

PRUDENCE'S DAUGHTER

By Ethel Hueston

WNU Service

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SYNOPSIS PART ONE

CHAPTER I.—At a merry party in the studio apartment of Carter Blake, in New York, Jerry Harmer, Prudence's daughter, meets Duane Allerton, a wealthy idler. He becomes slightly intoxicated, and Jerry, resenting his assumption of familiarity, leaves the party abruptly.

CHAPTER II.—The story turns to Jerry's childhood and youth at her home in Des Moines. Only child of a wealthy father, when she is twenty she feels the call of Art, and her parents, with some misgivings, agree to her going to New York to study.

CHAPTER III.—In New York Jerry makes her home with Mrs. Delaney ("Mimi"), an actress, who, with Theresa, a painter, occupies the house. Jerry takes an immediate liking to Theresa, and the two become fast friends.

CHAPTER IV.—The friendship between Jerry and Theresa, who is eccentric but talented, grows. Jerry poses for Theresa's masterpiece, "The Ocean Rider." Allerton calls on Jerry. The girl, recalling his conduct at the studio party, refuses to see him.

CHAPTER V.—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 and offers her expensive painting equipment to an almost penniless girl student, Greta Val, who cannot understand her generosity. A painful scene results.

CHAPTER VI.—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, and is pained at the seeming frivolousness of the older woman in the face of the tragedy. The "present" Theresa had promised Jerry proves to be her picture, "The Ocean Rider." Jerry is deeply moved. After the funeral of her friend she decides to go home.

CHAPTER VII.—Jerry, with Theresa's help, convinces Greta of her good intentions, and the two girls "make up." At a party Jerry again sees Duane, and will not recognize him. Theresa hints that Jerry should go home, and promises her a "present."

PART TWO

CHAPTER I.—At home Jerry is enthusiastically welcomed by her adoring parents. She wins their sympathies with the pathetic stories of Theresa and of Greta Val.

CHAPTER II.—Unable to settle into the routine of everyday life in her home city, Jerry is dissatisfied.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK)

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, profusely 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 glowed around at her little family. "I've been having a heavenly time, mother—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 sirlolin 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 roaster 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 a—"

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 rofl.

"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!"

Jerrold looked at her. "I thought you didn't see any sense in making money you don't need, just—"

"Oh, this is a different thing! This is—well, I'm doing something for the money! I've got a right to the money if I earn it. It's—don't you see how it is, mother?"

"Of course I do."

"And think of the poor old House," Jerry finished pathetically. "After all these years of being a barn, and a blot on the landscape, just think how it will feel to wake up some morning and find it is pretty, and lovely, and that people are stopping in the street to exclaim over it! Think how you'd feel if you were a house."

Jerrold considered that too much of a strain on a business imagination like his, but he finally agreed that it was a sound practical proposition, and if Jerry had made up her mind to it, he thought it might turn out rather nicely all around. And he would go with her the very next day to look it over, and get figures on it, and if it seemed all she said, they would buy it and pitch in.

"Buy it!" Jerry repeated, in great surprise. "It is bought! I bought it this afternoon. I gave him my five hundred dollars, and I don't have to make another payment for three months, and I figure that by that time I ought to have it looking like pretty much of a place. What I want the money from you for, is to begin tearing things down."

When dinner was over, Jerry looked regretfully at the waning light. She should have liked to dash her father and mother out to look at the house right away, but it was too dark. So she pulled out all the old House Beautifuls, and spread them over the dining room table, and worked feverishly with a pencil and a pad of paper, sketching out little nooks and corners as she intended having them in her finished product.

"Lucky thing I studied Art, after all," she said brightly. "I never thought I'd find such a real practical use for all that nonsense."

Prudence hung over her with pleased solicitude, charmed with her avid interest, agreeing with every word she uttered.

"I may not make such a lot on this one," Jerry admitted later rather reluctantly to Jerrold. "Because I don't know how to figure down the expenses of it. But with the experience I get on this one, I'll make a killing of the next."

"What do you mean, the next? Is this the first of a series?"

Jerry pulled herself up, surprised. "That was a funny thing to say," she admitted. "I hadn't thought of a next one." She went on brightly, "But of course you can see that I must not waste all this experience, and if I can make a little on the first I can make heaps more on the second. So when you come to think of it, of course this is just the beginning."

As Jerrold had grown older, had learned to entrust his affairs to others in his employ, he had gradually fallen into a way of going steadily later to the office, so that now it was customary in the home to have breakfast at nine o'clock, after which Jerrold took his own time about getting off. But on the morning after Jerry discovered her passion, he found himself a tardy member of the household. Jerry pounded on the bathroom door three times while he was shaving, urging him to make haste, and when he hurried down at last, to show her indignantly that it then wanted ten minutes of the hour, she said:

"Oh, I forgot to tell you. I told them we'd have breakfast at eight-thirty."

turn out for a sweep of graceful French windows.

The awkward square parlor and parlor bedroom, comprising the left-hand portion of the first floor, were thrown together to make a broad living room, with window seats all the way around and shelves for books and handsome built-in cabinets. The staircase which had so particularly annoyed her was completely thrown into the discard, and a very broad one erected in its stead, rising from a wide base in the rear of the living room and turning itself about in some curious fashion finally to reach the top, where the changes were yet more drastic. One sleeping room was entirely done away with, to be transformed into a pretty informal sitting room or lounge at the head of the stairs, a novel and engaging version of an exaggerated hall.

Jerry felt she had never been so happy, and she had never worked so hard in all her life. She encountered many obstacles. Indeed, many times she was appalled by them. It was hard for her to believe that human beings like herself could be so grossly stupid as to misunderstand and misinterpret instructions so plainly, so lucidly, so painstakingly given. She was amazed to learn that laborers, regardless of the delicacy of the work on which they were engaged, regardless of the imperative need of haste, regardless of the honor that was theirs in assisting to beautify and ennoble, and elevate an inherent weakness in the structure of their own home town, would drop a shovel on the stroke of the hour, and would even walk sturdily out on strike for a trivial detail they called a principle, but which to her seemed a flagrant breach of contract.

She was pained and bewildered to discover that her carefully matured plans, set down in consistent black and white, signed, agreed to, and included in the financial estimates of the contractors, turned out to be not at all as she had intended, and that she was obliged to replan, refigure and realow in order to develop her cherished dreams to concrete fact. And she was especially shocked and upset to find that there were things that a lather, in loyalty to his laboring brothers, would flatly decline to do, things a plumber would wash his hands of, things a plasterer would openly sneer at, things a bricklayer would consider an insult to his profession—and thus oblige her to deal with a totally new organization of workmen to meet the exigencies of the case.

And she found the cost of her work mounted heavenward on soaring wings, and that her anticipated earnings sank with a corresponding ratio. In spite of her natural easy generosity, she soon found herself dickered constantly over trifles, arguing with great heat, even with anger, trying to cut down a dollar or so here, grudgingly allowing a dollar or so there, where she felt the expenditure must not be denied.

"Why, I have to argue over fifty cents, like any street peddler," she said to her father plaintively, regretting this new but necessary niggardliness of hers. "Already they've forced me up and up much farther than I intended. Why, if I don't stand up for my rights, I won't make five hundred dollars on the whole business! And the way I've worked over it!"

"Oh, I thought you did not care about making money," he said. "I thought you said there was no nobility in the simple earning of a dollar or so."

"In the bare earning of it—there isn't. But this is a different matter altogether."

Jerry was joyously, mysteriously, passionately happy. She told herself quite often that she had entirely forgotten Duane Allerton, that she had entirely forgiven him for his vulgar insolence. And she worked harder than ever. Within a month she took an option on another wretched little hovel, four-roomed, moth-eaten, run down at the corners, a disgrace to its street, and immediately began getting estimates for its rebuilding, and making rosette sketches of its future estate.

Jerrold had taken her to his bank in the beginning of her business adventuring and obtained for her an audience with the president, Irvin Wenthery, a member of Jerrold's club and his particular friend. Jerrold was extremely businesslike on this occasion.

"I know you have met my daughter, Jerry," he said, "but I want you to get in touch with her in a professional way as well. She is going into business for herself, and I am starting her off with a checking account of three thousand dollars, but should like for you to extend her an additional credit of two thousand if she needs it."

Jerry explained her business interest with the impulsive eagerness of her youth. And Irvin Wenthery, looked at her, nodded his approval, sighed dismally at her father.

"Ain't girls the darndest, any more?" he asked plaintively. "That second daughter of mine, Emily—know what the little fool's doing? Secretary to a dairyman over in Chicago, twenty-five a week, and crazy about it. Says she won't be dependent on any man for a living, father or what-not. I hope to God she gets married, that's all I've got to say."

Jerry laughed at his concern. "Look at Judge Daniel's daughter. Clerking in the ten-cent! You ought to be glad you drew nothing worse than a secretary—you might have got a laundress or an Art Traller."

In July she started work on the second cottage, impatient to get it into human, habitable shape before the coming winter. And in August she took an option, indorsed by her father, on a huge, six-storied rooming-house for women, the veriest skeleton of a house as Jerry saw houses, built with no more regard for aesthetic satisfaction than a freight train, but with accommodations for two hundred women.

Jerry worked feverishly over that with a pencil and a pad of paper. If she rented two hundred rooms, at an average of thirty dollars a month, the earnings of the house would be six thousand a month. If she paid twelve thousand for the house, spent five thousand making it what she called fit to live in, allowed a running expense of perhaps a thousand a month prior to making a sale outright—Jerry's figures turned to aureate dreams.

She told her father she would bet any amount he wished that she could sell the house it was going to be for twenty-five thousand dollars. Jerrold agreed with her. "Prudence said she knew right from the beginning that Jerry was right. So she bought the house, and in her new absorption in estimates, plans and figures, fell into a way of forgetting to go home for meals at proper hours, and lost a preposterous amount of sleep in her efforts."

Jerry had returned to Iowa in March. It was early in September when she had her first letter from Rhoda La Faye. Rhoda was brisk and to the point, in correspondence as well as in person. Her letter consisted of three paragraphs. The first told Jerry how very much she, Rhoda, loved her, missed her, admired her. The second told her that she, Rhoda, had just been awarded the scholarship by the Academy for her picture, and was leaving the first of October for a year's study and travel through the art centers of Europe. The third said that Duane Allerton, whom perhaps Jerry would remember, had lost all his money in a terrible crash in Wall Street, that the poor fellow was completely broke, down and out, and up against it, as recorded in the daily papers, that he did not know where to turn for the next meal, and was said to be looking for a job, but of course couldn't get one because he, did not know how to do anything. And wasn't it a shame, a nice fellow like Duane? And now he would probably become a tramp and a bum like other nice young fellows who are left money they don't know how to take care of. And with oceans and heaps of love—

Rhoda inclosed voluminous clippings from the daily press of New York to substantiate the last two paragraphs



She Hastily Pulled Out a Pad of Paper and Wrote a Letter.

of her letter. There were photographs of her prize-winning picture, of Rhoda herself, and columns in praise of her and of her work. Jerry ungratefully tossed them to the floor. There were other and more sensational clippings recounting the financial troubles of young Duane Allerton and his desperate plight, with a tragically pencilled sketch showing him, down at the heels, treading the rails as he would doubtless be a few years hence. Jerry read every one of them. She was trembling. She knew that was because she was a tender-hearted girl, and even to her own bitterness of disillusionment, could feel but sorry for the misfortune of any human being. The thought of a young man—any young man—alone in New York, not knowing where to

turn for the next meal, where to lay his head at night—Jerry had read of the miserable ones who sat on the benches in Central park all night—and winter coming on—it struck chill to her gentle heart.

She hastily pulled out a pad of paper and wrote a letter.

"My Dear Mr. Allerton: A letter from my friend, Rhoda La Faye, inclosing newspaper clippings, has just informed me of your disaster on Wall Street. Rhoda says you are unable to get a position, and are without funds. My father is an automobile manufacturer and employs a great many men. If you care to come to the Middle West, he will be glad to give you some kind of position. I do not know what kind of work it will be, nor how much you can earn, but at least it will take care of you until you can get on your feet again. If you have not the money to pay for your ticket, wire me collect, and my father will send it by telegraph."

"It is only fair to warn you that you may have to work pretty hard, for while my father is the kindest man in the world, he believes that every man should earn his wages."

"Sincerely yours,
"GERALDINE HARMER."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SPEED DEMONS WILL THRILL SPECTATORS AT GA. STATE FAIR

TWO DAYS OF AUTOMOBILE RACES BOOKED FOR DIRT TRACK EVENTS.

Savannah, Ga.—Track events at the sixth annual Georgia Fair, opening October 26, will include two days of automobile racing, with stakes sufficiently attractive to draw some of the world's best known dirt-track speed demons.

The automobile speed program will be staged on Monday and Saturday afternoons during the six-day State Fair, October 26-31. Eight events are booked for each day's program, with probably a dozen noted drivers competing for the purses which the management has offered the winners. Undoubtedly there will be thrills aplenty, for the demons taking part in the dizzy speed events will attempt to smash previous remarkable dirt-track records.

Some of the fastest speed cars in use in the world today are expected to be used in the State Fair program, which will be held under the rules of the International Motor Contest Association. These cars, built especially for hair-raising driving, will whirl around the half-mile oval in such a daring manner as to take the spectators to their feet—that is, if previous performances are equalled, and in this year's program there are plans for past stunts to be surpassed. Thrills aplenty are positively to be had by those who attend these contests.

In addition to the two days of motor car contests, there will be fast harness races four afternoons in front of the grandstand. Some of the country's leading horses will participate in the contests at the State Fair.

More or Less.

Farmer to young man from the city: "You want big pay for someone who has never done any farm work."

"Well I figure it will be worth more because it'll take me longer."

Mixed Sweets.

Friend to newlywed: "Did you have waffles with honey?"

Newlywed: "No she was too tired to get up this morning."

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NOTICE OF DISCHARGE

Notice is hereby given that I have filed my final report as administratrix of the estate of R. C. Kirkland deceased, with the Honorable John K. Snelling, Judge of Probate for Barnwell County and that I will petition the said Court for an Order of Discharge and letters of dismissal on Monday the 28th day of September, A. D. 1925.

MRS. JANIE KIRKLAND
Sept. 1st, 1925. Administratrix.

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