul and Barnabas Rehearsed Their Experience (v. 12).
They told how God had set his seal of approval on their preaching of salvation by grace through faith, apart from works, by the working of signs and wonders through them.

3. The Argument of James (vv. 14-21).
He took the declaration of Peter and showed how it harmonized with the prophecy of Amos (Amos 9:11-15). He showed that the reception of the Gentiles was not in conflict with God's plan, but in strict harmony therewith. As set forth by James, God's plan is as follows:

(1) To take out from among the Gentiles a people for His name (v. 14). This is what is now going on—the preaching of the gospel to the ends of the earth, and the calling out of the church.

(2) After the church is completed and removed, the Hebrew nation will be converted and restored to its own land and privileges by the Lord Himself at His return (vv. 16-17).

(3) Following this will be the conversion of the world through the agency of converted Israel (v. 17, cf. Rom. 11:15). He showed that there is no conflict when the Scriptures are rightly divided.

His judgment was that the Gentiles should not be troubled with things that are Jewish, but should be warned against the perils of heathenism, such as meat offered to idols, fornication and blood.

(4) The Decision (vv. 22-25).
The Mother church came to unanimous agreement and accepted the resolution offered by James. The apostles and elders not only sent a letter stating the decision of the conference, but took the wise precaution to send influential men along with Paul and Barnabas to bear the same testimony by word of mouth. The letter denied the authority of the Judaizing teachers (v. 24), and stated the method by which this decision had been reached (vv. 25-27). They put the Holy Spirit first.

(5) The Decision Delivered to the Church (vv. 30-35).
The church was called together to hear the report. Its reading brought rejoicing. They were now free to prosecute the great missionary work.

Spiritual Growth

We must not expect spiritual growth when we persist in acting the fool.—Charles E. Jefferson.

To Shore Unknown

Let me dream that love goes with us to the shore unknown.—Mrs. Ho-mans.

Strong Body; Pure Soul

"A strong body is good; a pure soul is better."—Burning Bush.



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The Usual Answer

Dr. A. G. Sinclair, pastor of the famous Old First church of Bloomfield, N. Y., is receiving congratulations on the success of the Mothers' day exercises in his Bible school. He described touchingly to the children a painting. A cottage interior, a child dangerously ill, the father and the doctor hovering near, the mother seated at a table, her head in her arms.

"What do you think the mother was doing?" asked the minister. "Cross-word puzzles!" a small girl promptly answered.—New York Times.

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The Bright Side

"Excuse me, sir, but you do not seem to have very much business," said a tourist from the North whose car had developed a sad case of hypochondria upon which he had been working for nearly half a day.

"Well—p/u—no; not to say much," replied the proprietor of the crossroads store. "But if customers don't come along, just looky at the time I have to pitch horseshoes and talk dog-swap with fellers that don't want to buy nuth'n'."—Kansas City Star.

Music Cure for Flowers

F. C. Billings of Milwaukee, Wis., says flowers will retain their original bloom many days longer if "treated" with good music. Certain rhythmic waves set up in the atmosphere by strains of music have a beneficial effect on flowers, he maintains, after some interesting experiments. The effect is similar to the reaction from light waves, he says.

So It Goes

"What we need in this life is perfect understanding." "Yeh, we don't always get it over the radio."

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