1-22-1875

Class Prophecy

Lucy Booth
Rhode Island College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/risns_early_docs

Recommended Citation
Booth, Lucy. "Class Prophecy" (1875). Early Documents. 4.
https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/risns_early_docs/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the College History at Digital Commons @ RIC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Early Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ RIC. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@ric.edu.
Class Prophecy,
by Miss Lucy Booth,
January 22, 1875.
A PROPHETIC DREAM.

It was summer in the year 1880 and I took the album wherein I kept the pictures of the class of '75 to look once more at the familiar faces. And as I looked at them a great wish came over me to see my classmates and I cried aloud “O! if I could only see them and know what they are doing!” I had scarcely made the exclamation when a curious little figure appeared at my side and a curious cracked voice said “Your wish is granted.” I stared in blank amazement. He threw over me a mantle of gauze which he drew from one of the recesses of his great coat, and telling me to look at the first picture in the book announced himself ready to show me my class-mates. I mechanically turned to the first page and met the upturned face, the earnest eager look of one whom we used laughingly to call the infant of the class, because we envied her commanding figure and perhaps her superior intellect. The tiny elf waved his wand and out of a huge cloud of smoke there slowly arose a huge globe. He struck the globe and with a rumbling noise it opened and presented to my view a large brick house. After a second the walls seemed to melt away and disclosed a room which was evidently a library.

Here were three persons, a gentleman, a lady whom I instantly recognized, and a young boy apparently about sixteen years of age. I looked to my magician for an explanation. “She married a widower with one son, a man whom thousands delight to honor,” was his gruff answer; and the scene faded from sight. I turned the leaf over and on the next page regarding each other with an expression of affection were two whom we held as the “stars of
the class.” The globe opened as before, and this time I saw a crowded street lined on either side with tall, narrow buildings. My eye rested on one at the right which bore the name “Alfred Building,” and soon I saw the outer walls vanish and a law-office was shown in which sat the friends, one busily writing, the other listening attentively as an impatient client told his story and presented his papers. “It is well,” I thought. “The clear, vigorous intellect, the patient surmounting of all difficulties that placed these two at the head of our class, find fitting work in the study of law.”

On the next page are placed the pictures of two who were always associated in their work, and in the thoughts of the class. I wondered if they still retained each other’s friendship, but I did not wonder long, for the globe opened with a sharp report and I saw a large room fitted up as a laboratory. And here, the one with her slight willowy figure raised to its full height and her face flushed with excitement, lecturing in an eager, rapid manner to a crowd of attentive students; the other quietly but rapidly filling receivers and arranging retorts and crucibles, were the two chemists of the class of ’75.

The page to which I now turned showed me the face of one who was universally beloved for gentleness and goodness. The next picture which the globe gently opening revealed to my eager sight was a tiny white cottage, surrounded by a well kept lawn and a brilliant display of flowers. In a prettily furnished room sat a lady teaching two golden haired children to read. I knew her at once; she had the same sweet face, the same innocent blue eyes that characterized my class-mate in the days of ’75. And her work is to scatter flowers in the path of the life of these two. The globe opened again before I had an opportunity to look at my album, this time discovering a large building, larger than any I ever saw. There were four large doors through which the population of the world seemed pouring in a ceaseless tide. There was no need of my joining that crowd, for the massive walls to my eyes were as transparent as the clearest glass. The hall was literally
packed. A burst of applause greeted a lady who was led to her seat on the platform by the dignitaries of the city. I was disappointed when I saw her. She was a large woman with black hair and eyes. "No one I ever knew," I thought. An almost death-like silence succeeded the burst of applause as she rose to read. The clear ringing tones of her voice struck a chord of remembrance, and then and not till then did I recognize the reader of the days when we alternately quarreled and made peace.

At the next opening of the globe I saw a large building, on the front of which were the words "Young Ladies' High School." The fading of the outer walls showed a hall in which the pupils were all assembled. With surprise I noticed that the three teachers who occupied the platform were members of the dear old class. The dreamy Edith, the earnest Mary, the practical Lillie had all found their work here. Mary, who is apparently the principal of the school, speaks to the scholars, reminding them that it is but five minutes before the teacher of Geometry comes, and they go on with their work with renewed industry. As the globe did not close, it flashed across my mind that this teacher of Geometry was also a class-mate. At the expiration of the five minutes the door opened and—"Why it is Lou—" and then I stopped. Words cannot express my astonishment! There was no girl in the class who hated Geometry as she did! "They call her the geometrical enthusiast," growled my guide, "and she well deserves the name."

The next view presents a large brick building with granite trimmings, situated on an elevation of land which slopes gradually down to the river. The words over the door "Aylsworth College," and the groups of girls on the lawn tell the story. On next looking at my album I saw the pictures of two who were inseparable in the days of '75. One was a leading singer and the other was noted among us for her good humor and her ready smile. The globe opened such a short distance this time that it was with difficulty that I saw a small brown house on
which was the sign "Private school by—" but all I could see of the names was Ke of one and Sp of the other, the rest was strangely blotted, and you will have to guess what they were, as I did.

The next scene presented was one of the principal streets of a large town. Here quietly wending their way along the crowded thoroughfare, I saw two young ladies who were evidently bent on some important business. One was dressed in mourning and had lost her bonnie brown curls, but the deep brown eyes, the slender figure showed me my class-mate. The other was known to me instantly by her pale face and heavy braids of mingled black and gray. One carried a book marked on the back "Whitney's German Reader," the other a music roll, and it needed not the gruff explanation of my guide to know that one was a teacher of German and the other a music teacher.

"Do you know," asked the latter "who has accepted the position as teacher of the girls at the Reform school?" "I do not. I know of no one who possesses sufficient power added to gentleness to manage that class." "But I do," returned the other, "it is Maddie ---" but the rattling of carriages in the street drowned her voice and I was left to my conjectures concerning the last name. One bought a paper of a passing newsboy and carelessly turned to the title page; but the carelessness soon changed to astonishment, and she exclaimed breathlessly, "Here is a beautiful poem signed 'I. R. W.,' the sixth one I have noticed in a few weeks. Don't you believe it is"—but the globe closed with a snap, and whether she believed or not I did not hear—but I do.

I waited a long time; the globe at last slowly and to the sound of sweet music, showed to my delighted eyes the pleasantest primary school-room that they ever beheld. Pictures hung on the walls, flowers were on all the desks and plants in all the windows. A small lady sat in a huge arm chair surrounded by a group of little children. She looked so pretty and so much
as she did in the days long gone by, that I tried to reach out my hands to her, but the gauze mantle was as heavy as lead and I could not move. The globe closed suddenly, and I was left in darkness. My guide turned to me with a growl. Now what have you been doing in the five years that have elapsed since you sang the parting hymn in Normal Hall?" And I meekly faltered—"I am a farmer's wife and do try to faithfully perform my duties as a citizen of the land of Steady Habits." And I awoke, and it was summer in the year 1875, and I sat in my room with my lap filled with photographs, representing the class of '75, and on the table at my side stood a curious image, used as a match safe. And my eyes filled with tears as I asked "In the coming years shall we know aught of each other? Shall we forget each other in the cares and duties of our future life?" But I was comforted by the answer which came in tones as clear and distinct as though a human voice had uttered them.

It is true our life-paths may no more be together.

Let us pray to our Father to guide each to his home,
That at last we may meet where parting comes never,
In an unbroken circle at our dear Father's throne.

Lucy Booth,
Class Prophet, '75.