

PRUDENCE SAYS SO

By Ethel Hueston
AUTHOR OF PRUDENCE OF THE PARSONAGE



Prudence at that moment felt that she knew very little about it, indeed. She turned to Fairy. There was a strange intonement in Fairy's fine eyes as she studied the twins on the floor at her feet.

"You aren't thinking of turning Christian Scientists, yourselves, are you?" asked Prudence rather humbly. "Oh, of course, we aren't Scientists, Prudence," was the quick denial. "We don't know anything about it yet, really. But there are lots of very helpful things in it, and—people talk about it so much, and—they have made such wonderful cures, you know, and—we'd thought we'd just study up a little."

"You take the book yourself and read it, Prue," urged Carol hospitably. "You'll see what we mean."

Prudence drew back quickly as though the book would sear her fingers. She looked very forlorn. If only her father were at home—ten days between herself and the lifting of responsibility!

"When father comes home—she began. And then suddenly Fairy spoke. "I think the twins are right," she said emphatically. "It would be very narrow-minded of us to refuse to look into a subject as important as this. Let them go on and study it; we can decide things later."

Prudence looked very doubtful, but a warning movement of Fairy's left eyelash—the side removed from the twins—comforted her. "Well—" she said. "Of course, Prudence, we know it would nearly break father's heart for us to go back on our own church—but do you think if folks become truly convinced that Christian Science is the true and good religion, they ought to stand by it and suffer—just like the martyrs of old?" suggested Lark—and the suggestion brought the doubt-clouds thick about Prudence's head once more.

"We may not be convinced, of course, added Carol, "but there is something rather—assuring—about it." "Oh, twins," Prudence cried earnestly, but stopped as she caught again the slight suggestive movement of Fairy's left eyelash.

"Well, let it go for this afternoon," she said, her eyes intent on Fairy's face. "I must think it over."

The twins, with apparent relish, returned to their perusal of the book. Fairy rose almost immediately and went into the house, coming back a moment later with her hat and gloves.

"I'm going for a stroll, Prue," she said. "I'll be back in time for supper." It was two hours later when Fairy came back. Prudence was alone on the porch.

"Where are the twins?" asked Fairy softly.

"Upstairs," was the whispered reply. "Well?"

Then Fairy spoke more loudly, confident that the twins, in their upstairs room, could hear every word she said. "Come upstairs, Prue. I want to talk this over with you alone." And then she whispered, "Now, you just take your cue from me, and do as I say. The little sinners! We'll teach them to be so funny!"

In their own room she carefully closed the door and smiled, as she noted the creaking of the closet door on the twins' side of the wall. Eavesdropping was not included among the cardinal sins in the twins' private dialogue, when the conversation concerned themselves.

"Now, Prudence," Fairy began, speaking with an appearance of solemnity, though she took great pains to turn her face toward the twins' room, and enunciated very clearly indeed. "I know this will hurt you, as it does me, but we've got to face it fairly. If the twins are convinced that Christian Science is the right kind of religion, we can't stand in their way. I've been reading up a little myself this afternoon, and there are some good points in Christian Science. Of course, for our sakes and father's, the twins will be generous and deny they are Scientists. But at heart, they are. I saw it this afternoon. And you and I, Prudence, must stand together and back them up. They'll have to leave the church. I think we'll have them go before the deacons next Sunday while father is gone—then he will be spared the pain of it. We must make it as easy for them as we can. They'll probably dismiss them—I don't suppose they'll give them letters. But it must be all over before papa comes back."

Then she hissed in Prudence's ear, "Now cry."

Prudence obediently began sniffing and gulping, and Fairy rushed to her and threw her arms about her, sobbing in heartbroken accents, "There, there, Prue, I know—I felt just the same about it. But we can't stand between the twins and what they think is right. We aren't here that on our consciences."

The two wept together, encouraged by the deathlike stillness in the closet on the other side of the wall.

Then Fairy said, more calmly, though still sobbing occasionally, "For our sakes, they'll try to deny it. But we can't let the little darlings sacrifice themselves. They've got to have a

chance to try their new belief. We'll just be firm and insist that they stand on their rights. We won't mention it to them for a day or two—we'll fix it up with the elders first. And we must surely get it over by Sunday. Poor old father—and how he loves—Oh, Prudence, dear, don't cry so."

Prudence caught her cue again and began weeping afresh. They soothed and caressed and comforted each other for a while, and then went downstairs to finish getting supper.

In the meantime the shocked and horrified twins in the closet of their own room, were clutching each other with passionate intensity. When their sisters had gone downstairs they stared at each other in agony.

"They—they wo-won't p-p-put us out of the ch-ch-church," gasped Carol.

"They will," stammered Lark. "You know what Prudence is! She'd put the whole church out if she thought it would do us any good. Oh, Carol, I told you it was wicked to joke about religion."

This unexpected reproach on the part of her twin brought Carol back to earth. "I didn't read a word of it, did you?—I just thought it would be such a good joke on Prudence—with father out of town."

The good joke was anything but funny now.

"They can't make us be Scientists if we don't want to," protested Lark. "They can't. Why, I wouldn't be anything but a Methodist for anything on earth. I'd die first. We'll just go and tell Prudence it was a joke—Prudence is always reasonable. She won't—"

"She'll punish us, and—it'll be such a joke on us, Larkie. Even Connie'll laugh."

They squirmed together, wretchedly, at that.

"It—it was a good joke while it lasted," said Carol, with a very faint shadow of a smile. "Don't you remember how Prudence gasped? She kept her mouth open for five minutes!"

"It's still a joke," added Lark gloomily, "but it's on us."

"They can't put us out of the church!"

"I don't know. Like as not they'll say we'd be a bad influence among the members."

"Twins!"

The call outside their door sounded like the trump of doom to the conscience-smitten twins, and they clutched each other, started, crying out. Then, sheepishly, they stepped out of the closet to find Fairy regarding them quizzically from the doorway. She repressed a smile with difficulty, as she said quietly.

"I was just talking to Mrs. Meins over the phone. She's going to a Christian Science lecture tonight, and she said she wished I wasn't a minister's daughter and she'd ask me to go along. I told her I didn't care to, but said you twins would enjoy it. She'll be here in the car for you at seven forty-five."

"I won't go," cried Carol. "I won't go near their old church. You can't make me."

Lark shook her head in corroborative denial.

"Well, that's queer," Fairy frowned, then she smiled.

Suddenly, to the tempest-tossed and troubled twins, the tall, splendid Fairy seemed a haven of refuge. And with a cry of relief and shame and fear, the twins plunged upon her and told her their little tale.

"You punish us this time, Fairy," begged Carol. "We—we don't want the rest of the family to know. We'll take any kind of punishment, but keep it dark, won't you?"

"I'll talk it over with Prudence," said Fairy. "But—I think we'll have to tell the family."

Lark moved her feet restlessly. "Well, you needn't tell Connie," she said. "Having the laugh come back on us is the very meanest kind of a punishment."

Fairy looked at them a moment, wondering if, indeed, their punishment had been sufficient.

"Well, little twins," she said, "I guess I will take charge of this myself. Here is your punishment." She stood up, again, and looked down at them with sparkling eyes as they gazed at her expectantly.

"We caught on that it was a joke. We knew you were listening in the closet. And Prudence and I acted our little parts to give you one good scare. Who's the laugh on now? Are we square? Supper's ready." And Fairy ran downstairs, laughing, followed by two entirely abashed and humbled twins.

CHAPTER III.

How Carol Spoiled the Wedding.
A day in June—the kind of day that poets have rhymed and lovers have craved since time began. On the side porch of the parsonage, in a wide hammock, lay Aunt Grace, looking languidly through half-closed lids at the girls beneath her on the step. Prudence, although her face was all a-dream, bent conscientiously over the bit of linen in her hands. And Fairy, her piquantly bright features clouded

with an unwonted frown, crumpled a letter in her hand.

"I do think men are the most aggravating things that ever lived," she declared, with annoyance in her voice. The woman in the hammock smiled slightly, and did not speak. Prudence carefully counted ten threads, and solemnly drew one before she voiced her question.

"What is he saying now?"

"Why, he's still objecting to my having dates with the other boys." Fairy's voice was vibrant with grief. "He does make me wild! Aunt Grace, you can't imagine. Last fall I mentioned casually that I was sure he wouldn't object to my having lecture course dates—I was too hard up to buy a ticket for myself; they cost four dollars, and aren't worth it, either. And what did he do but send me eight dollars to buy two sets of tickets! Then this spring, when the baseball season opened, he sent me season tickets to all the games, suggesting that my financial stringency could not be pleaded as excuse. Ever since he went to Chicago last fall we've been fighting because the boys bring me home from parties. He wants me to patter along by myself like a—like—a hen!" Fairy said "hen" very crossly!

"It's a shame," said Prudence sympathetically. "That's just what it is. You wouldn't say a word to his taking girls home from things, would you?"

"Hum—that's a different matter," said Fairy more thoughtfully. "He hasn't wanted to yet. You see, he's a man and can go by himself without having it look as though nobody wanted to be seen with him. And he's a stranger over there, and doesn't need to get chummy with the girls. The boys here all know me, and ask me to go, and—a man, you see, can just be passive and nothing happens. But a girl's got to be downright negative, and it's no joke. One misses so many good times. You see the cases are different, Prue."

"Yes, that's so," Prudence assented absent-mindedly, counting off ten more threads.

"Then you would object if he had dates?" queried Aunt Grace smilingly. "Oh, no, not at all—if there was any occasion for it—but there isn't. And I think I would be justified in objecting if he deliberately made occasions for himself, don't you?"

"Yes, that would be different," Prudence chimed in, such "miles away" in her voice that Fairy turned on her indignantly.

"Prudence Starr, you make me wild," she said. "Can't you drop that everlasting hemstitching, embroidery, tatting, crocheting, for ten minutes to talk to me? What in the world are you going to do with it all, anyhow? Are you intending to carpet your floors with it?"

"This is a napkin," Prudence explained good-naturedly. "The set cost me fifteen dollars." She sighed.

"Did the veil come?" The clouds vanished magically from Fairy's face, and she leaned forward with that joy of wedding anticipation that rules in woman-world.

"Yes, it's beautiful. Come and see it. Wait until I pull four more threads. It's gorgeous."

"I still think you're making a great mistake," declared Fairy earnestly. "I don't believe in big, showy church weddings. You'd better change it yet. A little home affair with just the family—that's the way to do it. All this satin-gown, orange-blossom elaboration with curious eyes staring up and down—ugh! It's all wrong!"

Prudence dropped the precious fifteen-dollar-set napkin in her lap and gazed at Fairy anxiously. "I know you think so, Fairy," she said. "You've told me so several times." Fairy's eyes twinkled, but Prudence had no intention of sarcasm. "But I can't help it, can I? We had quite settled on the home wedding, but when the twins discovered that the members felt hurt at being left out, father thought we'd better change over."

"Well, I can't see that the members have any right to run our wedding. Besides, it wouldn't surprise me if the twins made it up because they wanted a big fuss."

"But some of the members spoke to father. And you must admit, Fairy, that it is lovely of the Ladies' Aid to give that dinner at the hotel for us."

"Well, they'll get their money's worth of talk out of it afterward. It's a big-mistake.—What on earth are the twins doing out there? Is that Jim Forrest with them? Listen how they are screaming with laughter! Would you ever believe those twins are past fifteen, and nearly through their junior year? They haven't as much sense put together as Connie has all alone."

"Come and see the veil," said Prudence, rising. But she dropped back on the step, gain: Carol came rushing toward them full speed, with Lark and a tall young fellow trailing slowly, laughing, behind her.

(Continued next week)

FOLDAHL

Ole Landen made a trip to Grand Forks last week.

Misses Esther and Myrtle Tangquist spent last Tuesday at Warren.

Mr. and Mrs. John Johnson and daughter, Ethel, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Haugberg and son, Emil, and Mrs. Larson and daughter, Hildur, and Miss Selma Petterson and Miss Emma Bergstrom, autored to Bostox, N. D., to visit with Mrs. and Mrs. Lars Olson of that place. Mrs. Olson is a sister of Mr. Haugberg. They enjoyed the visit.

Read the Want Ads—it pays.

ROSEWOOD

Church Notes From Rindahl.

Rev. Geo. Larson autored up from Thief River Falls on Sunday forenoon to conduct services at Rindahl, after which he left for Norden to speak there in the afternoon. The Rindahl Ladies' Aid will meet at the home of Mrs. B. P. Sagmoen at Rosewood on Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 4th, and the Young Peoples' Society meets the same evening at the church. On Saturday evening, Dec. 1st, the annual auction sale of articles produced by the Ladies' Aid during the year will be held. Lunch will be served after the sale.

Mrs. Simon Styrlund in company with her mother, Mrs. Znerold, of Warren, arrived on Monday evening for a visit with Mrs. J. Styrlund and family.

Mrs. Martin Furan and children left on Monday evening to visit with the S. Benson and L. L. Furan homes at Thief River Falls.

Joe Weiss, of the 13th Infantry, Camp Cody, New Mexico, is home for a brief visit with his parents.

Mrs. John Helquist is home after having spent a week at Thief River Falls receiving medical attention.

A. Collier, from Montana, was in town on business last Monday. He is in town on business after his real estate in town of Norden.

Leonard Peterson, Supt. of the Thief River Falls Light and Water Works, was in town on business last Monday. Beautiful fall weather. The plowing in the neighborhood is completed, many farmers are engaged at breaking, others constructing drainage ditches, fertilizing fields, discing, etc.

Miss Clara Nelson, who has been employed in North Dakota, returned home on Friday evening.

Helmer Carlson and Rose Pratske left on Tuesday morning for Conway, N. D. Miss Pratske had spent the previous Sunday at the Carlson home.

Helmer Carlson left on Wednesday for Bronson, where he is to work at the Soo line station.

R. A. Kromer, president of the Farmers' Club, was an east bound passenger on Monday evening to spend a few days on business in Pennington county.

Mrs. Nina Anderson was on the sick list part of last week and on Tuesday left for Thief River Falls to seek medical aid.

Mrs. Henry Whitehead and children, Edna and Albin, of Fordville, N. D., spent the last week as guests with the Chas. Sagmoen, E. P. Johnson and Emil Blomberg families.

Miss Annie Blom, who has been employed at various Pennington county places this summer and of late been staying with her sister at Thief River Falls, returned home the beginning of the week and will spend the winter with her parents.

Rev. K. Winberg, of Warren, arrived on Tuesday evening to conduct services at the Congregational church the same evening and also to renew old acquaintances of the vicinity for the next following days, after which he left for Numedal to visit a brother.

Henry Heby returned from fall employment near Park River, last Wednesday and is now employed on the Oen farm.

Mrs. Victor Mosbeck and Mrs. H. Whitehead left to have dental work done at Thief River Falls last Wednesday.

Teachers, Lilly Gunstad and Ebba Walbeck in company with John Sorenson and Julius Alby went to Thief River Falls on Wednesday evening to attend the teachers' and school officers' convention. School director, H. Thorsen and treasurer A. Helquist left the same evening.

Miss Evelyn Sorenson returned from her vacation on Thursday.

Mrs. S. S. Nordgaard and son arrived from Viking on Thursday evening to visit with the T. Mellem family.

Road overseer L. Thompson went to Thief River Falls on Thursday evening on business.

Olof Lapeggaard and Henry Erickson recently left for Blackduck with the intention of getting work in the timber districts.

Carl Mellem, Miss Lilly Holson and Mrs. A. T. Thorsen left Thursday evening for Thief River Falls to attend the closing exercises of the teachers' convention.

Sam Heby, of Steiner, having leased part of the Oen farm south of town, has been up this week plowing and doing other fall work. He will stay at Steiner this winter and move up in the spring to take charge of the land.

Mrs. Enoch Nelson, of Viking, arrived on Saturday evening to visit with relatives over Sunday.

Mrs. John Berglund and Miss Backlund, of Strathcona, were over Sunday visitors with Mrs. Berglund's parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. Mellem of this place.

Mrs. O. Olson and daughter, Bernice, returned to Wannaska last week after a two weeks' visit with relatives.

The new residence for Peder Solvold was completed last week and his family, who formerly resided near Viking, moved into same on Thursday.

John Elvov and Carl Olson autored to Middle River on business last Friday.

successful sale of fancy articles from the Ladies' Aid was conducted at the Congregational church on Saturday evening which together with the lunch netted the sum of \$2.85.

Enoch Nelson, of Viking, spent a few days of last week attending to business in the vicinity.

The Rosewood Farmers' Club will meet again on Saturday evening, Nov. 23rd. Lunch will be served and a program is being prepared by Lilly Gunstad and Lilly Holson. Come and be welcome.

J. Raftsest went to Grand Forks on Monday morning for further medical treatment for his hip.

Oscar Ollver arrived by auto from Park River, N. D., Saturday for a visit with the Oliver Flann family.

Organizer J. Peterson, of the Northwest Congregationalist Society, arrived from Little Falls on Saturday to stay over Sunday to look after the business of that society at this place, and also to arrange for getting a successor to Rev. Olof Anderson, after whose death last fall this assembly has been devoid of a regular minister. Rev. Peterson conducted four services at the Congregational church.

STEINER

Too late for last week.

Mrs. Kennison, of Thief River Falls, arrived at Steiner Wednesday for a visit at the home of her brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. John Whitman.

Misses Inga, Celia and Evelyn Sauger are attending high school at Thief River Falls this year. Miss Inga is taking up normal work.

Mr. and Mrs. O. A. Flann, of Rosewood, were callers at Steiner Wednesday afternoon.

John Kellberg is making improvements on his house this fall.

Hubert and Vernon Malberg shot a big wolf recently.

F. Copp has built a new large silo on his farm this fall. The building being made of brick.

Vernon Copp is attending high school at Thief River Falls this year.

The Berg boys have been successful this fall in shooting and killing wolves. Miss Lydia Muzzy was a business caller at Steiner Wednesday afternoon of last week.

Miss Mathilda Liden left for Thief River Falls Wednesday afternoon for a business trip, returning home Thursday.

The shortage of hay in this vicinity has been relieved a great deal by the nice weather which has made it possible to have the cattle out much and gather food themselves and thus spare hay.

P. Solem drove to Thief River Falls Wednesday with stock which he had sold at Thief River Falls.

The little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Steigen, of this place, has been seriously ill with appendicitis for which

she has gone through an operation. She was somewhat better and on the way to recovery at the last report.

Rev. Bredeson, of Thief River Falls, stepped off the train at Steiner Thursday and left immediately for the homes of his friends, who reside a few miles east of Steiner.

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