PRUDENCE SAYS SO

By ETHEL HUESTON

Author of "PRUDENCE OF THE PARSONAGE"

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CHAPTER XV—Continued.

—17—

"You're the nicest old things that ever lived," said Lark, still laughing, but with great warmth and tenderness in her eyes and her voice. "But you can take the stockings back and save your money if you like—we love you just as much."

But this the happy donors stoutly refused to do. The twins had earned this wealth of hose, and finally, wiping their eyes, the twins began to smooth their hair and adjust their ribbons and belts.

"What's the matter?" "Where are you going?" "Will you buy the rest of us some silk stockings?" queried the family, comic-opera effect.

"Where are we going?" Carol repeated, surprised, seeming to feel that anyone should know where they were going, though they had not spoken.

"We're going to call on our friends, of course," explained Lark.

"Of course," said Carol, jabbing her hairpins in with startling energy. "And we've got to hurry. We must go to Mattie's and Jean's and Betty's and Fan's and Alice's and—say, Lark, maybe we'd better divide up and each take half. It's kind of late—and we mustn't miss any."

"Well, what on earth!" gasped Prudence, while the others stared in speechless amazement.

"For goodness' sake, Carol hurry. We have to get clear out to Minnie's tonight, if we miss our supper."

"But what's the idea? What for? What are you talking about?"

"Why, you silly thing," said Carol patiently, "we have to go and tell our friends that we've got four pairs of silk stockings, of course. I wouldn't miss this afternoon for the world. And we'll go the rounds together, Lark. I want to see how they take it," she smiled at them benignly. "I can imagine their excitement. And we owe it to the world to give it all the excitement we can. Prudence says so."

Prudence looked startled. "Did I say that?"

"Certainly. You said pleasure—but excitement's very pleasing, most of the time. Come on, Larkie, we'll have to walk fast."

And with a fond goodby to the generous family, the twins set out to spread the joyful tidings, Lark pausing at the door just long enough to explain gravely, "Of course, we won't tell them—er—just how it happened, you know. Lots of things in a parsonage need to be kept dark. Prudence says so herself."

CHAPTER XVI.

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 p'fessor 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 to you, because you can't forget when we were freshmen, 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 everyone. But how our family is going to pieces! Still, since it is Jim—! He is nice, isn't he? But you wouldn't dare say no."

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,—nor 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 deliriously 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 downtown to the postoffice to get that letter started for Danville, Illinois, where the Rev. 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 succeeded. Of course, I don'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 the 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 Mack 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 Rev. Mr. Duke's devotion to his elderly uncle in Mount Mark was a

Then She Smoothed the Letter Affectionately and Curled Up on the Bed.

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 Starrs, 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.

"Is Carol sick, Grace?" he asked one day, turning suddenly to his sister-in-law.

She smiled curiously. "N-no, I think not. Why?"

"She seems very—sweet."

"Yes. She feels very—sweet," was the enigmatic response. And Mr. Starr muttered something about women and geometry and went away, shaking his head. And aunt Grace smiled again.

But the months passed away. Lark, not too absorbed in her own happiness to find room for her twin's affairs, at last grew troubled. She and Aunt Grace often held little conferences together when Carol was safely out of the way.

"Whatever do you suppose is the matter?" Lark would wonder anxiously. To which aunt always answered patiently, "Oh, just wait. He isn't sure she's grown-up enough yet."

Then there came a quiet night when Carol and Mr. Duke sat in the living room, idly discussing the weather, and looking at Connie, who was deeply immersed in a book on the other side of the big reading lamp. Conversation between them lagged so noticeably that they sighed with relief when she finally laid down her book, and twisted around in her chair until she had them both in full view.

"Books are funny," she began brightly. "I don't believe half the written stuff ever did happen—I don't believe it could. Do girls ever propose, Mr. Duke?"

No one ever proposed to me," he answered, laughing.

"No?" she queried politely. "Maybe no one wanted you badly enough. But I wonder if they ever do? Writers say so. I can't believe it somehow. It seems so—well—unnecessary, some way. Carol and I were talking about it this afternoon."

Carol looked up startled.

"What does Carol think about it?" he queried.

"Well, she said she thought in ordinary cases girls were clever enough to get what they wanted without asking for it."

Carol moved restlessly in her chair, her face drooping a little, and Mr. Duke laughed.

"Of course I know none of our girls would do such a thing," said Connie, serene in her family pride. "But Carol says she must admit she'd like to find some way to make a man say what anybody could see with half an eye he wanted to say anyhow, only—"

Connie stopped abruptly. Mr. Duke had turned to Carol, his keen eyes searching her face, but Carol sank in the big chair and turned her face away from him against the leather cushion.

"Connie," she said, "of course no girl would propose, no girl would want to—I was only joking—"

Mr. Duke laughed openly then. "Let's go and take a walk, shan't we, Carol? It's a grand night."

"You needn't go to get rid of me," said Connie, rising. "I was just going anyhow."

"Oh, don't go," said Mr. Duke politely.

"Don't go," echoed Carol pleadingly.

Connie stepped to the doorway, then paused and looked back at them. Sudden illumination came to her as she scanned their faces, the man's clear-cut, determined, eager—carol's shy and scared and—hopeful. She turned quickly back toward her sister, pain darkening her eyes. Carol was the last of all the girls—it would leave her alone—and he was too old for her. Her lips quivered a little, and her face shadowed more darkly. But they did not see it. The man's eyes were intent on Carol's lovely features, and Carol was studying her slender fingers. Connie drew a long breath, and looked down upon her sister with a great protecting tenderness in her heart. She wanted to catch her up in her strong young arms and carry her wildly out of the room—away from the man who sat there—waiting for her—

Carol lifted her face at that moment, and turned slowly toward Mr. Duke. Connie saw her eyes. They were luminous.

Connie's tense figure relaxed then and she turned at once toward the door. "I am going," she said in a low voice. But she looked back again before she closed the door after her. "Carol," she said in a whisper, "you—you're a darling. I—I've always thought so."

Carol did not hear her—she did not hear the door closing behind her—she had forgotten Connie was there.

Mr. Duke stood up and walked quickly across the room and Carol rose to meet him. He put his arms about her, strongly, without hesitating.

"Carol," he said, "my little songbird"—and he laughed, but very tenderly, "would you like to know how to make me say what you know I want to say?"

"I—I—" she began tremulously, clasping her hands against her breast, and looking intently, as if fascinated, at his square, firm chin so very near her eyes. She had never observed it so near at hand before. She thought it was a lovely chin—in another man she would have called it distinctly "bossy."

"You would try to make me when you know I've been gritting my teeth for years, waiting for you to get grown up. You've been awfully slow about it, Carol, and I've been in such a hurry for you."

She rested limply in his arms now, breathing in little broken sighs, not trying to speak.

"You have known it a long time, haven't you? And I thought I was hiding it so cleverly." He drew her closer in his arms. "You are too young for me, Carol," he said regretfully. "I am very old."

"I—I like 'em old," she whispered shyly.

With one hand he drew her head to his shoulder, where he could feel the warm, fragrant breath against the "lovely chin."

"You like 'them' old," he repeated, smiling. "You are very generous. One old one is all I want you to like." But when he leaned toward her lips, Carol drew away swiftly. "Don't be afraid of me, Carol. You didn't mind once when I kissed you." He laid his hand softly on her round cheek. "I am too old, dearest, but I've been loving you for years, I guess. I've been waiting for you since you were a little freshman, only I didn't know it for a while. Say something, Carol—I don't want you to feel timid with me. You love me, don't you? Tell me, if you do."

"I—I." She looked up at him desperately. "I—well, I made you say it, didn't I?"

"Did you want me to say it, dearest? Have you been waiting, too? How long have you—"

"Oh, a long time; since that night among the rose bushes at the parsonage."

"Since then?"

"Yes; that was why it didn't break my pledge when you kissed me. Because I—was waiting then."

"Do you love me?"

"Oh, P'fessor, don't make me say it right out in plain English—not tonight. I'm pretty nearly going to cry now, and—" She twinkled a little then, like herself, "you know what crying does to my complexion."

But he did not smile. "Don't cry," he said. "We want to be happy tonight. You will tell me tomorrow. Tonight—"

"Tonight," she said sweetly, turning in his arms so that her face was toward him again, "tonight—" She lifted her arms, and put them softly about his neck, the sleeves falling back and showing her pink, dimpled elbows. "Tonight, my dearest—" She lifted her lips to him, smiling.

THE END.

DRIVING RIVETS SLOW WORK

Not Only That, but Enormous Number of Them Are Needed in a Steel Ship.

The largest single item in the labor of fabricating a steel ship is in the riveting of her hull; therefore the driving of rivets is taken as a standard of size and of progress by most of the shipbuilders. To build a 10,000 ton ship a week means the driving of about 650,000 rivets in that time. The Union shipyards of San Francisco, as at present equipped and freed from labor troubles, can drive about 300,000 rivets, although in a record week it drove 411,000 rivets; the four next largest yards in America—at Fore River, Mass., at Newport News, Va., at Camden, and at Philadelphia upon the Delaware—can drive 200,000 to 275,000 rivets a week each. A half dozen smaller steel shipyards will drive from 50,000 to 150,000 each seven days.

Riveting, despite all the inventions devised to speed it up, remains hand work and slow work. A riveting gang consists of two men and two boys—the riveter, his "holder-on," the passer boy and the heater boy. The gang drives from 300 to 375 rivets in the course of a ten-hour day and is tired at the end of it. But when you know that it takes four men all of a working day to drive an average of a little less than 350 rivets, you can begin to see the full size of the labor problem of driving at least 650,000 rivets a week necessary to turn out a 10,000-ton ship at the end of that length of time. In other words, you need 1,200 men for the riveting gangs alone.

Look at the matter from another angle, writes Edward Hungerford in Harper's. Ten ships a week—the tremendous program for 1918 to which we stand committed—means 6,500,000 rivets a week. And the rivet capacity of our five greatest yards—with a total working force of 50,000 men at the end of 1917—was but 1,350,000 rivets a week. And riveting represents only about 20 per cent in the construction of a ship.

Making Life Worth While.

To increase your earning capacity, you must be an energetic, live specimen of humankind. You should be throbbing with surplus power. You should possess a degree of strength that will give you confidence and courage and endurance. Then you can go on day after day, relates a writer, adding to your skill and knowledge and power in your profession. And when you have climbed to the highest point on one sphere of endeavor, you will be ready to look around for other worlds, and continue to experience the delights that come only with the daily struggle, required for the attainment of the objects one has in view. Do not forget the value of systematic effort. Do not waste your energies. Intelligent direction is all-important. Force, to be of value, must be applied at the proper place. Effort, to be productive of reward, must be directed by superior intelligence.

Most Expensive Wood.

The most expensive wood in the world is said to be the boxwood imported from Turkey for the use of engravers. The cost ranges from 4 to 10 cents a square inch for the best grade.—Brooklyn Standard-Union.

Bowser Strikes Chords

But He Does Not Make a Success at It.

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By M. QUAD.

A year or so ago Mr. Bowser read in a magazine what many of thousands of others read. It was an article by a celebrated musical composer, who stated as a fact that there was a chord in music which would appeal to every living thing, from an elephant to a flea, and from a vulture to a canary

He Sat Down and Cried Like a Child.

bird. That chord might appeal to their sympathies, their aggressiveness, their loneliness, their joy, their calmness, and so on through the schedule.

The writer cited one case where an elephant had his sympathies wrought upon so that he sat down and cried like a child. There was also one where a man took a harp to a zoological garden and played on it in front of a tiger's cage. He hit the tiger's aggressive chord, and the animal got out of his cage and terribly bit and clawed two or three patients. Again, when he struck a lively chord of the hippopotamus, the old fellow went waltzing around and his eyes sparkled with joy.

"Egad!" Bowser said to himself. "I am going to prove the truth or falsity of that fellow's story about

The Feathers Flying All Over the Room.

musical chords. Here, you infernal old cat, come down from there and take a seat in a chair while I practice on you a little."

He wanted to touch the cat's sympathy chord, and he persisted for five minutes and made a failure. Then, by chance almost, he touched the right chord. It was a chord in the air "The Sweet By and By." The cat responded to it instantly. Her heart was touched. She gave a yowl and went out of the open window into the back yard and licked seven cats one after the other.

Mr. Bowser didn't know whether to be satisfied or not. He was pondering it over in his mind when he heard the cook fussing around in the dining room. She was making too much noise and he could hear her talking to herself and complaining of her hard life. He would find a chord to calm and quiet her, and if she wanted a raise in wages to make her forget it. He struck a chord that he thought would do the business. It did. He heard her broom drop and she came clattering upstairs and looked into the sitting room and exclaimed:

"Why, Mr. Bowser, what was that? I thought a bad boy had thrown a stone through the window and you had tumbled out of your chair dead."

"It was only me playing, Sarah," calmly replied Mr. Bowser.

"Then, if you don't mind it, please don't play any more, for I certainly whil have to have my wages raised if I stay here where such things are going on."

Mr. Bowser hadn't hit it yet. The people across the alley, with the front of the houses facing on another street, had their back windows open, and his eye caught a human form seated at one of the windows.

"There's my chance," he whispered as his eyes came back to the keys. "It is a girl or woman who is in sorrow, and thinks there is no more joy or pleasure for her in this life. I will try and find the joy chord and give her a new emotion."

Mr. Bowser began with great deliberation to strike every key on the board from left to right, and he kept his eye on the figure in the window as he did so. He had almost reached the end, when he struck a chord that seemed to float out and quiver around with a sort of Fourth of July chorus. The figure instantly changed position, and the woman leaned out of the window and shook her fist and shouted:

"Ye old divil ye! Has a poor woman, who has been over the wash tub all day, got to submit to such an infernal racket as this, when she could catch a nap by this cool window. Stop that clatter or I will blow the whistle for a policeman, and he will soon yank you out of there!"

Mr. Bowser had failed again. Perhaps he should have played on a harp instead of a piano. He pulled on the curtain of the window, and was about to abandon his experiments, when the doorbell rang. He went to the door, and there stood a man with a bulldog, and the man said:

"This is Mr. Bowser, I believe."

"It is."

"Well, Mr. Bowser, the butcher was telling me that you wanted to buy a bulldog, and so I brought mine over. He is worth every cent of fifty dollars, but, as I am hard up just now, I will take half of that."

"I do not wish to buy a dog, of any kind," replied Mr. Bowser, "but I wish you would bring your dog in here a minute, and let me try an experiment on him."

"Is there another dog or cat in the experiment?" cautiously asked the man.

"Oh, no. I am going to play the piano a little, and see how he likes it."

"That won't do no harm, I think, but you must take the risk of it. A bull dog, Mr. Bowser, is an animal that you can't fool with. Sometimes he will lick your hide, and sometimes he will try to get at your throat. I will watch him closely, however, and I guess he will be all right."

The man took a seat, and the dog sat up and looked around him. If he had any idea at all, it was that his owner was going to sell him, and he had objections to that, for everything looked nice and comfortable. Mr. Bowser took a seat at the piano and began to strike chords. He let the bass keys alone and used only the treble. If he used any of the bass keys they might sound like a brickbat falling close to the dog's heels and thus arouse his ire.

Slowly, very slowly, the tender keys were pressed down and held for two or three seconds, and then the right chord came. The bulldog cocked his ears, gave a growl which sounded like distant thunder, and with a sudden lunge he broke from his master and ran across to the divan. Here he seized a sofa pillow in his mouth and had it in threads in a moment and feathers flying all over the room. He had served a second pillow in the same way when the two men interfered. In the melee which ensued both were bitten, two or three chairs knocked over and the easel on which stood Mrs. Bowser's portrait was knocked over and the portrait was trodden under foot. Just at this moment the original of the portrait opened the front door and the dog ran out, pursued by his owner. Mr. Bowser sat down to rub his bitten leg and face the music, but there was no music to face. Mrs. Bower came in and looked around, and then, as she began to remove her hat, she said:

"Oh, yes. I read that same article, and I was going to suggest that you try it some time. I see you have been trying it, and I hope you found it a success!"

THE SPRING DRIVE

Our boys are going "Over the top" and into "No man's land" this spring. No one has any doubt of their ability to get there. There will also be a spring drive on this side of the ocean, because March is the year's "blue Monday." It is the most fatal month of the year. March and April is a time when resistance usually is at lowest ebb. It is a trying season for the "run-down" man. But medical science steps in, and says, "it need not be"! We should cultivate a love of health, a sense of responsibility for the care of our bodies. Do not allow the machinery of the body to clog. Put the stomach and liver in proper condition. Take Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, to be had at most drug stores in tablet or liquid form, tablets sixty-cents a vial, composed of native herbs. This puts the stomach and liver in proper condition. You may be plodding along, no spring, no elasticity, no vim, but as soon as you have put the body into its normal physical condition—oiled the machinery, as it were—you will find new vim, vigor and vitality within you. A little "pep," and we laugh and live. Try it now. Send Dr. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., 10c. for trial package. A little energy will save the day. The prime necessity of life is health. With spirit and energy you have the power to force yourself into action. The Golden Medical Discovery is the spring tonic which you need.

Always Particular.

He had been the nuttiest of the nuts before he trod the paths of crime; and he was to be hanged on the following day.

"Have you any request to make?" inquired the governor of the prison, according to time-honored tradition.

"Well, if you could let me tie the noose myself," suggested the condemned one. "Never did care for those ready-made ties—don't want to start now."

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A Michigan Case

Mrs. James M. Murphy, 510 Maple St., Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., says: "I was miserable from a steady ache across my back and was often unable to attend to my housework. My feet and hands swelled and I suffered from headaches and dizzy spells. I felt all run down, too. Doan's Kidney Pills cured all these symptoms of kidney trouble and put me in the best of health."

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