



The Palmetto '23

Senior Class Prophecy

IT WAS April 13, 1923—also Friday. I was in a dejected and moody state of mind. Possibly the superstitions that people the world over have concerning unlucky Friday and unlucky thirteen had unconsciously permeated my being and accounted for my feeling of melancholia; but I rather attributed my depression to the fact that I had been elected by my classmates to an office for which in my own estimation, I was ill-fitted—that of class prophet, than to any influence of that monstrous ally of ignorance and enemy of enlightenment—superstition. I realized the fearful responsibility which had been placed upon me by my trusting classmates, and I realized my sad lack of any sense which even bordered on the prophetic. And—I repeat—I was, even as Evangel of old, struggling in the slough of Despond.

Having heard that the fates are kind and that they often reveal the future to one when wrapped securely in the arms of Morpheus, I decided to retire early that evening, hoping against hope that the destinies of my classmates might, in some mysterious way, be revealed to me before morning. No genius, however, inspired me during the long, sultry night; on the contrary, I seemed, on the following morning to be farther from my attainment than ever.

But one must live and one must carry out the daily routine, despite joys, sorrows or responsibilities which come to him; so after breakfast, I met school call, and entered chapel to begin my daily school life.

Captain Freeman conducted the exercises, but I could not put myself into the spirit of the song and prayer, as I was desperately attempting to contrive some scheme by which I might fulfill my obligation. I was startled out of my day dream by the words of Capt. Freeman, who, as was usual for the professor who conducted the chapel exercises, was making a talk. He was relating the marvelous discoveries and inventions of modern sciences, and he was reviewing a recent discovery of the medical profession. He said that Dr. A. R. Spikes of the Washington Research Bureau had published the incredulous statement that the future of any being could be ascertained by the minute analysis of a drop of blood taken from his body. Capt. Freeman's talk was punctuated by exclamations of incredulity and laughter; but I had sipped enough from the fount of knowledge to know that nothing is impossible to the darling of God's creation—Man; so I drank in every word eagerly, for I knew that my salvation was at hand.

I could scarcely concentrate my mind on my studies that day, for my head was full of plans. In the afternoon I wrote to Dr. Spikes, and after a lengthy correspondence, contracted with him. He sent seventeen small, numbered, vials in each of which I deposited a small quantity of the blood of each of my classmates; and then returned them to him. My name happened to be the thirteenth on the list which I hastily wrote down from memory, which fact, at the time seemed strangely coincidental to me; but I did not change it.

I waited patiently for three weeks for a letter from Dr. Spikes. Finally, on Friday, May 18, just five weeks to the day after my election, I received an important looking letter, post-marked Washington. I feverishly tore open the flap and found the following letter within: (I have inserted the names.)

Washington, D. C.
May 16th 1923.

Mr. R. F. Berry,
Carlisle School,
Bamberg, S. C.

My dear Mr. Berry:—

I respectfully submit the following results of my analysis.

No. 1—(EASTERLING) From a close analysis of this specimen, I find that the Skyvometer registers decidedly positive, and predict that the young man from whose vein it was taken will become a great military leader.

No. 2—(LARGE) This specimen indicates that the young man has an athletic bent, and his name will become, after many trials and tribulations, a by-word in the mouths of baseball enthusiasts. I predict that he will surpass all batting records, and that he will become one of the highest paid ball players in the world.

No. 3—(SMITH) The skyvometer registered semi-positive on this specimen, which points beyond the shadow of a doubt, to a scientific career. From all the indications of my several tests, I am led to believe that he will enter into the electrical field, and will possibly over-shadow Edison with his discoveries in that great branch of science.