

# Prudence's Daughter

By **ETHEL HUESTON**

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WNU Service

## THE BIG IDEA

**SYNOPSIS—PART ONE**—At a merry party in the studio apartment of Carter Blake, New York, Jerry (Geraldine) Harner, Prudence's daughter, meets Duane Allerton, wealthy miser. He admires her tremendously, and she takes him. But Allerton gets a bit exasperated 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 Iowa. Only child of a wealthy father, when 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." Allerton 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." Retiring from the evening of ecstasy, Jerry is shocked at hearing from Mimi she also learns that Mimi is Theresa's mother. The "present" Theresa had promised Jerry proves to be her picture, "The Ocean Rider." Jerry decides to go home. At home she is enthusiastically welcomed by her adoring parents. She wins their sympathies with the stories of her New York life.

## CHAPTER II

### Jerry Comes Into Her Own

Jerry seemed to settle again into the routine of every-day life in her Middle Western home without change. She shared in the work of the house as she had done before she went to New York, practiced her music, read a great deal, and drove out very often in the handsome little "Harmer" which was her personal possession.

Her return was hailed with a great lavishness of celebration on the part of her friends, for she had long been a leader in the particular little set she claimed as hers. Immediately she was made the occasion for a gay series of dances, dinners and parties. Little flirtations, inconsequential affairs, which had faded away and died upon her departure, struggled back into a semblance of rejuvenation on her return, and although they failed to stir Jerry to active interest, at least they played their part in whiling away the hours, and helping to occupy her thoughts, which were not happy ones for the most part.

Even with so much to amuse and engage her, the days passed slowly, and Jerry, for all the demands on her time, remained distrustful and preoccupied, almost listless. And Prudence drove herself well-nigh to distraction in her maternal anxiety to bridge the dangerous chasm between times past and times present, but all in vain she racked her fertile brain for things to stimulate Jerry's interest.

"Oh, my dear, you haven't taught me to dance for nearly two years!" she exclaimed one night, in the extreme of desperation.

Jerrold and Jerry broke into laughter over her abject submission to martyrdom for her daughter's sake. For Prudence found in dancing nothing but punishment and tribulation.

Married life for her had been an intricate matter at best, having as she did the sacred shadow of Methodism for a background. The church itself had been the first shadow to cloud the heaven of their domestic harmony. Church, to Prudence, meant Methodist, and Jerrold, in the ardor of his young love, attended services with her in the beginning with some fair display of interest. His enthusiasm, however, was for Prudence only, not for the church of her affiliation.

When she asked him how he liked it he said: "Oh, very much," to please Prudence.

After a time, growing suspicious as to the depth of this interest, she pressed him further. Jerrold admitted at last that as far as he was concerned, he considered it no church at all, no real worship, no divine service. Prudence was shocked into speechlessness. But Jerrold, hard driven, stuck to his ground. He said the way the Methodists clubbed about the door and chatted and laughed was his idea of rank irreverence. And for a preacher to get down on his knees in the pulpit and talk in that offhand and familiar fashion to the Divine Being instead of reading respectfully from a book—he called it sacrilege. He was willing to go, to please Prudence, he was willing to shake hands, and discuss his wife's health and the state fair and the corn crop at the door—to please her—he was willing to follow through countless intimate paragraphs of extemporaneous prayer—but he did not call

it church, and it was not his idea of worship.

Prudence wrote to her father. And her father wrote back, with that gentle and forbearing patience which seems more rare and more divine in the ministry than anywhere else, that Prudence must go with her husband. "We have learned," he wrote, "that there are lessons in stones, and sermons in running brooks. So if Jerrold finds no religion in our church, it is up to you to find it in his."

Prudence swallowed hard, but she did it.

It was not, as Jerrold frankly admitted, that he cared particularly about attending any church with a painful degree of assiduity, but when he had church, he wanted church, and not a Sunday morning reception without refreshments.

Of course Prudence had had to learn to dance. Having become an Episcopalian she could not plead the Methodist Discipline in rebuttal, and thus unexpectedly torn adrift from her spiritual backbone, she agreed with Jerrold, rather faintly, that it would be a shame for her to go through life sitting out every evening wait and during one-step. She must certainly learn to dance.

She encountered difficulties from the start. A professional instructor was brought in to teach her. And after many painful, painstaking lessons, she managed to get around very nicely. But when Prudence, in fear and trembling, got on the floor with any other than the instructor, she had trouble.

"It isn't that I don't try," she told her husband despairingly, but eager in her own defense in the face of his derision, "I do try! I put my whole mind on it. I know exactly what I am supposed to do, I count every step, and I never listen to a word my partner says, and I keep both eyes shut so I won't be afraid of running into the wall! But I can't keep off my feet, nor from under them. You needn't laugh, either, for I can't help it."

When Jerry had come of an age to take a personal interest in her mother's social life, and to feel a personal responsibility for her public appearance, she shared this burden with her father. And at regular intervals, perhaps twice a year, the entire household was thrown into a tumultuous state of excitement with teaching Prudence to dance.

"Why can't you dance? Why can't you?" demanded Jerry earnestly. "Aunt Fairy dances beautifully, Aunt Connie dances, both the Twin Aunties adore it. Haven't they as much Methodist blood as you have? Why can't you learn?"

"I don't know," acknowledged her mother unhappily. "I certainly work hard enough to learn anything! I just can't, and that's all there is to it."

When Prudence, therefore, of her own volition and without coercion from anyone, voluntarily proffered herself as a willing sacrifice to learn to dance again, she was driven to desperation. To her surprise, to her great concern as well, Jerry only laughed, and would not accept such martyrdom at her hands.

"Nonsense, mother, you can't dance, and you don't want to. Why bother? You'd better just stick to Wesley and eschew the devil and all his works."

"Bridge, then," pleaded Prudence hopefully. "You really ought to teach me something, you know."

Jerry consented to add a few final touches to a course in cards which had already extended futilely over a period of twenty years, but she warned her mother to let no one inveigle her into playing for points.

"For do your level best, mother, you can still lose the family fortune a great deal faster than father can earn it, if you go in for points, the way you play it."

And so March blustered away, and April came, and May. And in all these months Jerry could not fathom that great mystery of what girls do, who have nothing to do, and go quite mad over doing it!

It was a morning late in May when she was called to the telephone. A girl of her acquaintance, Rae Forsythe, was going over to the other side of town to look at a house. She asked Jerry to go with her. Jerry, who had driven her own car from the time she was fifteen years old, was used to these invitations to go with her friends on errands to remote and inaccessible places. Jerry understood it very well, but her understanding was quite without malice. She did not blame them. She was sure if she had to go a long way to a strange part of town, and had no car of her own, she herself would invite as company for the occasion—one who had.

So she accepted the invitation very sweetly, and said she would stop by for Rae in the car, about eleven o'clock.

She knew that Rae was going to be married in the fall, and that her father had given her ten thousand dollars to provide a bridal home. And this expedition, as she surmised, was in search of a house. She picked up her friend at the designated hour, and turned her car buoyantly to the north side of the city.

"But why go away out there, Rae?"

"It's a crazy place to look for a house," she protested.

"Yes, but property is so much cheaper. We want to get house and furniture all for ten thousand, you see. And then, Grant has bought a drug store out by the university, and it will be much nicer for him. He can come home for luncheon," she explained with the pretty proprietary shyness of pre-nuptial days.

Following Rae's directions, Jerry drove slowly out along Central avenue and turned down Seventeenth street. When they came to the house, she stopped the car, and both girls turned about in their seats and looked at it.

It was not prepossessing. Set entirely too far forward in a small lawn at the top of a steep terrace, it stood very stiff, very square, very high, with an awkward square porch, clumsy square windows, the whole in grievous need of paint.

"Will you tell me," Jerry said plaintively, "why my Iowa builds itself such ghastly homes?"

"He said it was a barn of a thing," assented Rae. "But it is very cheap. He said—the real estate man, I mean—said it could be entirely built over for a few thousand. And it has good points, a garage in the back when we get rich enough for a car—just opposite the little park you see—on the car line—and quite near the university and Grant's drug store."

With these points to its credit, Jerry followed her distastefully up the steps of the terrace, and still more distastefully on the clumsy, stiff square porch.

"Why do they do it, Rae?" she wondered. "Such stiff, straight, stupid lines—the doors, the windows, the col-



"Will You Tell Me," Jerry Said Plaintively, "Why My Iowa Builds Such Ghastly Homes?"

umns. Couldn't they put a little curve in once in a while for the same money?"

"Beauty is very expensive," said Rae lightly.

"No wonder we all go off somewhere, to California, or to New York, if this is the best we can do for ourselves," Jerry went on gloomily. "I don't blame us. Fancy living in a thing like this! Not just one, either—all the inexpensive poorman houses are exactly like it. The gypsies do better in tents."

"Oh, bother the gypsies, Jerry; come on in and have a look." Rae opened the door with the key which had been given her, and led the way inside where they stared curiously about them, a frowning disapproval on their two young faces.

"People must have lived in it some time," said Jerry. "Probably they died, poor things. I don't wonder."

The house was divided with scrupulous exactness into four sections, rooms Jerry decided one must doubtless call them—to the left a stiff square parlor leading to a stiff square parlor beyond—to the right a solemn dining room, with a sober kitchen adjoining. The stairs rose in a direct and businesslike manner, without pretense or artifice to the second floor, where there was another mathematical division of space, a bedroom, a bath to the left, two bedrooms to the right. Jerry stared and stared. "Wouldn't you think they must have died, Rae?" she asked. "It would be like living in a cemetery, wouldn't it? Wouldn't you think that some time one of them would have taken a hammer to those walls, just to break the deadly continuity of the thing? Poor corpses, I don't blame you a bit. I think you're lucky."

Rae laughed at her. "You are funny, Jerry. But it is a horrid old barn of a house, isn't it? But then they are only asking thirty-five hundred for it." "Cheap enough, unless one has to live in it," murmured Jerry. "I hold it against the state, Rae," she went on. "I almost wish I had been born in Arkansas, or Nevada, or Wyoming."

"Don't blame the state," protested Rae. "People don't have to live in this particular house unless they wish."

"But the whole street is like it. And the next one is worse, and the next still worse. Oh, some few houses are nice enough, I suppose, but in the main—hopeless! Our own used to be a funny, straight-up-and-down thing, too. We have pictures of it. They built it over when I was a baby. No, it is the state, Rae. We get that straight up-and-downness from the corn, I fancy."

Rae, intent upon her search for a home for herself and her young pharmacist, paid slight attention to her friend's plaintive ramblings. She looked about her, with growing disfavor. And while she looked, Jerry stood in the doorway, and stared with increasing amazement about the place.

"It couldn't be a home, you know," she said to herself. "It might do as a garage, even as a stable if one didn't love one's horses. One could call them stalls, dinner stall, sleeping stall, cooking stall—it's the way they look. And you know really it wouldn't be so hard to—sort of—switch things around a little—knock out a wall or two—twist that staircase about some way—and—"

Jerry's eyes narrowed speculatively. She drew vague little designs in the air with a gloved finger. A curious brightness came into her face.

"It is impossible," Rae said, coming back from her inspection. "I wouldn't have it as a gift."

"Thirty-five hundred. Is that what you said? Can I get it on terms? Let's go down right away. I have an idea."

## CHAPTER III

### The Summer Passes

Prudence and Jerrold had finished the soup and were starting with steak and potatoes when Jerry ran in that night, professedly apologetic for her tardiness. Her face was aflame with color, her starry eyes aglow behind the fringing lashes.

"Awfully stupid of me to be so late," she cried, tossing her gloves and hat upon a chair, and sliding deftly into her place at the table. "No soup for me, Katie. But be generous with the steak." She gazed around at her little family. "I've been having a heavenly time, other—almost as exciting as teaching you to dance again. And that reminds me—Jerry put her knife down and turned about, facing her father. "I'll have to borrow some money, father—I don't know just how much—a thousand or so. Will you lend it to me?"

Jerrold was working with a refractory bit of silex and did not answer upon the instant.

"I will," proffered Prudence meekly. "It's awfully good of you, mother, but I think I'd better get it from father. This is business, you see, and it's impossible to be real businesslike with you, you're such a lamb. Of course, father, I can give you a mortgage on the 'Baby.'" Jerry always called her pretty roadster the "Baby." The first had been just "Baby," the second was "Baby Junior," and this latest and finest one of all was tenderly known as "The Third." "I can give you a mortgage on her, but I'm going to be awful busy, and I'll have to use her just the same."

"It might be interesting to know what you're going to do with it—the money, I mean," her father put in gently, when she paused for breath. "Not that it's any of my business, of course."

"Oh, I don't mind telling—not in the least," Jerry was impulsively generous. She pushed her plate back a little and launched into a graphic account of the day's excursion with Rae in quest of a honeymoon home. She described the "great grotesque barn of a thing" on Seventeenth street opposite Good park in no mild manner.

"Rae simply wouldn't give it a second look," she finished. "But you know, father, it looked pretty good to me. Lots of advantages, Rae said so herself—right opposite the park, on the car line, near the university—and lumber in it, heaps of lumber! Well, I got to figuring. You could pull out a few walls, and build in a few windows, and switch things around a little bit and paint it, and—sort of fuss it up. I figured out a hundred things that one could do to it. Well, you can buy it for thirty-five hundred, spend say another thirty-five hundred in making it look human—and I'll bet you could sell that place for Ten Thousand Dollars!"

Jerrold was buttering his roll. "I'm sure of it," agreed Prudence.

"But why bother?" asked Jerrold, after a little. "Why go to all that trouble, and work, and expense—"

Jerry was amazed at his stupidity. "Oh, a dozen reasons, father! In the first place, Iowa ought to be ashamed of itself for permitting such a lot of these stupid, stiff, square houses, that no human being could possibly fit into. Well, then, it would make a lovely and adorable little spot of a place that is now simply an eye-sore and a civic ulcer, as you might say. And once you get a real sweet, dainty home up there, it's going to make the rest of the block ashamed of itself, and first thing you know they'll all be doling up a little bit, to keep up with Lizzie. 'Scuse the slang, mother—I'm so excited. And besides—Jerry's voice rose triumphantly—"think of me! I'm going to make a couple of thousand dollars on that job!"

Evidently Jerry has found something interesting. Is it the beginning of a career?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Our Paradoxical Language

A fellow gets in bad when he is found out.—Portland Evening Express.

## IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

# Sunday School Lesson

By REV. F. B. FITZWATER, D.D., Dean of the Evening School, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. (S. 1215, Western Newspaper Union.)

## Lesson for September 20

PAUL WRITES TO THE THESSALONIANS

LESSON TEXT—1 Thess. 2:1-12. GOLDEN TEXT—"In everything give thanks."—1 Thess. 5:18. PRIMARY TOPIC—Paul's Love for His Friends. JUNIOR TOPIC—How Paul Worked in Thessalonica. INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Paul's Devotion to His Work. YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Spirit and Method of Paul's Work.

While the lesson committee has selected this brief passage in the second chapter for printing, the intention was to present the message of the entire epistle. It was on Paul's second missionary journey that the church at Thessalonica was founded as seen in the last lesson. After crossing into Macedonia he preached the Gospel at Philippi, where he was imprisoned. From Philippi he went to Thessalonica. The people there were largely Gentiles.

### I. The Salutation (ch. 1:1).

Timothy and Silas were associated with Paul in this missionary journey, and they are associates of Paul in this message.

### II. Paul's Thanksgiving (1:2-10).

1. For Their Faith, Love and Hope (v. 2-4).

This triad of graces testified of their election of God.

2. How They Received the Gospel (v. 5).

It was in the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. Joyful Obedience (v. 6).

4. Exemplary Lives (v. 7).

5. Missionary activities (v. 8).

6. Turned From Idols (vv. 9-10).

### III. Character of Paul's Ministry (2:1-12).

It would seem from this defense that some of the Jews had called into question his ministry. He defends himself by showing the character of his ministry:

1. It Was Courageous (vv. 1-2).

His persistence in spite of shameful persecution proved his devotion to the Lord and His work.

2. Honest and Guileless (vv. 3-4).

As one sent of God, he faithfully ministered unto them, not courting man's favor.

3. Without Flattering Words (v. 5).

4. Without a Cloak of Covetousness (v. 5).

5. Did Not Seek Glory From Man (v. 6).

6. Gentle and Affectionate (vv. 7-8).

So vitally did he enter into the lives of the people that he displayed a gentleness even as a nursing mother with her children.

7. Unselfish (v. 9).

In order that his motive be not questioned, he labored night and day for his support.

8. Irreproachable and Blameless (v. 10).

He did not claim to be faultless, but he challenged them as to his blamelessness.

9. His Lofty Aim (vv. 11-12).

"That they would walk worthy of God in keeping with their high calling."

### IV. How the Gospel Was Received (2:13-16).

As the very Word of God.

V. Paul's Desire for the Thessalonians (2:17-3:13).

1. He Endeavored to See Them Face to Face, but Was Hindered by Satan (2:17-18).

2. He Declared Them to Be His Crown of Rejoicing (2:19-20).

His hope of meeting his converts at Christ's second coming was his crown of rejoicing.

3. Timothy Sent to Them (3:1-10).

It was his report that furnished the information concerning this church.

4. He Prayed for Them (3:11-13).

VI. Sins Rebuked (4:1-12).

1. Uncertainty (vv. 1-5).

2. Dishonesty (vv. 6-8).

3. Lack of Brotherly Love (vv. 9-10).

4. For Being Busybodies (v. 11).

5. Idleness (v. 11).

VII. Doctrinal Errors Corrected (4:13; 5:11).

1. Not to Sorrow Unduly (v. 13).

It was because of their misunderstanding of the meaning of the coming of the Lord that they were indulging in excessive sorrow.

2. The Reason Assigned (vv. 13-18).

(1) The departed saints will come back when Jesus comes (v. 14).

(2) Living Believers Will Be Caught Up With Them (v. 17).

3. The Time of the Lord's Coming (4:13; 5:11).

The exhortation is "be ready," watch.

### VIII. Concluding Exhortations (5:12-28).

Sin, Grace, Humility

No sin is so offensive to God, and so injurious to the soul as pride. No grace is so commended, both by precept and example, as humility.—Ryle.

### Truth

Truth is not of man's making, but of God's revelation. Hear it in the house of God.—American Lutheran.

### To Be Thankful

To be thankful is to be especially Christlike.—Russell H. Conwell.

## Two Letters

The first written twenty years ago, the second recently by Mrs. J. H. Bourland, Frankston, Texas.



June 2, 1924, she writes:—

"For twenty-three years I was a constant sufferer from chronic catarrh. I had a severe misery and burning in the top of my head, a continual dropping of mucus into my throat causing frequent expectoration. My entire system became involved and I grew worse. It seemed as if I could not recover from a constant cough and frequent attacks of bilious colic. My bowels were affected, causing alarming hemorrhages. I tried many remedies and finally took Pe-ru-na. In three days I was relieved of my bowel trouble and entirely cured by five bottles. I most cheerfully recommend Pe-ru-na."

June 20, 1924, Mrs. Bourland writes again:—

"I will soon be seventy-nine years old and enjoy good health for one of my age. I still recommend Pe-ru-na and take it myself when necessary."

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Send 4 cents postage to the PE-RU-NA COMPANY, Columbus, Ohio, for book on catarrh.

Pe-ru-na in either tablet or liquid form sold everywhere.

### What's in a Name?

A vigorous family, the Doyles, both mentally and physically. One of Conan Doyle's sisters married a clergyman named Angel, a dear ugly fellow. They lived near to us at Wallingford, and next door to them happened to live another clergyman named Dam. And later on Dam was moved to Goring and found himself next door to a Roman Catholic priest whose name was Father Hell. Providence, I take it, arranges these little things to some wise purpose.—Jerome K. Jerome, in Harper's Magazine.



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