

Prudence Says So

By Ethel Hueston,

Author of Prudence of the Parsonage
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CHAPTER XVI. (Continued.)

"I think you'd better take a little. They might drive to town, or go to a social or something."

"Can't do it. Haven't a cent."

"Well, I guess I can lend you a little," was the smiling reply. It was a standing joke in the family that Carol had been financially powdered ever since she began using powder several years previous.

"Are you fond of Jim, Carol?" Lark jumped away backward in the conversation, asking the question gravely, her eyes upon her sister's face.

"Hum! Yes, I am," was the light retort. "Didn't Prudence teach us to love everybody?"

"Don't be silly. I mean if he proposes to you, are you going to turn him down, or not?"

"What would you advise, Lark?" Carol's brows were painfully knitted. "He's got five hundred acres of land, worth at least a hundred an acre, and a lot of money in the bank—his mother didn't say how much, but I imagine several thousand anyhow. And he has that nice big house and an auto, and—oh, everything nice! Think of the fruit trees, Larkie! And he's good looking, too. And his mother says he is always good natured even before breakfast, and that's very exceptional, you know! Very! I don't know that I could do much better, but you, auntie! I'm sure I'd look cute in a sunbonnet and apron, milking the cows! So, boss, so, there, now! So, boss!"

"Why, Carol!"

"Why, Carol!"

"But there are objections, too. They have pigs. I can't bear pigs! Poocey, poocey! The filthy little things! I don't know—Jim and the gray suit and the auto and the cows and overalls and pigs and onions and freckles I have goose flesh. Here they come! Where's that other slipper? Oh, it's clear under the bed!" She wriggled after it, coming out again breathless. "Did I rub the powder all off?" she asked anxiously.

The low honk of the car sounded outside and the twins dumped a miscellaneous assortment of toilet articles into the battered suit case and the tattered hand bag. Carol grabbed her hat from Connie, leisurely strolling through the hall with it, and sent her flying after her gloves. "If you can't find mine, bring your own," she called after her.

Aunt Grace and Connie escorted them triumphantly down the walk to the waiting car where the young man in the new sentimental gray suit stood beside the door. His face was boyishly eager, and his eyes were full of a satisfaction that had a sort of excitement in it, too. Aunt Grace looked at him and signed, "Poor boy," she thought. "He is nice! Carol is a mean little thing!"

She smiled at the twins impartially. "Shall we flip a coin to see who I get in front?" he asked them, laughing.

His mother leaned out from the back seat and smiled at the girls very cordially. "Hurry, twinnies," she said, "we must start or we'll be late for supper." Come in with me, won't you, Larkie?"

"What a greasy schemer she is," thought Carol, climbing into her place without delay.

Jim placed the battered suit case and the tattered bag beneath the seat and drew the rug over his mother's knees. Then he went to Lark's side and tucked it carefully about her feet.

"It's awfully dusty," he said. "You shouldn't have tumbled up so. Shall I put your purse in my pocket? Don't forget you promised to feed the chickens—I'm counting on you to do it for me."

Then he stepped in beside Carol, laughing into her bright face, and the good-bys rang back and forth as the car rolled away beneath the heavy arch of oak leaves that roofed in Maple avenue.

The twins fairly reveled in the glories of the country through the golden days that followed and enjoyed every minute of every day, and begrudged the hours they spent in sleep. The time slipped by "like banana skins," declared Carol crossly, and refused to explain her comparison. And the last day of their visit came. Supper was over at 7 o'clock, and Lark said, with something of wistfulness in her voice, "I'm going out to the orchard for a while, and I'll be myself. And farewell to you, I'm so glad you disturb me—I'm so ugly when I cry."

So she set out alone, and Jim, a little

awkwardly, suggested that Carol take a turn or so up and down the lane with him. Mrs. Forrest stood at the window and watched them, tearful-eyed, but with tenderness.

"My little boy," she said to herself, "my little boy. But she's a dear, sweet, pretty girl."

In the meantime Jim was acquiring himself badly. His face was pale. He was nervous, ill at ease. He stammered when he spoke. Self-consciousness was not habitual to this young man of the Iowa farm. He was not the awkward, ignorant, gangling farm hand we meet in books and see on stages. He had attended the high school in Mount Mark and had been graduated from the state agricultural college with high honors. He was a farmer, as his father had been before him, but he was a farmer of the new era, one of those men who takes plain farming and makes it a profession, almost a fine art. Usually he was self-possessed, assertive, confident, but in the presence of this sparkling twin, for once he was abashed.

Carol was in an ecstasy of delight. She was not a man-eater, perhaps, but she was nearly romance-mad. She thought only of the wild excitement of having a sure-enough lover, the hurt of it was yet a little beyond her grasp. "Oh, Carol, don't be so sweet," Lark had begged her once. "How can the boys help being crazy about you, and it hurts them." "It doesn't hurt anything but their pride when they get snubbed," had been the laughing answer. "Do you want to break men's hearts?" "Well—it's not at all bad for a man to have a broken heart," the irrepressible Carol had insisted. "They never amount to anything until they have a real good disappointment. Then they brace up and amount to something. See? I really think it's a kindness to give them a heart break and get them started."

The callow youths of Mount Mark, of the Epworth league, and the college, were almost unanimous in laying their adoration at Carol's feet. But Carol loved the elasticity, the buoyancy, of loves like these, and she couldn't really count them. She felt that she was getting a bit of solid experience now, and there was nothing callow about Jim—he was solid enough. And now, although she could see that his feelings stirred, she felt nothing but excitement and curiosity. A proposal, a real one! It was imminent, she felt it.

"Carol," he began abruptly, "I am in love."

"Are you?" Carol had not expected him to begin in just that way.

"Yes—I have been for a long time. With the sweetest and dearest girl in the world. I know I am not half good enough for her, but I love her so much that—I believe I could make her happy."

"Do you?" Carol was frightened. She reflected that it wasn't so much fun as she had expected. There was something wonderful in his eyes, and in his voice. Maybe Lark was right—maybe it did hurt! Oh, she really shouldn't have been quite so nice to him!

"She is young—so am I—but I know what I want and if I can only have her I'll do anything I— His voice broke a little. He looked very handsome, very grown-up, very manly. Carol quivered. She wanted to run away and cry. She wanted to put her arms around him and tell him she was very, very sorry; and she would never do it again as long as she lived and breathed.

"Of course," he went on, "I am not a fool. I know there isn't a girl like her in ten thousand, but—she's the one I want, and—Carol, do you reckon there is any chance for me? You ought to know. Lark doesn't have secrets from you, does she? Do you think she'll have me?"

Certainly! It was the surprise of Carol's life. If it was romance she wanted, here it was in plenty. She stopped short in the daisy-bright lane and stared at him.

"Jim Forrest," she demanded, "is it Lark you want to marry, or me?"

"Lark, of course!"

Carol opened her lips and closed them. She did it again. Finally she spoke. "Well, of all the idiots! If you want to marry Lark, what in the world are you out here proposing to me for?"

"I'm not proposing to you," he objected. "I'm just telling you about it."

"But what for? What's the object? Why don't you go and rave to her?"

He smiled a little. "Well, I guess I thought; telling you first was one way

of breaking it to her gently."

"I'm perfectly disgusted with you," Carol went on, "perfectly. Here I've been expecting you to propose to me all week, and—"

"Propose to you! My stars!"

"Don't interrupt me," Carol snapped. "Last night I lay awake for hours—look at the rings beneath my eyes—"

"I don't see 'em," he interrupted again, smiling more broadly.

"Just thinking out a good flowery rejection for you and then you trot me out here and propose to Lark! Well, if that isn't nerve!"

Jim laughed loudly at this. He was used to Carol and enjoyed her little outbursts. "I can't think what on earth made you imagine I'd want to propose to you," he said, shaking his head as though appalled at the idea.

Carol's eyes twinkled at that, but she did not permit him to see it. "Why shouldn't I think so? Didn't you say a new gray suit? And haven't I the best complexion in Mount Mark? Don't all the men want to propose to a complexion like mine?"

"Shows their bum taste," he muttered.

Carol twinkled again. "Of course," she agreed, "all men have bum taste, if it comes to that."

He laughed again, then he sobered.

"Do you think Lark will turn you down," said Carol promptly, "and I hope she does. You aren't good enough for her. No one in the world is good enough for Lark except myself. If she should accept you—I don't think she will, but if she has a mental aberration and does—I'll give you my blessing, and come and live with you six months in the year, and Lark shall come and live with me the other six months, and you can run the farm and send us an allowance. But I don't think she'll have you; I'll be disappointed in her if she does."

Carol was silent a moment then. She was remembering many things—Lark's grave face that day in the parsonage when they had discussed the love of Jim, her unwonted gentleness and her quiet manner during this visit, and one night when Carol, suddenly awakening, had found her weeping bitterly into her pillow. Lark had said it was a headache, and was better now, and Carol had gone to sleep again, but she remembered now that Lark never had headaches! And she remembered how very often lately Lark had put her arms around her shoulders and looked searchingly into her face, and Lark was always wistful, too, of late! She sighed. Yes, she caught on at last, "had been pushed on to it," she thought angrily. She had been a wicked, blind, hateful little simpleton or she would have seen it long ago. But she said nothing of this to Jim.

"You'd better run along then, and switch your proposal over to her, or I'm likely to accept you on my own account," just for a joke. And he said and told her "I'm good and sure that I didn't get a chance to use my flowery rejection. But I'm almost sure she'll turn you down."

Then Carol stood in the path and watched Jim as he leaped lightly over fences and ran through the sweet meadow. She saw Lark spring to her feet and then step out from the shade of an apple tree, and then Jim took her in his arms.

After that Carol rushed into the house and up the stairs. She flung herself on her knees beside her bed and buried her face in the white spread.

"Lark," she whispered, "Lark!" She clenched her hands and her shoulders shook. "My little twin," she cried again, "my nice old Lark." Then she got up and walked back and forth across the floor. Sometimes she shook her fist. Sometimes a little crooked smile softened her lips. Once she stamped her foot and then laughed at herself. For an hour she paced up and down. Then she turned on the light and went to the mirror, where she smoothed her hair and powdered her face as carefully as ever.

"It's a good joke on me," she said smiling, "but it's just as good a one on Mrs. Forrest. I think I'll go and have a laugh at her. And I'll pretend I knew it all along."

She found the woman lying in a hammock on the broad piazza where a broad shaft of light from the open door fell upon her. Carol stood beside her, smiling brightly.

"Mrs. Forrest," she said, "I know a perfectly delicious secret. Shall I tell you?"

The woman sat up, holding out her arms. Carol dropped on her knees beside her, smiling mischievously at the expression on her face.

"Cupid has been at work," she said softly, "and your own son has fallen a victim."

Mrs. Forrest sniffed slightly, but she looked lovingly at the fair sweet face. "I am sure I can not wonder," she answered in a gentle voice. "Is it all settled?"

"I suppose so. At any rate, he is

proposing to her in the orchard and I am pretty sure she's going to accept him."

Mrs. Forrest's arms fell away from Carol's shoulders. "Lark!" she ejaculated.

"Yes—didn't you know it?" Carol's voice was mildly and innocently surprised.

"Lark! Mrs. Forrest was plainly dumfounded. "I—I thought it was you!"

"Me!" Carol was intensely astonished. "Me? Oh, dear Mrs. Forrest, whatever in the world made you think that?"

"Why—I don't know," she faltered weakly. "I just naturally supposed it was you. I asked him once where he left his heart and he said 'At the parsonage,' and so of course I thought it was you."

Carol laughed gaily. "What a joke," she cried. "But you are more fortunate than you expected, for it is my precious old Larkie. But don't be too glad about it, or you may hurt my feelings."

"Well, I am surprised, I confess, but I believe I like Lark as well as I do you, and of course Jim's the one to decide. People say Lark is more sensible than you are, but it takes a good bit of a man to get beyond a face as pretty as yours. I'm kind of proud of Jim!"

CHAPTER XVII.

The Girl Who Wouldn't Propose.

It took a long time for Carol to recover from the effect of Lark's disloyalty, as she persisted in calling it. For several weeks she didn't twinkle at all. But when at last the smiles came easy again, she wrote to Mr. Duke, her pfeffor no longer, but now a full fledged young minister. She apologized sweetly for her long delay.

"But you will forgive me when you have read this," she wrote. "Cupid is working havoc in our family. Of course, no one outside the home circle knows yet, but I insisted on telling you because you have been such a grand good friend to us for so long. We may seem young and we were fresh, but we are really very grown up. We act quite mature now and never think of playing jokes. But I didn't finish my news, did I?"

"It is Jim Forrest—he was in high school when we were. Remember him? Larkie and I were out to spend a week and—but I needn't go into particulars. I knew you would be interested. The whole family is very happy about it, he is a great favorite with every one. But how our family is so pleased to pieces! Still, since it is Jim—he is nice, isn't he? But you wouldn't dare say so."

Carol's eyes glittered wickedly as she sealed this letter, which she had penned with greatest care. And a few days later when the answer came she danced gleefully up the stairs—not at all "mature" in manner, and locked the door behind her while she read:

"Dear Carol:

"Indeed I am very interested and I wish you all the joy in the world. Tell Jim for me how very much I think he is to be congratulated. He seems a fine fellow, and I know you will be happy. It was a surprise, I admit—I knew he was doing the very devoted—but you have seemed so young to me, always. I can't imagine you too grown up for jokes, though you do sound more 'mature' in this letter than you have before. Lark will be lonely, I am afraid."

"I am very busy with my work, so you will understand if my letters come less frequently, won't you? And you will be too busy with your own happiness to bother with an old professor any more anyhow. I have enjoyed our friendship very much—more than you will ever know—and I want once more to hope you may be the happiest woman in the world. You deserve to be."

"Very sincerely your friend,

"David A. Duke."

Carol lay down on the bed and crushed the letter ecstatically between her hands. Then she burst out laughing. Then she cried a little, nervously, and laughed again. Then she smoothed the letter affectionately and curled up on the bed with a pad of paper and her father's fountain pen to answer the letter.

"My dear Mr. Duke: However in the world could you make such a mistake. I've been laughing ever since I got your letter, but I'm vexed too. He's nice, all right; he's just fine, but I don't want him! And think how annoyed Lark would be if she could see it. I am not engaged to Jim Forrest—not to any one. It's Lark! I certainly didn't say it was I, did I? We're all so fond of Jim that it really is a pleasure to the whole family to count him one of us, and Lark grows more delightfully joyful all the time. But I know you're awfully busy, of course, and I hate to intrude, but you must write one little postal card to apologize for your error, and I'll understand how hard you are working when you

do not write again.

"Hastily, but always sincerely,

"Carol."

Carol jumped up and caught up her hat and rushed all the way down town to the postoffice to get that letter started for Danville, Illinois, where the Reverend Mr. Duke was located. Her face was so radiant and her eyes were so heavenly blue and so sparkling bright, that people on the street turned to look after her admiringly.

She was feverishly impatient until the answer arrived and was not at all surprised that it came under special delivery stamp, though Lark lifted her eyebrows quizzically and Aunt Grace smiled suggestively, and her father looked up with sudden questioning in his face. Carol made no comment, only ran up to her room and locked the door once more.

"Carol, you awful little scamp, you did that on purpose, and you know it. You never mentioned Lark's name. Well, if you wanted to give me the scare of my life, you certainly succeeded. I didn't want to lose my little chum and I knew very well that no man in his proper senses would allow his sweetheart to be as good a comrade to another man as I want you to be to me. Of course I was disappointed. Of course I expected to be busy for a while. Of course I failed to see the sterling worth of Jim Forrest. I see it now, though. I think he's a prince, and as near worth being in your family as anybody could be. I'm sure we'll be great friends and tell Lark for me that I am waxing enthusiastic over his good qualities even to a point of being inarticulate. Tell her how happy I am over it, a good deal happier than I've been for the past several days, and I am wishing them both a world of joy. I'm having one myself, and I find it well worth having. I could shake you, Carol, for playing such a trick on me. I can just see you crouch down and giggle when you read this. You wait, my lady. My turn is coming. I think I'll run down to Mount Mark next week to see my uncle—he's not very well. Don't have any dates."

"Sincerely, D. D."

And Carol laughed again and wiped her eyes.

The Reverend Mr. Duke's devotion to his elderly uncle in Mount Mark was a most beautiful thing to see. Every few weeks he "ran down for a few days," and if he spent most of his time recounting his uncle's symptoms before the sympathetic Starks, no one could be surprised at that. He and Mr. Starr naturally had much in common, both ministers, and both—at any rate, he was very devoted to his uncle, and Carol grew up very, very fast, and smiled a great deal, but laughed much less frequently than in other days. There was a shy sweetness about her that made her father watch her anxiously.

(To be continued.)

CHARITON.

Walter Good has gone to Canada to purchase potatoes for some of the Chariton merchants.

W. P. Pahlam, Wallace, Nebr., returned home after a few days' visit with the home folks.

Columbus Chambers left a few days ago for Yates Center, Kansas, to look after his farming interests, expecting to be home in time to cast his vote.

Mrs. J. F. Thomas is enjoying a visit from her daughter Mrs. Bertha Cook of Indianapolis, Ind.

Harry Hemphill has gone to Rockford, Ill., where he will conduct a dancing school. His mother will join him there in a few weeks.

Mr. and Mrs. Emil Larson entertained a company of friends at a 6:30 dinner on Wednesday evening.

John G. Lane of Yuma, Colo., is here for a visit with relatives and old friends. He was reared in Liberty township near Oakley.

Mr. Eugene Teas and baby of Randolph, are visiting in Chariton with her parents Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Ensley enroute to Indiana where they will reside for a time, and where Mr. Teas is employed.

W. B. E. Lusk has gone to Quincy, Ill., to spend the winter with his son Chas. B. Lusk and family.

Mrs. Lizzie Fenick is spending a few days in Des Moines with her daughter Dorothy who is a student at Drake university.

Franklin Bell has returned from an automobile trip to St. Joseph, Mo.

W. H. Smyth, department president of the W. R. C. has returned from an inspection trip over the state.

Mr. and Mrs. Bun Graves are the parents of a daughter, born Wednesday.

Mrs. Mary J. Holmes has returned from a ten months' trip to Los Angeles and other points in California.

AGED WOMAN FOR HUGHES.

Moline, Ill., Nov. 4.—Mrs. Swan Johnson, of Moline, will be 91 years of age next Tuesday and on that day will go to the polls and cast her first ballot at a national election. She says she will vote for Hughes and the entire republican ticket.

BEAUTY CHATS

By EDNA KENT FORBES

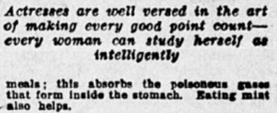
Why Actresses Are Pretty

A CERTAIN YOUNG GIRL graduated with many honors from a college preparatory school, but decided to go to a school of dramatic art instead of through to college, as she had planned originally. Alice—that was her name—had been so busy studying Greek and algebra that she had never given a thought to her appearance. She wore big hipped corsets, she slouched, her complexion was poor, her hair always seemed wispy, and she looked like the typical "bookworm" human being.

Two weeks at the dramatic school changed her almost beyond recognition—as I know, for I saw her myself and scarcely knew her. The instructor had, first of all, made her change her method of standing, giving her daily setting up exercises till she learned to keep her shoulders and hips back and her head high. Then the teacher made her change her style of corset, and had personally supervised the buying of her new fall outfit, selecting artistic clothes, the proper model corset, and making her pupil learn to wear both with an air of distinction.

Alice was taught to walk upstairs gracefully, and across a room gracefully. She was taught to clean her skin and keep it like a fresh and pretty, and to do her hair becomingly. And—in two weeks she was so much improved, her classmates hardly knew her. Now, she is one of the best looking of leading ladies. She never cared much about her looks, you see, until she had to, as a business asset.

Good looks are the best business asset a girl has, whether she spends her life in social pleasure or in a busy office. And good looks most often consist in simply making the best of everything Nature has given you, and taking the very best care of yourself into the bargain.



Actresses are well versed in the art of making every good point count—every woman can study herself as intelligently.

Questions and Answers

Can you give me some suggestions for the quick cure of a bad break? I am a stenographer, and I know how unpleasant it must be to dictate to a person who isn't just as fresh and dainty as she can be.—Business Girl.

To Amelle—To rid the skin of pimples, use the cream treatment given above, diet, and rub the face nightly with some specially prepared pimple cream. After the worst pimples have gone, use ordinary cream, following a very hot washing or steaming. Afterwards close the pores by rubbing the face with ice.

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Courier's Drawing Puzzle



This is little Tiny Tim, can you find his brother Jim? COMPLETE THE PICTURE BY DRAWING A LINE THROUGH THE DOTS BEGIN AT NO. 1 AND TAKE THEM NUMERICAL.

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