

Class Prophecy. (N S N 1924)

Twas the night before Christmas, 1934. A heavy driven snow was fast covering the sidewalks and streets of a large, hurrying city. I left my elegant apartment house (the night janitor was just coming to relieve me) and hurried down into the happy jostling crowd of pleasure seekers and holiday shoppers. As I walked, I eagerly scanned the faces of the multitude that swayed on and on, that I might see some familiar face this lone Xmas Eve. (Ah me, How many lonely janitors have suffered thus) By this time I had travelled far, and was surrounded on either side by towering, canyon like walls. I was in the sky scraper district. Once, after being buffeted by a particularly Three Milish Limit crowd, I looked up at a large electric sign. It winked out, while I stood in open-mouthed wonderment, waiting for its return. Ah, there it was again. "Madame Ruthanis Awdames, Foreteller of the Future." - "Flight Thirty-seven". I gasped with glee. Surely it could'nt be Ruth Adams. Why, we had copied lesson plans from each other in the Normal school, away back in 1924. Lets see, that was over ten years ago. How the time had flown. I wondered where my class mates were this festive night. Yes, I must see this could be our own Ruth. I turned from the madsome mob and entered the towering mass of stone and steel. The lower halls were deserted. (Janitor asleep in the boiler-room, most likely. Pity they could'nt all be such as I) The elevator shafts were locked. Thirty seven stories!! Yet I started climbing with a will, having served a good apprenticeship in stair climbing while at the Normal. Somewhere a clock boomed ten. Up, ever up, I plodded, winding round and round, up and up. I stopped, gasping for breath. My eyes saw a sign on a glazed door in the dim corridor - 'Emery Jacques, Attorney at Law.' I hurried to it, tried the knob, but it refused to turn. Emery was undoubtedly at home at his own fire-side, with his own little wife, this whirling Xmas eve. Somewhere a bell tolled eleven. I turned away with a sigh, and continued climbing the cold stone stairs, ever upward. I lost count of the time. Floor thirty-three, 34. A howling wind born far out in the mid-Atlantic, tore at the walls of the man made structure. 35, 36! My feet dragged as leaden weights. Thirty seven! I stood swaying in the dim corridor. Somewhere a bell knelled the hour of midnight. The bells of Old Trinity. Far down the long hall I saw a fiery ball. It was the strangest light I ever saw. I was drawn as the moth to the flame. I stood before a huge panelled door. 'Madame Awdames, Medium of the Spirit' The ball of subdued fire cast a weird pallor over the gilded sign. I lifted a heavy wrought knocker and let it fall with a dull thud. All was silent. The door drew inward as by magic. I entered. The door closed silently behind me, as guided by an unseen hand. Here was a high ceilinged room, hung with flaming draperies and illumined by harnessed Northern Lights, so it seemed. The draperies in the far end of this most extraordinary chamber parted. Out stepped two brawny men, garbed in the tawny skin of the tiger. With arms folded across hairy chests, they strode to me and stood erect on either side of me. My eyes bulged. If it was'nt Pete Heppin and Sam Freed, old classmates at the N S N. I jumped at them with out stretched hand. They stood like wooden images, giving me the cod-fish eye. Then simultaneously they spoke, "What is your suit, creature?" I gulped my Adam's apple in three bites and replied, "Goldbergs Two Pants, sirs," in an awed, small voice. Pete waved a mighty arm impatiently. "What do you want?", he bellowed. I trembled, as if I was receiving a 'cold radiator' bauling out at the apartments. "Could I see the Madame?", I said in a far-a way voice. With arched eyebrows they looked me over, and with an audible sniff, strode to shrouded curtains and disappeared. I stood gaping after them. The minutes dragged by. The curtains parted and a woman stepped forward, clad in wondrous silks and gorgeous strings of pearls. It was Ruth. I ran forward with a glad cry, but she held up a bejewelled hand. "Dont you know me, "I cried, "we used to go to the Normal together." She passed a hand across her brow, and answered slowly. "Ah, I see a light. I see a stone structure - and edifice dedicated to knowledge. I see many young men and women hanging over the railings. Ah, yes, I remember you, sirrah." A benevolent light kindled in her mystic eyes. Come in, M'sieu Voelker, and let us conjure with the dim past. With

these words she turned and walked sedately across the richly carpeted chamber and drew aside a plush curtain, beckoning me to enter. I followed, with my hat a shapeless ball in my hands, and entered the most private communal chamber of Madame Awdames, Medium of the Spirit. Ruthie - I mean Ruthania - paused before a long divan, and sinking into the masses of tapestried stuffs covering it, invited me to do likewise. Before us stood a delicately carved table of exquisite design, covered by what looked like a cloth of finely woven spider web. On the stand stood a large, smooth crystal sphere. It looked like a Gullivers Travel pearl, and a slow, subdued, wavering light seemed to exude from its mystic vitals. The pungent odor of incense smote my nostrils. Madame Awdames turned her slumbrous eyes on me and trilled, "Juan, tell me about yourself." My eyes shown with pardonable pride as I told her of my success in my chosen vocation - janitor of the Woodlawn Apartments. "Magnificent, splendid, most praiseworthy," Madame gushed, "I always predicted big things for you, Juan." Now I must tell you about myself. All my life I have felt the cosmic urge to commune with those who are not present. So with this great ambition foremost, I have moulded this establishment and achieved international fame. "Gee," was all I could manage on the moment. The mystic chamber was devoid of sound, save for our own breathing. Casting my eyes on the floor like a client attempting to sponge free advice from his lawyer - you've all done it - I murmured, "Could you tell me about our graduating class, Ruthania, where they are, what they are doing after these ten long years since we parted." "Juan," she replied slowly, "tonight my ego is in perfect harmony with the ether. The whispered nothings are growing most intelligible!" Here eyes lighted with a most mysterious fire. She continued more slowly, "Do not utter a sound. Do not even breathe." I nodded dull assent, for the incense was fast seeing to that. She gathered the filmy shawls around her shoulders, ~~uttering~~ muttering weird expression which I had never heard before. Her breath came in quick, deep gasps. She passed her hands over her eyes, swaying, after the manner of mourning in Metsopatamia. Suddenly she removed her hands from her eyes - they seemed glazed and unnatural - and drew herself up ~~the~~ to the table. She placed both hands on the great crystal ball and gazed into it with a deep and piercing concentration. All the while I did not breathe. She remained thus for a long time. Then she spoke, in slow, measured accents, in a voice which almost made me take a breath, it was that uncanny.

"I see a great assemblage - away over in Michigan - it is made up of the great intellectual leaders of the state - ah yes - a teachers conference. I see Jean Jeffrey, Juanita Kanney, Bernice Bair, Evely Warner, Ruth Weideman, Georgiana Tedford, Loretta O'Brien, Esther Peterson, Ethel Ohman, Ruth Northey, Viola Olson, Beulah Pascoe, and Saimo Ojala, and Gertrude Rockburg. Wht, over half of our class must be there. I see Letha Stephens, Evalen Medler Anna Ludden, Pauline and Victoria Jensen, Ethel Hilliersitting beside Camille Hammerburg, while Anna Kirschenbauer, Aino Puppola, Evelyn Nicholls and Irene Menghoni occupy a table by themselves. There is a great hush. A tall man is explaining the ideal system of teaching reading. All are held in rapt attention. Its Ray Forsman., wearing a red rose in his buttonhole. He's taking a drink of ice water. Seated around him, peacefully snoring, are Superintendentes Plichta, Hakingos, Muehrcke, and Nelson, while Ed. Champion and Billy Goodman are playing a quiet game of dominoes. Both have written histories of the occasionally United States and Cuba, which are used in all of our best deaf and dumb schools. Ah, Ray has desisted - a rippling sigh passes over the crowd. Now they all sit up in their seats, for Thelma Anderson, Dora Lyons and Sarah Bottrell are singing a Christmas Carlo. The light wavers - all is dark - darker - hold - a flash - ah, brilliance - I see scattered homes throughout the United States. I see Mothers tucking little tots in their cribs - I see several Santa Claus' of various widths and breadths, stuffing little stockings full of things. Ah, in one little snow covered nest I see Sam Richards and his wife bending over a radio which squawks most dismally on the thin night air. Through a haze - its growing darker - who is it - ah, my rival - cursed - none other than Helen Wittler who has assumed a fan-

tastic name and fakes spiritual communication. Ah that the world must be filled with sham and fiction. What!! Shes holding a great ball in her studio. A party. Must have charged all those flowers and things.- and oh- that music is wonderful. Who is that standing near her, puffing at the fat cigar. Ah yes, Clarence Zerbel, wearing a black and white checked suit and a big horseshoe diamond. He's manager for Kid Wickstrom, that light weight champion of the Northwest, who stands so pugnaciously on the other side of Helen. Oh, there, over by the punch stand is gathered Inez Corriveau, Dorothy Zryd, ^{BERNICE TREVARTHEN} Beatrice Shimonek, Pat Sullivan, and Julia Ziegler. Their talking politics earnestly with Alderman Sullivan, who smiles benignly, telling them that the bids should be in by the first. They wink unknowingly. Votes for Women. Bah!! Why, there- Pearl Gollinger, my old moomate. Who'd/ would think she would attend a party given by that imposter. It must be a reunion of the class of '24. Theres Inged Kline, Florence Nordling, Ruth Stetter, Aileen Thomas, Mary Meyers, and Myrtle Sylvander surrounding Cleo Stanford ^{wh} who'se clawing forth a weird melody on her saxophone. The music strikes up- ah, a host of young blades appear from no where, and ~~chopping their~~ finding their partners are danding around in a mad whirl. These girls who I have just mentioned have nearly all changed their names. Strange. Or perhaps the young men could account for it. I see Leon Hegner whirling ^{by} with a tall, russet haired chap, and Syl Trytaall is dancing a jig, balancing a glass of punch on his nose. What an orgy- what a way to spend the Christmas- that horrid old Helen Wittler- yet- yet- oh- Helen and I are the best of pals. I guess competition in the spirit~~ual~~ world accounts for the feeling between her and I. Ah, the scene suddenly changes.

I see a great South Shore passenger Zeppelin - its now sailing over the old brewery near Marquette- it is manned by Pilots Charley Olivier and John Brophy. It is idling along at about 200 miles per hour, bound for Champion and points west. The old South Shore faded and died some eight years ago (fell apart one day at Humbolt). Yes, their speeding home with a load of school teachers, superintendents, and flighty little Normal students. Among them I recognize Harold Walter Nelson, Helen Wareham, Frank Lindenthal, Tine Korpi, Bridget Sullivan, and sure enough- Al Sturdy reading a curdling dime novel- no, its the Whiz-bang- sitting beside Maxine La Vinge. Why, theres Clara Laidlaw, the authoress, deeply engrossed in one of Charled Van Ripers latest nawfuls. Theres Violet Eade, Nina Strehl, Ruth Nasberg, Mary Mussato, Lenore Hakenjos, Ruth Person and Alice Olds. Ah, its down in Iron River already and is swinging around to let the others out. Again the scene changes.

I see an expedition slowly making its way through the biting Artic wind. It is led by Tim Shea, he of the icy beard- and beside him walks Earl Gagnon, puffing on an old corncob. The Aurora Borealis is snapping and crackling in the weird artic light. The half wolf pack team follows them. You see, they've argued and argued for years whether Stephenson was right when he told them that pansies grew in the Artic circle- just about now Viljalmur would need ^{PANSIES} ~~rosemary~~ for remembrance if they could lay hands on him. Trudging along behind them, each munching a greasy herring, comes Arnold Jensen, chief cook and compass cleaner, while Jack Williams is imitating the last Eskimo chieftain they had met.- and there marches that handsome blond Viking, Albert Peterson. Hes the expedition cameraman, bent on photographing the little flowers and things- he has'nt done a tap for months. Theres Alger Mudge clapping his hands to keep warm to the time of Ted Fryfogle, whos dreamily strumming the "Polar Bear Blues" on his banjo. Its 75° below zero, and ~~it~~ going strong. Its growing so cold that the light fades- its passing- on and on they march in quest of the tender pansy-. ~~Their/~~ They grow indistinct- Jack Williams is just swiping an Eskimo Pie from one of the sledges- the scene changes.

Far out in the water I see a great steamer coursing aong through the mighty ocean waves- there are thousands of passengers slumbering in its depth- bound for the old battlefields of Europe. Skipper Glendening is pacing the great deck. All is still and inky black, save for the deep throb of the

mighty engines, far down in the bowels of the sea-monster. (They are fired by a group of renegade Juniors who happened along at the New York harbor.) Among the passengers are many of our classmates: Hilda Henderson, Mirtle Inch, Nancy Wennerston, Dorothea Green, Ester Niemi, Hilda Hannuksella, Minnie Gabriault, Magaret Duyone, Barbara Pianfetti, Ellen Risku, Murile Ross, Elsie Strom, Mamie Tampani, and Ina Conant. Louise Fassbender, Ruth Hewson, Jennie Linna and Ilene Cahill are playing bridge, surrounded by Evelyn Herring, Ruth Mc Cullough, Anna Kirschenbauer and Elisabeth Kessler. They are all laughing and happy, eager to arrive at Monte Carlo to visit the home for neglected Mah Jongg addicts which throng the place. Far up on the stern of the great steamer, Lawrence McNamara is guiding the large wheel. He is head wheelsman, there being no others in front of him, and he guides the steamer past ice burgs and minor craft with great skill. The wind is blowing fiercely- the wind howls and wails- the light wavers. The vision shifts.

It passes to a community in the Mid West of the U.S. It is a community made up intirely of women school teachers. They have their own city government, mayor, and everything. They spend their vacations there and have an ideal little place. They have followed the plan of ~~the~~ N.S.N.'s great economist, John Lautner, and their little community is thriving and happy. Irene Crowley is mayor, Lillian Jovax and Betty Senne are the police force, while Sylvia Levine is city treasurer. Dagmar Augustson and Viola Honkararra are Fire Chief and City Engineere respectively, while Ruth Austin collects the compact case tax. Prominent members of the fire department are: Rebecca White, Geraldine Gipp, Selma Jarvis, Adell Hyder, Helen Niessksela, while Mildred Sincock drives the great red fire truck. It is very interesting to watch. They have built row on row of pretty little bungalows, some of stucco, others of brick and so on. Each little cottage has its own garden of pretty flowers, Though Mildred Jilbert and Edith Drevdahl insist on raising cabbages. The plan is to have five people to a house, and it workd out very well. They alternate at cooking and washing, for instance, Florence Lowny and Hilda Manner are doing the cooking during this vacation, in their cottage, while Agnes Johnson and Ruth Sundwick tend to the furnace and do the washing. All Helen Rompf has to do is answer the telephone and doorbell. Right next to them lives Esther Stromback, Helen Wareham, Ann and Olga Huhtala and Ruth Billings. They have their own stores, too. They have the cutest little butcher shop, where Hildergarde West holds full sway, aided by the nimble Marion Muck and Ann Hedetnime. Farther down is a frocery store, where Alice Johnson may be found as busy as a bee. Right now Anny Carlson, Namie Butler, Alma Bloomquist, and Harriet Ebeling are all trying to get waited on at once, ~~while~~ while Alice Dawe and Catherine Lehnen are just leaving. Ah, their having a Xmas Tableau in the community square There are more members in the tableau than onlookers. Theres Dorothy Greewski dressed up as old ST. Nick, while Elizabeth Kangas and Mae Bellefuille are disguised as little dwarfs making toys. Then there are supposed to be throngs of people coming to see ST. Nick, each is supposed to ask for something for Xmas. Hilda Burkman wants a doll that says "Mamma", and Pearl Senical wants Whitakers Globe of the Earth (she was always so fond of geography) The light is growing so dim that I can scarcely see Florence Thompson, Martha Busse, Constance Driscoll, Elsie Bauchman, and many others. Each is asking Santa for some Xmas gift- Ida Moilenena and Merle Beatson are there too. How very strange such a suggestion as a womens community would sound ten years ago. But today, what with votes for women, equal rights, and Clara Diericks Secretary of the Treasury, everything is changed. The tableau is ended. The train has just arrived- they all hurry to depot and find Helen Trevillion and Alice Josephson are just alighting., and contrary to the very nature of woman, their all trying to talk at once. Helen Trevillion is saying, "Why, the trains were so crowded we were a whole day late. We saw wo many people, And loads and loads of our old class mates going home for the holidays. Why, we saw May Kelly, Marie Hranack, Jennie Oster, Ursula Neilson, and Magaret Decaire. My! Their all teaching and Ursula tells us that Ethel Crisp, Delma Arnell and Borghild Anderson are teaching in the same school." She stops, and they all

all leave for their own little cottages- why, of all things- they have their own taxi system. Sure enough, if that is 'nt Anna Linden, Anna Kustalp, Leona Harrington, Evelyn Mullahy and Cecelia Sedkler as chauffeurs. And-this is great- Rachel Faucett and Gertrude Ebeling as motor cops. Now- they are all home ~~now~~, and the streets of the little community are deserted- a fine light snow is fast covering the roofs of the little cottages. The ether wavers- I cannot see- I cannot- it quavers- ah, a warning, I near the end.

There are those among ^{our old classmates} who teach in foreign climes. Eileen Perskeri and Esther Peterson teach in Madrid while Sylvia Eskola is teaching penmanship in Tokyo. Jimmy Hardimon coaches the ~~sch~~ successful Australian Bushmen's Rotary Club Soccer Team. Ah, there are some among our numbers that I cannot trace. Strange. So those who I havent traced must be teaching in Russia-for among other things, the Soviet Government positively refuses to allow any spirit communication- creates a monopoly, they argue.

The scene changes to this great city which we are now in. I see a great assemblage. Ah yes, ~~and~~ a mammoth theatre. The lights are low. The orchestra plays a rythmic melody. It is Jalma- the great spectacular- nightly drawing its thousands to Farrell's ~~Midnight~~ Frolics to witness the marvelous beauty of the Eagle Mills sprites. Ah, these delightful coryphees are led by the Premiere Danseuse, Madamoszelle Carol Trevillion. Among them I recognize many of the members of the dancing class of Madame Gray, back in the old days. Hush!!! The curtain is rung down by one Seth Davey amid a thunder of applause. The orchestra, led by the fiery Walter Stanislav Hendzwill, plays the 'Deluge' in Z minor, composed by the non- parriel, Edwin Hosking. Yes, I see the audience fluttering and excited. Francis Nadeau sits in rapt admiration of the music, in the row nearest the orchestra. Shes a famous beauty specialist. Ah, there is John Jones, Yales Wonder coach, sitting in a box, gazing at the curtain. Beside him sits Sergeant Petit of the Ellis Island Quarantine Squad. My, he looks wonderful in his uniform. The light wavers- hold, its going-ah, it has returned. I see Dorothy Kehoe, chaperoning the girls from her boarding school up at Essex. Hold, there are two chaperons. There sits Alfred William Chubb in animated conversation with Dorothy. He is motioning to a row made up almost entirely of school mams, holiday bent. Among them sits Katherine Schaffer, Lucille Chabot, Marie Raher, ~~Kath~~ Ethel Finch, Grace Girwin, and others who I can not recognize in the ~~in~~ dim light. Ah, some late arrivals. None other than Charles Van Riper, The noted author with two young things leaning adoringly on his arm. Why its Ruth Stephens and Phyliss Carbonotto. Fie, Charles, fie!! Behind him struts Stephen Leacock, with two other young women. If I remember correctly, Charley and Steve were great pals back in the Normal days- exchanging letters, and all that sort of thing. Out in the lobby- the light wavers- ah, yes, ~~Reece/Kennaugh~~ Henry Bussiere and Reece Kennaugh talking earnestly over their cigars. Both are prominent architects, Bussiere specializing in the construction of bird houses for rheumatic condors. Theres Vera Kennedy sitting so demurely behind the ticket window- behind her stands Manager Farrell and his pretty blond wife. They are laughing and talking with none other than Roger McLean, manager of a chain of clothing stores, and Catherine Conway, his private secretary and- ah, the light grows dim- it is whirling, revolving- quavering- it recedes- its trembling-gone- gone- ah- all is darkness - not a flicker lights the soul of it. Its gone -gone- darkness----

I drew a deep sigh. Ruthania gasped, as coming out of a deep slumber, and turned to me. She offered me her hand, saying, "This has been an inspiration to me- I never ~~thought~~ dreamt of tracing ~~and~~ of our classmates- it has ~~been~~ a revelation. "Yes", I said, getting to my feet and edging toward the door. What would happen if Ruthania charged me a fee. Lets see, our class numbered wellover 200., "Yes-ah-it sure was wonderful".-Ruthania smiled and invited me to come a gain- shed give me the dope on the faculty- With that I fled, passing Sam and Pete ~~on~~ on the fly-. The door again opened mysteriously, and again closed. Gosh, must have been there for hours- for there was a janitor standing in the standard attitude- leaning on the broom -. I gave him the Janitors Union highball and with a wave of the hand began the great descent.