

TREATMENT

MATTIE

Based on book the
"Mattie Prophet"

Written by:
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"... / sanctified thee, and / ordained thee a prophet..."

Hope came during a cruel, turbulent southern era intensely rooted in tradition. It took its first breath as it nestled within the four walls of an old Baptist Church; there hope through a prophet was born. The atmosphere in the church was thick with the moans of mourners and the inconsolable whimpering of family members and friends grieving the questionable death of young man named Sam. Although these were a people familiar with unexplained tragedy, they were unable to quench the yearning to be freed from the bonds of injustice that still gripped this small backward town. They believed questions concerning Sam's death, would go unrequited unless someone intervened. So, while the family grieved Sam's transition, God was supernaturally transforming his sister, Mattie. Customarily seated at the front of the church was his mother, Annie, who had lost her mind long before she lost her son. She was being consoled by the broad-backed pillar of the family, Betty Jean, the boy's paternal grandmother. Mattie began the journey toward her destiny by counting her tentative steps toward his casket. She busied her mind with the trivial before she was forced to face the crucial. She paused her pace to note the theatrical display of the "Fainters and the Catchers" who had faithfully reported for duty, working together like a well-oiled machine perfecting what had become the "art" of mourning. Today, however they were not quite on their game as one of the "Catchers" missed

their cue and dropped a trusting "Fainter" with a loud thud onto the floor sending the black and white arrayed ushers scurrying to their aid. Nervously Mattie approached the casket preparing to say a final good-bye. She started by reminiscing about a time when Sam had saved her from drowning. It was early one morning when she'd curiously followed him to a farm belonging to a notable white Pastor. While there she'd lost her footing and slipped into a pond. She now stood beside his casket whispering softly, "they got you looking all bloated and pale." She recalled how the coroner's report read, "DEATH BY NATURAL CAUSES". She stared at Sam miserably, "This don't look natural to me!" she mumbled. Somberly, she reached out to touch Sam's cold face. Immediately her spirit was snatched from the church and transferred into another time. She found herself standing inside a barn directly behind Sam and several teenage boys. The only face she could see clearly was Sam's. The boys were arguing with Sam but Sam wasn't afraid...he was irritated. From the corner of the barn the sound of whimpering temporarily distracted her; she turned to see a teenage girl with her hands covering her face as she sobbed quietly. Mattie was unable to identify her, but believed she'd seen her before. The barn door was abruptly opened and a large shadow of a man, whose identity was shrouded by a blurry haze stood with something dangling from his hand. Sam realized the figure had something that belonged to him. Before he could approach the figure, the boys bolted toward the man attempting to push him out the barn door, but the man managed to gain reentry into the

barn. Sam was annoyed and stormed toward the man, "that's mine!" Mattie heard him say, "My daddy gave me that...give it back!" Sam grabbed for the object, but the man giggled like a small child as he playfully held it just out of Sam's reach. The young girl cried out to Sam, he turned toward her sidetracked by her anguished tone. He looked at her lovingly and Mattie heard him whisper, "I love her red hair." When Sam returned his attention to the fray he found that the man was now barreling down on him. Before he could react the man struck Sam with the object killing him instantly. Mattie screamed, her cries cutting through the phantom barn like a machete. Sam fell into the shadows of the past sending Mattie spiraling back into the church barely able to stand beneath the weight of the revelation that she had just witnessed her brother being murdered. Mattie was now on a voracious pursuit for justice. Her persistent search for answers would soon be rewarded when a chance encounter landed her in the path of the "red haired girl" named Emily, the daughter of the Pastor who owned the farm Sam often visited. The encounter quickly turned into an interrogation as Emily emphatically refuted Mattie's accusations that Sam's death was racially motivated. Mattie was unrelenting, "No matter how you slice it, my brother would be alive if it weren't for YOU! So either you led him there to die or you two were ambushed, either way...YOU know how, what, when, why and more importantly WHO KILLED MY BROTHER!" Emily maintained her innocence unwilling to uncover the dark secrets vaulted behind her family's reputation. But Mattie passionately compelled Emily to give

Mattie's family what any family deserved...The TRUTH! Finally Emily's stone facade cracked as she cried out, "This will kill my mother... he's the only one she has!" she wept bitterly. The admission led Mattie to the barn from her vision located on the outskirts of Emily's family farm! There Mattie found a misshapen, mentally ill man...the **only** brother of Emily's mother. As more TRUTH began unfolding, through the voluntary confession of Emily's mother, Mattie found herself in a spiritual struggle with God. Mattie thought the "gift's" purpose was to get revenge and justice, but instead God's plan superseded her objectives as He challenged her to see her enemies the way He would always see them...in need of MERCY! The TRUTH was, Sam's death was an act of innocence but the real crime was committed by one broken woman's attempt to uphold a perverted promise she'd made to a dying soul.

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