

# Prudence's Daughter

By ETHEL HUESTON

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## HOME AGAIN

**SYNOPSIS—PART ONE—**At a merry party in the studio apartment of Carter Blake, New York, Jerry (Geraldine) Harmer, Prudence's daughter, meets Duane Alorton, wealthy miser. He admires her tremendously, and she likes him. But Alorton gets a bit exhilarated, with unfortunate results. Jerry, resenting his assumption of familiarity, leaves the party abruptly. The story turns to Jerry's childhood and youth at her home in Des Moines, only child of a wealthy father, whom she is twenty. She feels the call of Art and asks her parents to let her go to New York for study. With some misgiving, they agree to her going. In New York Jerry makes her home with a Mrs. Delaney ("Mimi"), an actress, who, with Theresa, a painter, occupies the house. Jerry takes an immediate liking to Theresa, who is talented and eccentric, and the two become fast friends. Jerry now devotes herself to Theresa, who returns her liking. Jerry poses for Theresa's masterpiece, "The Ocean Rider." Alorton calls on Jerry. The girl refuses to see him. At a hotel dinner Jerry sees Duane and is conscious of his admiration, but refuses to change her attitude toward him. Jerry becomes convinced she has not the ability to become an artist. At a party Jerry again sees Duane, and will not recognize him. Theresa hints that Jerry should go home, and promises her a "present." Returning from an evening of gaiety, Jerry is shocked at hearing from Mimi that Theresa has killed herself. She also learns that Mimi is Theresa's mother. The "present" Theresa had promised Jerry proves to be her picture, "The Ocean Rider."

## CHAPTER VII—Continued

"How should I know? She didn't tell me. She should have told me!"

"Prudence would know," was all Jerry could say to that.

Mimi lay rigid among the cushions, twisting her hands into painful knots, cutting her flesh with the gaudy stones. Jerry looked at her—the lavish toss of the hennaed hair, the carefully ivoryed skin with its layers of cream and rouge, the voluptuous figure with its molding of fine French stays.

Jerry saw her in a cloud of artificial lights, the center of artificial laughter, flirtations, affairs and intrigues—saw also the light kindness, the generous delicacy of speech and manner, the friendly camaraderie. And she saw Theresa dead by her own hand in the undertaking parlor with the flowers in the window, Mietta's, on the corner.

And then, as poor, suffering Mimi faded out, Jerry saw Prudence, clear-cut and vivid, saw the fine-lined, tender face, the gentle twist of the humorous mouth, the laughing, plaintive sympathy of the soft, sweet eyes.

Jerry stared and stared. Her eyes burned painfully, her throat throbbled, there was a great longing in her heart. In that moment, Prudence's daughter, she ran suddenly to Mimi, caught her in her strong, tender arms, kissed her, cried over her, fondled her, and Mimi, after one slight, apologetic, high-strained laugh, buried her face in Jerry's arms and broke into helpless weeping.

Jerry helped her out of the lavish gown, out of the confining closeness of the French stays, and into a loose, light robe. She bathed her face, stroked her hair, hung over her with pitiful, sweet solicitude. And Mimi clung to her all night long, sobbing brokenly, writing in hysterical anguish, and would not let her go.

Jerry stayed with Mimi in the house on Reilly's alley until after the funeral—Theresa's funeral—when groups of her brilliant, wondering friends crowded into the little flower-filled room at Mietta's to do last honor to her tragic memory, and went away again, afterward, slowly, talking it over, agreeing that after all, in a way, it seemed rather a congruous thing that such a one as Theresa, divinely driven, should flash like a meteor across a starry sky to fade at once in a final, dominant flash at the height of her brilliance, rather than fade away, as many do, into a dull and doddering mediocrity.

The night after the funeral Jerry, slipping softly down the hall toward Mimi's room, was arrested by the siren, silvery voice.

"Oh, you bad boy! This is the third—at six dollars a pint!"

Jerry turned slowly back to her room. She was not deceived by that brave resumption of the old routine. She knew that Mimi's heart, artificial, shallow though it might be, had suffered a grievously cruel shock and she marvelled that the hollow shell could send back an echo so musical to a world that had given her only its bitter dregs.

Jerry went into her room, pulled out her bags, and began at once to pack the things of her possession.

Jerry was going home.

## Part Two

### CHAPTER I

#### The Coming of Jerry

It was a blustering, blizzard night in early March. The state of Iowa lay flat and bare under the lash of an angry winter, reluctant to loose its hold.

Inside the Harmer home was quiet warmth and cheery light. In the wide

fireplace a great pine log crackled in gay defiance of wintry wind and sleet. At the round table in the dining room Prudence and Jerrold sat opposite each other across a bowl of fragile Cecil Brunner roses.

"It's a nice night to be in," she said cheerfully. She was wondering if Greenwich Village was whipped with a gale like this.

"Rotten weather to be out," agreed Jerrold absently. He was remembering the dangerous rush of taxis, when city streets are glassed with ice.

And so they smiled cheerfully at each other, and rejoiced with pleasant words that they were warm and bright by the fireplace, with the pine log, and the rosebuds and the candle lights. But in their hearts they were trying to assure themselves that Jerry was a very alert and self-possessed young person who could certainly take care of herself if anybody could, and what childishness to worry!

The doorbell sounded suddenly. Upon intense inward thoughts like theirs, even the soft reverberation of the most carefully modulated electric

coming, how it was the last thing in the world she had dreamed of.

"But see here," remonstrated Jerrold, "you told me all the time she would come back. You said—"

Prudence gave him a furious look. "I did not," she declared quite passionately. "Oh, for a visit, of course—but to bring all her things and stay forever, I never dreamed of such a thing. I can't tell you how surprised I am!"

"But, Prudence, you said—"

Prudence glowered him into silence. "Now, Jerrold, I know what I said! I knew she would come for a visit, but this is really coming home, and I couldn't remotely fancy such a lovely thing!"

They went upstairs, the three of them, to Jerry's lovely room, and Prudence and Jerrold stood about, getting in the way, while Jerry unpacked the boxes, the boxes and the trunk. Everything was exhibited, exclaimed over, admired.

And while she unpacked she told them of New York, of Graves McDowell, and the lessons in Art, of Rhoda, and her passionate devotion to her work. She told them of lovely Almee, and the trashy column of society scandal she wrote for a daily paper. When Prudence asked about the girls in the house with her, Theresa, and Mimi, Jerry's lip quivered, her eyes shadowed, as she said:

"I'll tell you about them after a little. I'm coming to that."

She told them of her conquests in the city, her gay flirtations, her proposals. She showed them the little marble fair the Russian sculptor, Korzky, had done for her. She exhibited the autographed novels and books of poetry, warmly inscribed to her by authors and poets of a dozen nationalities. She displayed a hundred little testimonials of her triumph in the city, a triumph social, if not artistic.

"Isn't the laborers who are slave-driven," she declared warmly. "They don't need unions to protect them. It is a genius union we need, something to keep geniuses from working themselves to death. There was a violinist in our building—mother, I tell you truly, that man began to work before I was up, and was at it every night when I went to bed. There was a composer at Rhoda's—once I was staying all night—at two o'clock in the morning we heard, oh, very softly, a little tripping melody on the keys. Rhoda said it happened often—ran through his mind during the night, until he got up and worked it out of his system—using the soft pedal not to disturb the others. There was a young writer across the alley from us—whenever I went out, or came in, I could hear that dull thud of her typewriter, twelve o'clock, one o'clock, two o'clock. A union for genius, that's the need of the century!"

At half past two in the morning Prudence and Jerrold were still sitting enraptured, spellbound, on the wide day bed against the wall, listening as Jerry talked. And when at last the trunk was emptied, she turned slowly to the great crate she had brought with her all the way, so carefully, so tenderly, and released the safety fastenings on the end. Then she drew it out slowly, the shadows deepening in her eyes—Theresa's gallant "Ocean Rider" with eyes like Jerry's own.

Jerry's parents stared at it, exclaiming, marveling at its beauty.

"It—it looks like you," Prudence whispered.

"The eyes—they are mine. As they were when I went to New York, when she first saw me—Theresa—Jerry choked over the words. "Let me tell you."

She hastily switched out the bright lights, leaving only the one soft Roman candle burning on her dressing table, for Jerry did not wish to pain them with the emotion her vivid face could not fail to reveal. And she came across to them, piled cushions on the top of one of the three steps which led up to the raised day bed, and snuggled in between them.

"Do you want me to go out?" Jerrold offered generously, feeling that this was to be the climax of Jerry's confidence.

Jerry smiled at him, drew both his knees impulsively within the clasp of her arm. "Oh, no, father, of course not."

And then she told them of the house on Reilly's alley, of Mimi, with the golden hair and the silken gowns, of terrible, tragic Theresa in her attic room upstairs.

"I felt just like a mother toward that girl," she declared brokenly. She told of Theresa's rare talent, of her strange intensity, her impatient, impulsive kindness.

"Mother, she killed herself."

Jerrold let his cigarette go out, lit another feverishly, let it go out again. Prudence held Jerry in a close arm, weeping with her softly. And Jerry talked sadly on and on, told them of Mimi's pitiful, frivolous life, her wasteful motherhood. Sometimes as she talked, she lay in Prudence's lap, crying bitterly, only to sit up again with passionate earnestness to go on with the tragic tale.

"The worst of it—or maybe the best of it," she amended doubtfully, as she tried to shake away her tears, "is that I know she is glad of it. I can just imagine that gay, defiant laugh of

hers, as if she had fooled us all—slipped neatly out of a mess and left us looking at—cobwebs on our fingers. I can just imagine—in heaven—she would be laughing to think of the joke she had played on us. It's what Theresa would!"

Jerrold would have gone away then, taking Prudence with him, feeling that overwrought and highly strained young daughters would do best in bed. Prudence, with that tender insistent of hers that was never known to fail, knew better. Jerry was unbundling her heart, finding relief, had come to them, as she always came, when the things she undertook to do had proved too hard for her. And so they stayed on and on, and talked more of Theresa, and presently Jerry was talking of other things—of the mad frenzy that goaded all artists to desperation, of their intemperate folly, their unbounded love.

And then she was telling them of Greta Val, the little chambermaid, and how Graves McDowell was fairly living in her talent, feasting his own starved heart on the fuel he fed to hers. She told them of her little part in the drama, of how she had piled her wealth together, brushes and easel and boards, and with a profuse hand had tossed them on the unfortunate little tramp of the alleys.

"And what do you think she did? She stood up, and glared at me, and I slapped me in the face—right there!"

Jerry could laugh at it now, could laugh, and did, particularly at Jerrold's amazement, at Prudence's maternal displeasure.

"What are you going to do now?" Jerrold asked at last.

Jerry clouded again. She did not know. "What do other girls do?" she asked him. "Girls who are not zealous by birth—and lucky they are, if you ask me—but girls who would go mad doing nothing! What do they do?"

Jerrold cleverly evaded the issue by reaching for a cigarette, a prettily perfumed, gold-tipped thing that Jerry had brought in a handsome box, a parting gift from a young admirer, thus shifting the question to Prudence.

Prudence was very sober. "I don't know," she said. "What do you think?"

They talked of girls, of some who became teachers, some who went into the public libraries and museums, some into business.

"That's all right if you have to earn a living," objected Jerry. "But doesn't it seem silly to work hard at something you don't care a thing about, just to earn a little money you do not need? Of course, if one has a real fondness for a thing—but I haven't! I think it would be perfectly trashy of me to go downtown and pound a typewriter eight hours a day for twenty dollars a week—when I don't adore pounding typewriters—and can get the money by asking father."

"And besides," said Prudence, "it would be keeping some girl out of a position who does need the money."

"It's a great responsibility, having a daughter," Jerrold said, standing up, suddenly shocked to know it was after four o'clock. "I'm afraid we went into this thing too lightly, Prudence."

They all laughed over that, and Jerry kissed both parents a warm good night, and closed the door behind them.

In their own room, Jerrold turned to his wife to air a grievance that had lurked within his memory throughout all the happy evening.

"See here, Prudence, you did, too, expect Jerry to come home to stay. You said all the time she would come back."

Prudence caught his broad shoulders in her two slender hands, and shook him sternly. As a measure of discipline it was absurd, for Jerrold was tall and strong, and Prudence both slender and slight in strength. But as expressive of her pent-up emotions and representative of her scorn for his understanding, it was triumphant.

"Oh, Jerrold, will you never learn?" she wailed. "Don't you know that you must always be surprised at a woman?"

"But you said—"

"Always be surprised at a woman! It pleases her, it flatters her, it makes her feel how very unusual she is to do the unexpected thing. Be surprised, Jerrold, always be surprised! Women love it!"

"Then you did expect her home?"

"Of course I did." Prudence said this with a complacent pride in her astuteness.

"But you said—"

"Oh, bother what I said. You be a little careful after this, and don't go about telling everything you hear."

"Shades of the Parsonage and John Wesley defend us," he ejaculated devoutly.

"Oh, well, if it comes to that," said Prudence, "I learned a great many things in the Parsonage that John Wesley never heard of!"

Well, Jerry is home again, where she belongs. And now what's she going to do?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Beauty in Cheerfulness**  
Cheerfulness is almost as necessary as air, food and water. It stirs hearts as a pebble thrown into a lake sends ripples to every shore—returning again and again to you—making the heavy load lighter and the dark road brighter for all.—Grit.

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL Sunday School 'Lesson'

(By REV. F. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)  
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### Lesson for September 13

#### PAUL IN THESSALONICA AND BEREA

LESSON TEXT—Acts 17:1-15.  
GOLDEN TEXT—"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—I Thessa. 5:21.

PRIMARY TOPIC—Loving God's Word.

JUNIOR TOPIC—Studying God's Word.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Two Kinds of Hearers.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Searching the Scriptures.

#### I. Paul Preaching in Thessalonica (vv. 1-4).

1. His Method (vv. 1-2).

He observed the divine order, to the Jews first wherever he went (Acts 1:8; Rom. 2:9-10). He was exceedingly anxious for his kinsmen in the flesh, but whenever they proved themselves unworthy, he turned to the Gentiles. His own kinsmen first should be the method of every missionary, but should not stop there. He went out on the Sabbath day so as to find them assembled together.

2. His Message (v. 3).

His message was always and ever the same, viz., that Jesus is the Christ. To the Jew the essential thing was to be convinced from the Scriptures. So Paul expounded to them the Scriptures. This is the business of all ministers, to expound the Scriptures, to prove their positions by the Word. Concerning the Christ, he set forth three propositions:

(1) The Scriptures prove that Christ must be a sufferer (v. 3). "It behooved Christ to suffer." No plainer reference need be made than Isaiah 53, but it seems that the rabbi of that time had explained away the fact of a suffering Messiah so that the Jewish people were only looking for a glorious and powerful king to come; therefore they rejected Christ because of His lowly appearance. The same method of exegesis is employed by many Bible teachers and preachers today. Only the emphasis is placed upon the literal suffering of the Messiah, while they spiritualize and allegorize the teaching of the glorious coming of the Messiah to judge His enemies and to reign upon the earth (II Sam. 7:8-16; Isa. 53; Jer. 23:5-8; Zech. 9:14; Luke 1:1-3; Acts 15:14-17).

(2) That Christ Must Rise Again From the Dead (v. 3).

This he proved by the Scriptures. The resurrection of Christ, and the bodily resurrection of believers, needs sound and practical exposition in our churches today.

(3) That the Historic Jesus Whom He Proclaimed Did Suffer and Rise From the Dead; Therefore, He Is That Christ, the Predicted Messiah (v. 3).

II. The Attitude of the Jews (vv. 4-10a).

While some Jews believed and many Greeks, the envy of certain Jews was so aroused at Paul's success that they gathered together the worthless fellows of the town and set on foot a riot. They assaulted the house of Jason and dragged him before the rulers, having failed to get the missionaries. In their indictment of the missionaries they uttered unwittingly some great truths. They said: "These have turned the world upside down." It is true that the gospel is revolutionary, but it is not treason to right government. The real truth, however, is that the world is now upside down. The work of the gospel is to set it right side up. They turned the preaching of Paul into a specious lie. He did preach the kingship of Jesus (see verse 7), but not as they endeavored to make it appear. Jesus is most assuredly coming to reign on this earth (Ps. 2). Let all men acknowledge Him in humble submission.

III. Paul Preaching in Berea (vv. 10b-15).

1. His Method (v. 10).

He entered the Jewish synagogue and preached Jesus unto them.

2. The Reception of the Gospel by the Bereans (vv. 11-12).

It was with gladness of heart. The message was just as new to these Jews and just as counter to their way of thinking as it was to the Thessalonian Jews, but they had a more noble disposition. The success of the gospel depends altogether on the disposition of the hearers. Two things are said of them:

(1) They received the message gladly.

(2) They searched the Scriptures daily for the truthfulness of the preaching. For this worthy act Paul says they were more noble than those at Thessalonica.

#### Human Welfare

The utilization of the forces of earth for human welfare can only be achieved by brotherhood and co-operation.—Lily Douglas.

#### Peace

There is no peace, now or hereafter, for him who rejects the Prince of Peace.

#### A Holy Purpose

A holy purpose is better than a great fortune.—Christian-Evangelist.



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The Real Secret

Bishop Waldorf said in an address in Wichita:

"In their success talks to Young Men's Christian associations some of our millionaires enunciate rather anti-Christian views.

"In a recent talk of this kind an aged millionaire said earnestly: "I tell ye, young fellows, in this race for success, it ain't enough to know how to push yourself along—ye got to know how to push the other fellow out o' the way."

Not to Blame

Surgeon General Ireland of the War department was discussing the reform of drug victims.

"To reform these people is a difficult thing," he said. "Whenever I look at a collection of drug victims, with their sensual mouths and weak chins, I can't help thinking of the Chinese proverb: "Rotten wood can't be carved."

Necessity Before Luxury

"Will you ask her to marry you?" "Not till I get my car paid for."—Chicago Daily News.

## Watch Your Kidneys!

Your health depends upon your kidneys. When your kidneys are inactive, blood and nerves are poisoned and many mysterious ills result. You feel dull and drowsy; get up often at night and suffer annoying kidney irregularities. Your back aches; you have headaches and dizzy spells; your nerves are constantly on edge and you are always tired. If your kidneys are sluggish, help them with Doan's Pills. Doan's act on the kidneys only. Are recommended the world over. Ask your neighbor!

### A California Case

W. E. Hedges, rancher, 707 Dela Valla St., Madera, Calif., says: "My back became lame and when I stooped it was difficult to straighten because of the terrible pains through my back. I was laid up for several days. My kidneys acted irregularly and disturbed my rest at night. I also suffered with pains in my head. I used Doan's Pills and they cured me."

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