

**FLANDRAU  
CHARLES  
MACOMB**

THE DIARY OF A  
FRESHMAN

Charles Flandrau  
**The Diary of a Freshman**

«Public Domain»

**Flandrau C.**

The Diary of a Freshman / C. Flandrau — «Public Domain»,

# Содержание

I	5
II	11
III	17
IV	23
V	28
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	29

# Charles Macomb Flandrau

## The Diary of a Freshman

### I

Mamma left for home this afternoon. As I want to be perfectly truthful in my diary, I suppose I must confess that before she actually went away I sometimes thought I should be rather relieved when she was no longer here. Mamma has a fixed idea that I came to college for the express purpose of getting my feet wet by day, and sleeping in a draught by night. She began the furnishing of my rooms by investing in a pair of rubber boots, – the kind you tie around your waist with a string. The clerk in the shop asked her if I was fond of trout-fishing, and she explained to him that I had always lived in the West where the climate was dry, and that she did n't know how I would stand the dampness of the seacoast. Mamma thought the clerk was so interested in my last attack of tonsillitis I didn't have the heart to tell her that all the time he was looking sympathetic with his right eye, he was winking at me with his left.

Now that she is gone, however, I don't see how I could have thought, even for a moment, that I should be glad, and I 've been sitting here for an hour just looking at my room and all the nice things she advised me about and helped me to choose – wishing she could see how cosy it is late at night with the green lamp lighted and a little fire going. (It is n't really cool enough for a fire; I had to take my coat off for a while, the room got so warm – but I was anxious to know how the andirons looked with a blaze behind them.) I suppose she is lying awake in the sleeping-car thinking of me. She made me move my bed to the other side of the room, so that it would n't be near the window. I moved it back again; but I think now I 'll change it again to the way she liked it.

Of course I was disappointed last May when I found I hadn't drawn a room in one of the college buildings. I had an idea that if you did n't live in one of the buildings owned by the college you would n't feel, somehow, as if you "belonged." Before I arrived in Cambridge I worried a good deal over it. The old Harvard men at home were most unsatisfactory about this when I asked their advice. The ones who had lived in the Yard when they were in college seemed to think there was n't any particular use in going to college at all unless you could live either in their old rooms or some in the same building; and the ones who had lived outside as I am going to do (this year, anyhow) said the college buildings were nice enough in their way, but if I could only get the dear old place (which was pulled down fifteen years ago) where James Russell Lowell had scratched his name on the window-pane, and where somebody else (I 've forgotten who it was) crawled up the big chimney when the sheriff came to arrest him for debt and was discovered because he did not crawl far enough, I should be all right.

I don't see how the good times and the advantages of a place like this hold out for so long; everybody who has been here speaks as if he had about used them up.

Well, we found rooms pleading to be rented; every other house in Cambridge has a "Student's Room to Let" card in the window. Even some of the rooms in the Yard had been given up at the last minute by fellows who flunked their exams. Mamma said she felt very sorry for the poor boys; and after that the enormity of my having been conditioned in physics and solid geometry decreased considerably. The trouble (there were four days full of it) wasn't in finding a good place, but in trying to decide on some one place. For a while it looked as though I should either have to live in five separate houses – some of them over a mile apart – or give up going to college. We dragged up and down all the quiet side streets within a reasonable distance of the Yard, ringing bells and asking questions until the words "I should like to look at" and "What is the price of?" began to sound like some kind of a silly English Meisterschaft system. Several times when we were very tired we wandered by mistake

into houses we had been to before. This made the landladies exceedingly peevish; but mamma said it was just as well, because now we knew what their true characters really were.

We found that we could rent some of the rooms lighted and heated; but most of them were merely "lit and het."

All the houses in Cambridge and many of the buildings in the Yard seemed to be disgorging roomfuls of old furniture and consuming cartloads of new, and everywhere we went we met strings of cheerful, energetic mothers with tired, rather cross-looking sons. I've seen only one fellow with his father so far, and they sort of apologized for the fact by being dressed in deep mourning.

At the end of three days we 'd picked out five rooms. Considered in a lump, they seemed fine; but tackling them separately, mamma could n't decide which one was least objectionable. One was in a part of town that "looked damp" – a man across the street unfortunately sneezed just as we were passing a stone wall covered with green moss. The second smelt of cooking. On the steps of the third a groceryman was waiting to deliver several gallons of gasoline (this one was almost struck off the list). The fourth was near the river (we had the bad luck to be in that part of town when the tide was out), and from the windows of the fifth there was a merry little view of a graveyard. We simply could n't make up our minds, and were standing in the middle of a narrow, rather shabby little street two or three blocks below the Square discussing the matter, when a door behind us opened and a mother and son (we turned to look) came out, followed by a gray-haired woman – evidently the landlady – who was doing the talking, in a very New England voice, for all three. The mother was slim and pretty, and had on a beautiful dress that went swish-swash-swish when she walked away, and the fellow looked like her; he was very handsome.

"Well, I 'm real glad to know you," the landlady said to the fellow's mother. "Jus' seems 's if I could n't rest till I knew the young men's folks; dustin' their photographs every day makes it sort of different. It do – don't it? Oh, yes – I 'll take care of him. They get real mad at me, the young men do, sometimes, for makin' them change their shoes when it's snow-in' and makin' them wear their rubber coats when it's rai-nin'. *They 're* in too much of a hurry, *they* are. That's what's the matter with *them*." She gave the fellow a roguish look, and he and his mother walked up the street laughing as if they were very much pleased.

"I think," said mamma (who had become strangely animated on hearing of the change of shoes) – "I think that before we decide on one of these five rooms we 'll go in there." So we went up to the gray-haired woman, who had lingered outside to talk baby talk to a cat that was making gothic arches of itself all over the piazza, and in about seven minutes by the watch we 'd signed the lease of the last vacant rooms in the house.

A short, steep staircase like the companionway of a ship leads up to a landing about the size of a kitchen table. The edges of the steps are covered with tin and are terribly slippery. The door on the left opens into my study, and at the end of that is my bedroom, and next to that is a great big bathroom (it's bigger than the other two) with a porcelain tub and a shower which I am to share with the fellow who lives just across the staircase on the right. Mrs. Chester, the landlady, says: "All the young men thinks an awful lot of that bathroom."

The study is so small that we did n't have to buy as much furniture as we expected to. I have an oak desk with a rolling top that makes a noise like some one shovelling coal when you open and shut it, and usually sticks half-way. Of course, when we finally got it out from town (Boston is about four miles from Cambridge, and it takes anywhere from three days to a week for an express wagon to make the trip), we found that it was much too large to go up the staircase. But Mrs. Chester said we could take out the back of the house and have it swung up to the room on ropes – the "young men" always did that when they wanted pianos or sofas, or desks like mine. I wasn't present at the operation, as I had to go in town to lunch with mamma, but it was successfully performed (by "a real handy gentleman from down Gloucester way, who used to be a fisherman and is a carpenter now"), for I found the desk in the room when I returned and the walls of the house looked about the same.

Besides the desk I have an oak chair with a back that lets up and down by means of a brass rod; its cushions are covered with gray corduroy. Then there is another chair, a revolving one (very painful), that goes with the desk. We bought a bookcase at a shop just off the Square, from an odious little man who put his hand on my shoulder and said to mamma, "They *will* grow up, won't they?" It looks rather bare, as there aren't any books in it yet; but mamma would n't let me fill it, although right next door to the place where we bought it there were loads of books in the window for five and ten cents apiece.

We got some Turkish rugs at an auction in town. The man said they never would wear out. When they arrived here and I saw them for the first time by daylight (they had gas at the sale) I knew what he meant. However, mamma darned them very nicely, and as everything else looks so new, perhaps it's just as well.

I 've put the photographs of mamma and papa, and the one of Mildred in the ball dress and big hat with white ostrich feathers, and the one of Sidney in his little cart with the two goats, on the mantelpiece. I 'm afraid I never cared much for the goats when I was at home, but to-night I 've been thinking of all the funny things they used to do and wondering if I'll ever see them again. They're such cute little beasts. Over the mantelpiece I have two crimson flags with the sticks crossed.

This evening while I was sitting in front of the fire trying to decide whether I ought to begin my diary now or wait until college opened to-morrow and things began to happen, the door downstairs suddenly rattled and slammed, and some one came clattering up the tin steps at a great rate. Then the door across the landing was unlocked, and I heard whoever it was falling over chairs and upsetting things in the dark; and all the time he kept roaring at the top of his voice: "Oh, Mrs. Chester! Ay-y-y-y, Mrs. Chester, where are you?" Mrs. Chester had told me a few minutes before that she was "just goin' to step up street to see how Mis' Buckson 's comin' along with them rooms o' hers," so I called out that she was n't at home. Then the voice answered, "Oh, thank you;" and after a few more things in the other room had fallen on the floor and smashed, the fellow who was making all the fuss came across and stood in my doorway.

I thought for a second that the reason he did n't come in was that he was so big he could n't. I knew that the ceilings of the house were low and that my study wasn't very large, but I had n't realized before how small it all was. The fellow blocked up the whole doorway; his shoulders, in a loose, shaggy gray coat, stretched clear across. His face was burned a deep brown, and his hair was very black and looked rather long, as it evidently had n't been brushed for a good while, and he wanted to know if I could let him have a match. I could see that he was taking in my room as he stood there, and I think he smiled a little at something; but then he seemed to be smiling anyhow (in a different way), so I was n't sure. I jumped up and got him a box of matches (somehow I knew at once that he wasn't the other Freshman who has rooms in the house, although I can't think why, as he did n't look old), and he thanked me, saying he was sorry to trouble me, and went back to his room.

I felt sort of excited and restless after that, and thought I would sit down and write mamma all about him; but just as I was beginning to he stopped humming (I don't think he can be a member of the Glee Club, as he only struck the right note once by accident; still I knew perfectly well what he was trying to sing) and began to laugh. Then he came over to my door again with his hands in his pockets and said, —

"You did n't happen to see an iron bedstead lying around the streets anywhere, did you? The good Chester has evidently spent the last three months in putting my rooms in order and I can't find a thing." I told him I had seen a bed in the back yard this afternoon, but that I did n't think it could be his. He asked me very seriously why not. And then all at once I got horribly rattled. I didn't like to tell him that the bed had n't looked nearly big enough for him (it was a little narrow thing), for I was afraid he might think me fresh. Then besides, I found that I had instinctively stood up when I saw him, and as there wasn't any particular reason why I should have done this, I got sort of confused.

"Of course it's a very nice little bed," I hastened to add. Whereupon he burst out laughing with a loud whoop.

"If it 's such a nice one it certainly can't be mine, and I 'd better go down and swipe it right away," he said at last, and clattered downstairs. I tried again to write to mamma, but he made such a noise coming upstairs with pieces of bed and running down again that I could n't fix my mind. Then, too, I kept wondering whether I ought to offer to help him. Finally I went out as he was coming up with a mattress on his shoulder and asked, "Was it your bed, after all?" which made him laugh again and say: "I wouldn't tell you for anything in the world. If you aren't too busy, though, I wish you would help me put the beastly thing together."

We tried for about half an hour to make the bed stand up. It looked simple enough, but whenever we got the sides firm and more or less parallel, the back and front would wobble and fall to the floor. Once we had all four pieces standing beautifully, but just as we put on the woven wire business and Mr. Duggie (that's what Mrs. Chester calls him – I don't think it 's his real name, though) exclaimed, "I have the honor to report, sir, that the allied forces have taken New Bedford," the whole thing collapsed and pinched his finger fearfully as it came down. After that we sat on the floor awhile. He smoked a pipe and glanced meditatively at the ruins of the bed every now and then, and at last turned to me and said, "Is this your first year here?" I didn't let him see how pleased I was that he had not discovered I was a Freshman, and merely answered, "Yes."

We talked a long time – about all kinds of things. I asked him a string of questions that had been on my mind for months: whether it is better to live in a private house, one of the big private halls, or in the Yard (I called it the "Campus," and he looked queer for a moment and said it was known as the Yard here); where would be a good place to eat; whether he thought my allowance was big enough (I told him how much I was going to have); and what was the best way to make friends and get on teams and clubs and musical societies and crews and papers. He answered everything, although once or twice he puffed at his pipe and looked at me a good while before speaking. I couldn't tell whether the questions had n't occurred to him before, or whether he didn't know just what to tell me. Of course I can't remember all he said, but it sounded so important that afterward I scribbled as much of it as I could in a notebook.

## **ROOMS IN THE YARD ADVANTAGES**

General Washington may have stabled his horse (the iron-gray that never put his front feet to the ground in the presence of an artist) in your bedroom.

When girls come out to vespers (Thursdays from November to May) and stop to look at the Yard, you can stop whatever you happen to be doing and look at them.

In May and June the morning and evening views from your windows are different from and more beautiful than anything in the world.

The Glee Club (weather permitting) sings under the trees; you lie on your window-seat in the twilight and wonder whether, after graduating, you will accept Fame or Fortune.

Proximity to lectures during the annual inundations of December, January, February, March, and April.

## **DISADVANTAGES**

Too much effort involved in taking a bath. What ought to be an innocent pleasure becomes a morbid family pride.

Accessibility to bores who want to kill time while waiting for their next lecture. At first you think this is Popularity.

Enforced quiet after 9 P.M. – at which hour you usually close your books and feel like making a noise.

Enforced activity before 9 A.M. – until which hour you always close your eyes and try not to feel at all.

Necessity of burning a kind of coal that refuses to light (or to stay lighted) for anybody but the janitor, who is never in the basement, where you always firmly believe (in spite of your daily failure) that you are going to find him.

## **BOARD**

Mrs. Muldooney's is by all means the most desirable place. It is crowded, hot, noisy, expensive, and not particularly nourishing. Mrs. Muldooney is a tall, grim, steel-armored old cruiser of sixty-five, with dark-blue hair, who doles out eleven canned cherries to every man at luncheon and sends in word from the kitchen that there aren't any more. She tries to collect twenty-five cents when you have a guest; but as you promptly disown your guest, she is usually foiled. Her place, however, is always crowded with Freshmen, and I ought to go there.

## **ALLOWANCE**

My allowance is generous. It ought to satisfy my every need; but it won't.

## **TEAMS, CREWS, SOCIETIES, PAPERS**

Try enthusiastically but not too seriously to take part in everything. In this way you find out what kind of amusement really amuses you – which as you grow older is a source of great content.

## **FRIENDS**

Friends, in the true sense of the word, are divine accidents beyond all human control. You will probably meet with four or five such accidents in your college career. For the rest – be polite to everybody, and you will soon have the satisfaction of knowing that your position, both in the University and in the world, is, at least, unique.

## **CLUBS**

*Vide supra*, under "Friends."

I was just going to ask him something else, when we heard Mrs. Chester exclaiming, —  
"Land sakes, if it ain't Mr. Duggie! I saw the light from Mis' Buckson's parlor."

"Hello, you dear old buzzard! How dare you turn me out in the cold this way?" he called to her; and as she came in, he jumped up and took both her hands. "I 'm so glad to see you again." She gave him a little push, and looked pleased.

"Law, Mr. Duggie – how you talk! He's got real fleshy – ain't he?" she added, looking at me. She asked him where he 'd been all summer, and he told her he 'd been off shooting in the Rocky Mountains, and had brought her a breastpin made of an elk's tooth that she'd have to wear on Sundays when she went to see her married daughter in Somerville. I thought I ought to leave, but did not know how to interrupt them exactly; so I turned and examined some silver cups on the mantelpiece. There were five beauties, but I could n't make out the inscriptions on them.

"You 've had lots of visitors the last few days. They kept a-comin' to find out when you 'll be back. The Dean was here to-day – a real sociable gentleman, aren't he? – and he wants you to go right 'round and see him as soon as you can. And yesterday that little man – I forget his name – oh, you know, he's the President of the Crimson – came to find out about something. He said you were the only one who could tell him. And then there 've been lots of young men to see about the football – oh, my, just crowds of them, and they all left notes. I 'll run down and get them, and then I 'll put up your bed."

After she left, I said good-night. It's awfully late, and I have to get up early, to be in time to register.

I wonder who he is. I hope he didn't think I was fresh. I don't believe he did, though, for as I was going he said, —

"We 're such near neighbors, you must drop in when you haven't anything better to do."

Mamma's train must have passed Utica by this time.

## II

Well, I've learned a lot of things during the past week, that are n't advertised in the catalogue. If I've neglected to make a note of them until now, it has been my misfortune, and not my fault.

We registered on Wednesday morning – Freshmen have to register the day before college really opens – and I confess I was a little disappointed at the informal way such an important act of one's life is done. In the first place, as you can drop in any time between nine A.M. and one P.M., you don't see the whole class together. Then the room we registered in might have been in the High School at home. I don't know what I expected exactly, but it certainly was n't a bare, square room, a desk on a low platform, some plaster casts, and a lot of plain wooden chairs arranged in rows on an inclined plane. However, when I think the matter over, I don't see what else they could have.

A dissatisfied-looking little man with a red necktie sat reading a newspaper at the desk when I went in, and near him – reading a book – was a younger fellow who looked as if he might be a student. There were piles of registration cards on the desk, and after I had stood there a moment, not knowing what to do, the little man looked up absently from his paper, handed me some cards with a feeble sort of gesture, and murmured in a melancholy, slightly trembling, and very sarcastic voice, —

"... This gentleman is come to me  
With commendation from great potentates,  
And here he means to spend his time awhile."

Then he yawned, and took up the paper again. The young man, without apparently thinking this remark in the least odd, closed his book on his thumb so as not to lose the place, and gave me another card, saying in a perfectly businesslike voice, —

"Please fill this one out, too." I sat down at a bench to write, and just then five or six other fellows came in. One of them was the good-looking chap (with the pretty mother) who rooms in the same house with me. I hadn't seen him since the day I signed my lease. I listened to hear if the little man at the desk would spring anything weird on them; but as they went right up to him, and took cards as if they knew all about it, and retreated to the back of the room, he didn't have time. They talked and laughed a good deal, and once they got into a scuffle, but the instructors didn't even glance up. I finished answering the questions on my cards, and was reading them over, when one of the fellows behind me said, —

"I'll ask him – we live in the same house;" and the handsome one came and sat down beside me. There was something they did n't understand in making out the cards, and the first thing I knew, they were all gathered around me examining mine. I felt quite important. But the next minute I felt equally cheap.

The cards that had been given us by the young man with the book had to be filled out with one's name and address and religion. When the good-looking one (whose name I've since found out is Berrisford) came to it, he began to giggle, and after he had written on it he showed it to the man next to him, who burst out laughing, and passed it on to the others. They all laughed as soon as they saw it, and I was just about to hold out my hand to take it, when the young instructor closed his book, and said in a rather tired, dry tone, —

"By the way, unless you actually happen to be Buddhists or Hindus or Mohammedans, or followers of Confucius, kindly refrain from saying so on the card; only four men have indulged in that particular jest this morning, which, in comparison with former years, is really very few. I begin to feel encouraged; pray don't depress me."

I don't know what Berrisford had written, but he got very red while the instructor was speaking, and crumpled the card into a little lump which he afterward slipped into his pocket. The others pretended to be deeply absorbed in their writing just then; but one of them snorted hysterically.

If anything like that had happened to me, I think I should have expired with mortification; but Berrisford after a minute or two did n't seem to mind it at all. I almost think it encouraged him to do something even more idiotic.

There are two large, fine statues standing in the front corners of the room. One of them is a Greek athlete in the act of hurling something not unlike a pancake, and is called, I believe, The Discus Thrower. (We have a little one in the library at home.) The other is a venerable old man in flowing robes – probably Homer or Sophocles or some such person. Well, we had all gone up to the desk with our cards. Berrisford was first, and just as he got there he stopped (without giving his cards to the little man who reached out for them), and looked inquiringly from statue to statue. Berrisford has a beautiful, silly face with big, innocent eyes, and when he talks his manner is graceful – almost timid; you can't help liking it. I could see that he impressed the instructors just the way he did mamma and me the day we saw him with his mother. He looked at the statues a moment, and then said to the little man, —

"Would you mind telling me, please, which of these gentlemen is the President of the college?" His voice was so deferential, and there was something so eager and earnest and pure in his expression, I really believe that for a moment the instructor thought he was just a nice fool, and was on the point of kindly explaining what the statues represented. He didn't, though, for one of the fellows in the background tittered and ran out of the room, and the little man leaned back in his chair, examined Berrisford very deliberately, and then remarked in his queer, sarcastic way, —

"Sir, thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; but it speeds too fast – 'twill tire!"

As soon as we got outside, Berrisford said, —

"What a disappointing little creature! I had an idea he would be very angry, and he was n't at all."

"Did you want him to be angry?" I asked, rather surprised.

"Why, yes, of course," he answered. "It's so interesting to watch them; there are so many different ways of losing a temper. Sea-captains are the most satisfactory, I think. I discovered that last spring on my way to Europe. I go up to them when they 're very busy – just getting out of a harbor or something – and exclaim, 'Oh, I say, Captain – shall I steer?' You can't imagine how furious it makes them." I said I thought I could, and we parted. He seems to have a great many friends; he has n't spent a night at home since college opened – a week ago.

Well, I went to see my adviser, who helped me select my studies for the year. That is to say, he hypnotized me into taking a lot of things I really don't see why I should know. However, as I don't seem to have what he called "a startling predilection" for anything (my entrance exams. divulged this), and as he was a pleasant young man who invited me to dinner next week, I allowed myself to be influenced by him. He gave me a lot of little pamphlets with the courses and the hours at which they come marked in red ink. I 've forgotten what some of them are, as we have n't had any real lectures yet – just rigmaroles about what books to buy.

For the first few days the whole college and all the streets and buildings near it seemed to be in such confusion that I couldn't walk a block without feeling terribly excited – the way I used to feel when I was a kid, and we were all going to the State fair or the circus, and mamma would insist on our eating luncheon although we did n't want a thing. Along the sidewalk in the Square there was a barricade of trunks so high that you could n't see over it, to say nothing of huge mounds of travelling bags and dress-suit cases and queer-shaped leather things, with banjos and mandolins and guitars and golf-sticks in them. And from morning till night there were always at least four or five fellows telling the expressmen that it was "perfectly absurd;" that they simply had to have their trunks immediately; that the service was abominable, and that the whole place was a hundred and fifty years behind the times, anyhow. All of which the expressmen may or may not have agreed with, for they hardly ever

answered back, and just went on digging steamer trunks and hatboxes out of the ruins and slamming them into wagons to make room for the loads that kept arriving every little while from town.

It was very interesting to watch so many fellows of my own age or a little older hurrying about or standing in groups talking and laughing and looking glad to be here. But at the same time it was sort of unsatisfactory and hopeless. I didn't like to stay in my room much of the time, as I had a feeling (I have n't got over it yet) that if I did I might miss something. Yet, when I went out, I had so few things to do that, unless I took a walk – which of course leads one away from the excitement – there was n't much point in my being around at all. No one stuck his head from an upper window in the Yard and called out, "Ay-y-y-y, Tommy Wood, come up here," when I passed by; and no one slipped up behind me, and put his hands over my eyes and waited for me to guess who it was, because, with the exception of Mr. Duggie and Dick Benton and Berrisford, I didn't know a soul. I often saw Mr. Duggie in the Square, but as he was always with a crowd or striding along in a great hurry, and being stopped every few feet by some one who asked him questions that made him laugh and run away, I got a chance to speak to him only once. He nodded his head and smiled in a professional kind of way without in the least remembering who I was. Dick Benton I did n't have any hesitation in going right up to, as at home I had heard him solemnly promise mamma that he would look out for me and keep his eye on me. Of course I don't expect him to do this; but I confess I did feel sort of disappointed for a minute when he said: "Well, Wood" (he calls me Tommy at home), "when did you arrive? Getting settled? Got your courses picked out? Awful bore, is n't it? Well, here 's my car – going to meet some people in town and am late now. How 's Mrs. Wood? So glad. Hunt me up when you 're settled. So long." He swung himself on a passing car and I turned away and stared at a shop window. I must have stood there several minutes before I realized it was a bakery, and that there was absolutely nothing to look at behind the glass except three loaves of bread and a dish of imitation ice cream that had n't been dusted for weeks (it has just this minute occurred to me for the first time that I must have been homesick that day and the next. Isn't it queer, I didn't know what was the matter with me?) I bet I can describe every article in every shop window in the Square; for there was nothing for me to do the first few days except to walk up and down and pretend I was going somewhere. Of course I tried to get the books the various instructors told me about; but every time I asked for them at the three bookstores I found either that the last one had just been sold or that they had n't arrived yet.

Mrs. Muldooney's tables were unfortunately full when I applied and I have been eating around at the most ridiculous places – ice-cream parlors, and dairy restaurants where you sit on high stools and grab things, because you can't get over the feeling that a conductor will stick his head in the door pretty soon and say, "All Abo-urrrd."

On Bloody Monday night the Freshmen reception took place. I scarcely know how to touch on that event, as my part in it (or rather in what followed) was so unexpectedly prominent and terrible.

The old college men at home had let drop all kinds of mysterious hints about Bloody Monday. In their time, apparently, it was the custom for the upper-classmen to send grewsome notices to the Freshmen, telling them what would happen if they did n't have a punch in their rooms on that occasion. These warnings were written in blood and began and ended with a skull and cross-bones. Then in the evening there was a rush in the Yard between the Freshmen and Sophomores. The old graduates knew perfectly well that the punches had been given up long ago; but I don't think they liked to admit it even to themselves – although they do groan a good deal about college days not being what they used to be. From what they said I could not tell whether there really were such things nowadays or not, so I wrote a little note to Mr. Duggie and left it on the stairs, where the postman puts our letters, asking him what to do if I got a notice, and if there was going to be any rush. He answered: "The custom, I am sorry to say, is *ausgespielt*; it must have been great sport. As for the rush – theoretically we don't have it. By the way, my name (Mrs. Chester to the contrary notwithstanding) is not Mr. Duggie, but Douglas Sherwin."

At that time I did n't know what the second sentence of his note meant, but I understand now; it dawned on me during the speeches at the reception. In some mysterious, indescribable way it was communicated to me as I sat there in the crowded theatre. Whether it came to me most from my classmates – packed into the pew-like seats and standing in rows against the wall – or from the professors who spoke on the stage, I can't say. I simply became aware of the fact that something was going to happen – something that wasn't on the program. It was in the air – it made me restless, and I could n't help thinking of that sultry afternoon out West when the seven pack-horses stampeded just as we were about to start; I knew the little devils were going to do something and they knew it, too, for they all began to buck at the same instant. But I hadn't said anything about it – and neither had they.

It was just like that while the speeches of welcome were being made in Sanders Theatre. They were fine speeches; they really did make you welcome and part of it all – in a way you hadn't thought of before. You couldn't help being proud that you "belonged," and after the President had spoken and the fellow next to me yelled in my ear (he had to yell, the cheering was so loud), "He 's a great man, all right," I felt all over that he was a great man – everybody did. But nevertheless, there was something else tingling through the noise and excitement that we felt just as much. The professors themselves felt it. The elaborate way in which every one of them ignored the subject of Bloody Monday was almost pathetic. The Dean in his speech ignored it so radiantly that the audience actually laughed. Theoretically as (Douglas Sherwin had said) there would be no rush; the speeches made one quite ashamed to think of such a thing.

I was n't there when it started, for after the speeches I went with the crowd into the great dining-hall to be received. It would be nice, I thought, to be introduced to the distinguished men and to get to know some of my classmates. Every one was trying to move toward the further left-hand corner of the vast place, and I soon found myself hemmed in and carried – oh, so slowly – along with the tide. It was very hot, and as I am not particularly tall I would more than once have given a good deal to be out in the fresh night air; but the thought of shaking hands with the President and the gentleman who invented plane geometry (I did n't know whether he had anything to do with solid or not; I never studied it), and another gentleman (a humorist) who wrote a book and called it *The Easy Greek Reader*, cheered me up. I knew, too, that mamma would be glad to hear I had talked to these men. But when, after at least half an hour of waiting and pushing, I reached the corner of the room, I discovered that it was n't the distinguished men we had all along been gasping and struggling for; it was the ice cream. The distinguished men were lined up away across the room all alone; if it had been rumored beforehand that they were indisposed with the plague, they could n't have been much more detached. Every now and then some young fellow – probably an upperclassman – would snatch a Freshman from the throng, say something in his ear (it looked as if he were murmuring, "They 're all perfectly harmless – only you mustn't prod them or throw things in the cage"), and march him up to be introduced. I watched these proceedings awhile, and then, as the ice cream in the meanwhile had given out, I left and started to walk to my room by way of the Yard.

A sound of confused cheering reached me the moment I got outside, and when I passed through the gate I could see down the long quadrangle what seemed to be a battle of will-o'-the-wisps – a swaying, shifting, meeting, parting, revolving myriad of flickering lights and lurid faces. I ran until I reached the edge of the crowd, and stood for a minute or two staring and listening. The fellows were surging wildly up and down and across the Yard with torches in their hands, cheering and singing. Whenever enough men got together, they would lower their torches and charge the whole length of the Yard – amid a howl of resentment – like a company of lancers. Then by the time they had turned to plough back again, another group would have formed, which usually met the first one half-way with a terrible roar and a clash of tin torches, – a drench of kerosene and a burst of flame. Two German bands that never stopped playing the "Blue Danube" and the "Washington Post" were huddled at either end of the Yard. Now and then a sort of tidal wave of lights and faces and frantic hands would

swell rapidly toward them, lap them up, engulf them, and then go swirling back again to the middle. But they never stopped playing, – even when they became hopelessly scattered and horribly reunited.

I saw two policemen fluttering distractedly on the brink – pictures of conscious inefficiency – and felt sorry for the poor things. As I was standing there wondering where I could get a torch, a slim middle-aged man with an iron-gray beard bustled up to them, and the three held a sort of hurried consultation. It ended by the iron-gray man's (he was a professor) suddenly leaving them and mounting the steps of University Hall. His expression as he turned to face the crowd was the kind that tries its best to be persuasive and popular and tremendously resolute all at once, but only succeeds in being wan and furtive. He filled his lungs and began to talk, I suppose, as loud as he could; yet all I heard was an occasional despairing "Now, fellows ... It seems to me, fellows ... Don't you think it would be better..."

No one paid any attention to him, however, and in an incredibly short time the crowd had crushed itself as far away as it could into the quadrangle's lower end. I made my way over there, and as I was pushing into the thick of things a man next to me exclaimed to no one in particular: "They've sent for Duggie Sherwin, the captain of the team, as a last resort – he's going to say something from the porch of Matthews." I saw I never could get near Matthews by trying to forge straight ahead; so, as I wanted to hear Mr. Duggie (I hadn't known until that minute what he was), I extricated myself and ran around the edge of the crowd. Even then I wasn't very near, and, although I could n't hear a word he said, I could see him – standing on a chair – towering above everybody and smiling a little as if he enjoyed it. I didn't know what he said; to tell the truth, I don't think anybody did, except perhaps the men right around him. Yet in about a minute two or three fellows began to yell, "All over," "The stuff is off," and "Now will you be good;" and the crowd fell back a little, attempting to spread out. The spell somehow was broken; for owing to Mr. Duggie's wonderful influence we would have dispersed quietly if it had n't been for that flighty idiot, Berrisford.

I had picked up a torch that some one had thrown away and was moving along with it when Berrisford dashed up to me with something round – about the size of a football – wrapped in a newspaper. One of the sleeves of his coat was gone; he was breathing hard and seemed to be fearfully excited.

"It's your turn now," he gasped, and thrust the parcel into my hand.

"Why – what is it? – what are we going to do? The rush is over," I answered, for I did n't understand.

"Of course the rush is over – stupid," he said hurriedly. "We're playing a game now – 'The King's Helmet' – and you 're It. I *was* It – but I'm not any more; you are now. Hurry up, for Heaven's sake, or they'll get it. Here they come – run for all you 're worth; it may mean a lot for the class." This last and the fact of my catching sight just then of some men running toward me decided me. I clutched the parcel to my side and scudded down the Yard. Every one fell back to let me pass, and my progress was followed by screams of delight. I never had attracted so much attention before, and from the things that were shouted at me as I flew along I knew I was doing well. At the end of the Yard I ran smash into a building, but although somewhat dazed I managed to hang on to the parcel, turn, and look back. The only person pursuing me, apparently, was a bareheaded policeman – and he was alarmingly near. But I managed to pass him, and on my return trip I noticed that I received even a greater ovation than the one the fellows had given me at first. I did n't know what it all meant, and I was nearly dead, and suddenly tripped, staggered, and fell into the arms of a second policeman who handled me very roughly and seized Berrisford's package. It contained the helmet of the bareheaded one, who arrived in a moment exceedingly exhausted, but able, nevertheless, to shake his fist in my face.

The parade to the police station must have been several blocks long – I heard about it afterward. First there was me with an escort of two officers, all the muckers in Cambridge, and the Freshman class in a body, who started a collection on the way over with which to bail me out. Then there was a

German band playing the "Blue Danube," and after that "a vast concourse" (as Berrisford called it) of Sophomores, upperclassmen, and law students with another German band playing the "Washington Post" in their midst.

I was almost paralyzed with fright, and my head ached dreadfully from the blow I had given it against the building; but although I did n't show it I could n't help feeling furious at Berrisford. He stayed right behind me on the way over and kept saying at intervals, —

"It's all right, old man. Don't worry — there's no use worrying; just leave everything to me."

### III

Perhaps, after all, my troubles were for the best. It was not my fault that I fell into the hands of the law; nothing was further from my thoughts than a desire to be disorderly. Of course the teasing I have had to endure is pretty hard, and it is most annoying to acquire a nickname at the outset (everybody calls me "Trusting Thomas" or "Tommy Trusting"), and although I realize now that I was pretty "easy" to do what Berrisford told me to, my conscience has been untroubled from the first. That, after all, is the main thing.

Berrisford, I think, would have tried (as he said) "to smooth it all over" at the police station, but very fortunately the arrival of the Regent and my adviser and the iron-gray man at once took the matter out of his hands. I don't know what they did to the officers, but I was quickly transferred from the police station to the room of my adviser. It was more or less impossible to return the money that had been collected from the class to bail me out with, so just as I left a fellow with a loud voice proposed amid great cheering to give it to the Freshman Eleven.

There had been something spectacular and brilliant about my progress from the Yard to the lock-up that, terrified though I was, I could not help appreciating in an abject, wretched sort of a way. But the silent walk down a back street to the hall in which my adviser lives was just common or garden melancholy. The sidewalk was broad, so we swung along four abreast. No one followed us, of course, and we went the entire distance in almost unbroken silence. Once the Regent cleared his throat and said in hard, cheerful, deliberate tones, —

"I see by the evening paper that Japan will not accede to the request of the Powers." No one answered for about a minute, and I began to fear that neither my adviser nor the iron-gray man would take advantage of the opportunity to exclaim, "What a wonderful little people they are!" I was vaguely disappointed; for of course when the Japanese are mentioned one instinctively waits for somebody to say this. However, just as I was beginning to lose hope and had almost made up my mind to risk the comment myself, the iron-gray man burst out with, "What a remarkable little people they are!" and my foolish heart was reassured!

I must say that when we reached our destination and the inquisition began, they were — all three of them — mighty fair and square. The circumstances of my capture were decidedly against me, and my defence, I realized, sounded simply foolish. (At one point my adviser jumped up abruptly and closed a window; I think he was afraid he was going to laugh.) There was nothing for me to do but tell my story: how I had watched the rush from the bottom of the steps; how I had gone over to hear Mr. Duggie's speech, and how Berrisford (I didn't give his name, however) had come up to me with the helmet in a newspaper and told me we were playing a game and that I was It. I felt very earnest and tremulous when I began, but by the time I finished I could n't help wanting to shut a few windows myself. That — out of the whole howling mob — they had succeeded in seizing one miserable, little half-dead Freshman who had taken no part in the actual disturbance, struck me as being like something in an imbecile farce. It impressed the others, I think, in much the same way, although the iron-gray man, after a moment of silence, said: "Do you really expect us to believe all this?"

"No, sir," I answered; "I don't see how you conscientiously can." But they decided to believe it, nevertheless. My adviser asked me if I knew who gave me the helmet, and on learning that I did, he intimated that he would like to know the man's name. I preferred, however, not to tell; and they were very nice about that, too. (I shouldn't have told even if they had chosen to be disagreeable about it.)

As far as I am concerned I don't believe any action will be taken. There is no end, though, to the ominous rumors of what the Faculty will do in general. One day we hear that the two lower classes won't be allowed to play football this year, and the next, that all the Freshmen are to be put on what is called "probation;" everybody, in an indefinite sort of way, is very indignant. To tell the truth, I don't see why; but as all the rest are, I am, too.

Berrisford has been very nice ever since that Monday night. At first I think it was a desire to "make amends" that caused him to spend so much time in my room and ask me to do so many things with him and his friends; but of course he never put it that way. He was very much worried when I told him that my adviser and the Regent had tried to find out who had given me the helmet, and he wanted to rush and confess. It took me a good while to persuade him not to. In fact, I did n't persuade him exactly, but only got him to agree at length to let Mr. Duggie decide. Mr. Duggie thought the matter over for a moment, and said that as my refusal to tell hadn't, so far as he could see, made me a martyr on the altar of friendship, he thought it would be unnecessarily theatrical for Berrisford to give himself up.

One day Berrisford asked me where I ate, and when I told him I had been trying the places in and about the Square, he said: "Why, you silly thing – why don't you join my crowd at Mrs. Brown's?" He spoke as if the idea had just occurred to him, but that same morning when he introduced me to a man who came up to his room, the fellow said: "I hear you 're coming to our table. That's good." So it must have all been arranged beforehand. Berrisford 's awfully generous and impulsive and kind, only he's so scatter-brained and eccentric you never know what he 's going to do next.

I 've done no end of interesting things since I last wrote in my diary. I bought a song called "Love's Sorrow" at a music store, had the man play it for me five or six times, learned the words and then attempted to sing it at the trial of Glee Club candidates. I 'm sure I sang all the notes and I remembered the words without a mistake; but something was wrong. For after I stopped singing the fellow at the piano went on playing the accompaniment several minutes. And when I took my seat I heard one of the judges murmur as he wrote something on a slip of paper: "Fourth heat; Tommy Trusting shows heels to the bunch and wins in a canter." They told me I would see my name in the "Crimson" when they wanted me for rehearsal. It hasn't appeared yet and that was some time ago.

Then one morning I borrowed a jersey and some moleskins from a fellow at our table and went over to Soldiers' Field to try for the football team. First we lined up for short sprints of twenty yards or so; then they divided us into squads and made us practise falling on the ball (I found chloroform liniment very good for this; but Berrisford maintains that there's nothing like osteopathy). Afterward we practised place kicks, drop kicks and punts; candidates for tackle were lined up against one another and tried breaking through; quarter-backs and centre-rushes practised passing and snapping back the ball. I tried everything – even the dummy.

The dummy is an imitation man in football clothes, suspended by pulley from a wire stretched between posts twenty-five or thirty feet apart. It is weighted by sand in a bag that is supposed to slide up toward the pulley as you tackle the thing and grind its nose in the dirt; only it does n't. What actually happens is that some one pulls the dummy rapidly from one post to the other, and while the creature is spinning through the air you hurl yourself at it, cling to it desperately with your finger-nails and teeth for about the tenth of a second, and are then flicked off – like a drop of water from a grindstone – into the next lot. When you return, the coach says he thinks "that will do for this morning" and enrolls your name in "Squad H." The members of this squad – it's the largest – are told to report for practice when they see their names in the "Crimson." All the others have been out every day or so; but although I've read the "Crimson" carefully every morning I haven't seen Squad H notified once.

I 've got so that I don't have to look at the printed schedule any more to see the days and hours of my various lectures. I just go to the right one when the bell rings as if I had been doing it all my life. In fact the college world has settled down to a routine of lectures and recitations, pleasantly broken by football games on Wednesdays and Saturdays, dining in town now and then, and the theatre afterward. Come to think of it, I 've been to the theatre rather oftener than "now and then." At home there are only two; and the things we have there – except once in a long time – are pretty fierce. But here there are about seven or eight big ones, and all sorts of continuous performance places, dime museums and "nickelodeons" besides. You simply have to go pretty often or you miss something good that everybody 's talking about. Berrisford goes every night.

I know now what Mr. Duggie meant when he said my allowance would not be big enough. He said it was generous; there, however, I disagree with him. I'm not in the *least* extravagant, but papa does n't seem to appreciate how many unexpected things happen that cost money. There was my new overcoat, for instance. Berrisford was having one made, and I realized when I saw him trying it on at the tailor's (it's a great, soft, loose thing; the kind all the fellows are wearing now) that my old one wouldn't do at all. In fact I had n't cared to put mine on, although the wind has been pretty sharp once or twice on the way home from town late at night. The tailor said that now was the time to get a coat like Berrisford's, as it would be much more expensive later in the season; so I ordered one. In a certain way it was real economy to do so. Then, I've gone to town in the afternoon several times with some of the fellows who are at our table and stayed at the last moment to dinner and the theatre. I did n't have enough money with me to do all this and was n't going to at first; but I found that the others did n't, either, and expected to charge their dinners at the hotel. You can even charge theatre tickets if you get them from an agent and pay fifty cents more. It's very convenient. I bought a few pictures for my study – it looked so bare (Berrisford has all sorts of queer, interesting prints and embroideries on his walls that he brought back from abroad); and I simply had to get some more chairs. For I had only one (the whirligig in front of the desk doesn't count; it's too uncomfortable), which made it embarrassing when four or five men dropped in. Then I had a dozen shirts made at a place just off Tremont Street. The shirts mamma got me at home are very nice and all that; but they're not the kind the fellows are wearing here. Everybody has colored ones – pale pinks and blues, or white with a little stripe of something running through them. Mine were all white. I really did n't need more than six new ones, I suppose, but the man said they were cheaper by the dozen. He showed me some really beautiful neckties that had arrived that day from London. Against the materials I had picked out for the shirts they were stunning, and as they weren't dear – considering the duty, the originality of the designs and the heavy silks they were made of – I let him send me five of them. There were the prettiest old pair of brass andirons and a fender in the window of an "antique" shop on Beacon Street that I used to stop and covet whenever I went into town. They were just the things for my fireplace, which looked rather shabby – although comfortable. I didn't think I could afford them at first; but one day when I happened to be passing everything in the window was for sale at a discount of ten per cent. The man was very kind and obliging and let me charge them.

They let you do that at all the shops, it seems; but I do think they might have a little more decency about sending in their bills. The first of November is three days off – and yet I've heard from every cent I've spent. I don't quite know what to do about it, as my allowance – even when it comes – won't be nearly enough to pay for everything; and of course I'll have to keep some of it for my board and washing and schoolbooks, and all the other little expenses one can't very well steer clear of. Before going to bed the last two nights I've spent an hour or more in itemizing everything and adding it all up, and then checking off the people who have to be paid immediately, the ones who could wait a short time, and the ones about whom there is no particular hurry. This makes the financial outlook a little more possible, but not much. And yet Duggie had the *nerve* to say he thought my allowance *generous*!

Another matter that I try not to think of is the fact that very soon we are to be given what is called "hour examinations" in all our studies. I never imagined they would come so – well, abruptly; when we began it seemed as if we would take much longer to learn enough to be examined in. To tell the truth – with the exception of my English course – I haven't become deeply interested as yet in the lectures. After the first few times I gave up trying to take notes; everything I wrote seemed so unimportant. And I haven't done any of the reading, either. They expect you to do a lot of reading at home or in the library, and hold you responsible for it in the examination. The man Berrisford and I have in history is a dreamy old thing who goes into thoughtful trances every now and then in the middle of a sentence, while three hundred and fifty stylographic pens hang in mid-air waiting

to harpoon the next word. One day, after telling us to read a certain work on the feudal system, he added in a kind of vague, helpless way, —

"We haven't the book in the library and I believe it is out of print, so I don't think you will be able to buy it anywhere; but it's a singularly perfect exposition of the subject and I strongly advise you all to read it." They say he knows more about fen-drainage in the thirteenth century than any other living person except one dreadfully old man in Germany who 's beginning to forget about it.

We were instructed to make ourselves familiar with another work that is in the library, and told that without a knowledge of it we could not expect to accomplish much in the examination.

"I don't suppose many of you will read every word of it," the old man said, "although it will do you a vast amount of good if you do." I privately made up my mind to plough through the whole thing — even if it were in two volumes; I thought it would please him. So, the other day as it was raining and there was n't anything in particular going on, Berrisford suggested that we run over to the library and glance through the book. We'd never been in the library before and had to ask one of the pages at the delivery desk where the history alcove was. He couldn't attend to us at first, as there was an angry old gentleman with a very red face prancing up and down in front of the desk exclaiming: "It's an outrage — an outrage! I shall certainly speak to the President about this before the sun goes down upon my wrath!" Several other pages were cowering behind the desk, and a terrified librarian was murmuring: "I can have it here the first thing in the morning, sir — the first thing; can you wait that long?"

"But I want it *now*!" the old gentleman declared; "I shall *not* wait until the first thing in the morning. You 're preposterous. It's an outrage!" He was so emphatic and peevish that some of the students in the big reading-room pushed open the swinging doors and stuck their heads in to see what the trouble was.

Well, Berrisford and I found out from the page that he is the greatest philosopher of modern times. He had come in to get a book that hadn't been asked for in fourteen years, and had just learned that it had been carted away to the crypt of Appleton Chapel to make room for something that seemed to be rather more universal in its appeal.

The page took us to the alcove we were looking for, and Berrisford found our book almost immediately. My back was toward him when he discovered it, and I turned around only because of his unusual and prolonged silence. He was standing petrified in front of eighteen fat, dog-eared volumes, with his big eyes blinking like an owl confronted by a dazzling light.

"Is that it?" I inquired after a moment in a cold, hushed voice. By way of answer he merely rolled his eyes and swallowed as if his throat were dry.

"It's a masterly little thing — isn't it?" he at length managed to say. Then without further comment we removed the volumes from the shelf and piled them on a table in the alcove. They almost covered it. When we had finished, Berrisford, with a grim look about his under lip, opened one of them and began to read. I did the same. It was just three o'clock. We read for an hour without speaking or looking at each other, and at the end of that time Berrisford took a pencil from his pocket and began to make calculations on the back of a letter. At last he looked up as if to demand my attention.

"I have read this book conscientiously — footnotes and everything — for an hour," he said; he was deliberate and there was an air of finality in his tone. "I find that I have completed five pages — the meaning of which has since escaped me. Now, as there are four hundred pages in this volume and as many, presumably, in every one of the other seventeen, it will take me one thousand four hundred and forty hours — sixty days, or two months — to 'familiarize' myself with the whole set. If we sit here night and day for the next two months without taking a second off to eat, sleep, or bathe, we shall have glanced through this superficial pamphlet and pleased the old man."

"I think it has stopped raining," I replied.

We have a new inmate at our house. I woke up one morning hearing such a strange, wild, sad little song coming from my study. At first I thought I must have dreamed it, but even after I sat up in bed and knew I was awake, the sound continued. It was the queerest, most barbaric little refrain,

all in a minor key with words I could n't make out, and was the sort of thing one could imagine a "native" of some kind crooning to himself in the middle of a rice-field. I listened to it awhile – almost afraid to go in; but when it began to grow louder, and then was interrupted from time to time by the most horrible gurgling and strangling noises, I jumped up and opened my study door. At the same moment Berrisford and Mrs. Chester appeared at the other door. In the middle of the room was a bristling brown thing with pointed ears and muzzle and shrewd little eyes. It had absurdly big feet and looked like a baby wolf. Something that seemed to be a piece of leather was dangling from its mouth. Berrisford threw himself on the floor, exclaiming: "My darling – my Saga – what is it – speak to me!" and pulled gently at the piece of leather. The brute rolled his eyes, gagged a little, and let him have it. "Why, it's the thumb of a glove," Berrisford said, holding up his prize for us to look at, "and he dess tould n't eat it 'tause it had a nassy tin button wivetted on uzzer end, so he tould n't," he added to the animal.

"That doesn't seem to have stood in the way of his eating the other one," I remarked coldly, for there was enough of the chewed thing in Berrisford's hand to enable me to identify the remains of a pair of very expensive gloves I had bought two days before.

"Heavens! – do you suppose he really did?" Berrisford asked in great alarm. "Do you think it will hurt him?"

"Of course he ate it. I don't see it anywhere, and they were both together on that chair. I hope it *will* hurt him," I said.

"It is n't like you, Wood, to talk that way about a poor, lonely, foreign thing who 's never been in a house before in all his life," Berrisford muttered resentfully.

"Well, he certainly do make the most outlandish sounds," Mrs. Chester interposed.

"It isn't outlandish – it's Icelandic," Berrisford replied. "He came all the way from Reikiavik on a Gloucester fishing-smack. I bought him at Gloucester yesterday for a dollar – didn't I, my booful Saga; ess he did. And he dess chewed all de checks often de trunks in dat nassy old baggage car on de way up – didn't he, darlin'? And dat horrid baggage man was dess crazy 'tause he did n't know where to put off any baggage and had to delay de twain like evvysing." Berrisford became quite incoherent after this, so I returned to my bedroom and slammed the door.

I don't think it's right for any one man to inflict a whole community with a beast like Saga, and I 've told Berrisford so several times; but he always says: "You seem to forget that I suffer as much, if not more, than any one. Do you ever hear *mecomplain* when he wallows in the mud and then snuggles up in *my* bed? Was there any outcry when he ate *my* gloves and *my* patent leather shoes and *my* Russia leather notebook with hundreds of exhaustive, priceless notes on the first part of 'Paradise Lost'? Did I make a violent scene – the way you and Duggie do every day – when I gave the tea for my sister and found him just before the people came – behind the bathtub in a state of coma from having eaten thirty-six perfectly *delicious* lettuce sandwiches? You might at least admit that you think he 's just as distinguished and quaint-looking as he can be; because, of course, you do think so. You know you love him to follow you through the Square – with everybody turning to look – you know you do. Does n't he, *mon tou-tou, mon bébé, mon chien de race?*"

One of the fellows at the table invited us to dine at his house in town last Sunday evening. Berrisford was to meet me at a hotel in the Back Bay at a quarter past seven and we were to go together. I took a long walk that afternoon, and the air was so delicious and the autumn foliage in the country so beautiful that I didn't realize how late it was until I looked at a clock in a jeweller's window on the way back. I hurried to my room to dress, and as I opened the front door my heart suddenly sank – for upstairs I heard Saga chanting his terrible little refrain. We have all come to dread that sound at our house, for it invariably means the loss of a cherished object to somebody. Berrisford calls it the "Icelandic Hunger and Death Motif." I ran upstairs and found Saga eating one of the tails of my dress-coat which I had hung over the back of a chair in my study to get the creases out. He had apparently first torn it off, then divided it into small pieces, and was consuming them one by one

as I came in. I was already late for dinner, and as it was Sunday evening there was no one in town from whom I could borrow another coat. For a moment I could n't decide whether to sit down and cry or to commit Sagacide.

## IV

Of course I went to the dinner – and what is more, I arrived almost on time. I can't give myself any particular credit for this achievement, however, as it was luck, pure and simple, that got me there. There is no doubt about it, I am marvellously lucky; I seem to have a knack of falling on my feet, and although Duggie has taken to worrying about my "shiftlessness" (as he is pleased to call it) in money matters, and the calmness with which I regard the approaching examinations and the academic side of college in general, I have a feeling that everything will come out all right somehow.

It would sound heartless, I suppose, to speak as if I thought it fortunate that Jerry Brooks had been stricken with appendicitis just in time to get me into the dinner, if it were n't for the fact that he is recovering so splendidly. (I went up to the hospital this afternoon to inquire.) But under the circumstances it is hard not to look upon his sudden seizure rather cheerfully – as I know he will enjoy hearing about it when he is well enough to see people. I was in despair that evening when his roommate came clattering up our tin steps and pounded on Berrisford's door; but the instant I ran into the hall and saw him my heart gave a great throb of hope. He had his dress clothes on; but he didn't look in the least like a person on the way to dine in town – and I felt with indescribable relief that, if this were the case, I could have his coat.

"Isn't Berrisford here? Has he gone?" he exclaimed excitedly. (I had never seen him before – although I knew his chum, Brooks, slightly.) "We were going to dine at the same house in town, but my roommate, Jerry Brooks, got sick just as I was starting and I can't go, and two doctors have taken him up to the hospital, and the Hemingtons haven't a telephone, and I thought I'd let Berrisford know, for, of course – "

Well, his coat didn't fit me in a way to make a tailor expire with envy exactly, but I was mighty glad to get it – and anyhow, I think people are inclined to take a dress-suit for granted. Berrisford attached no importance whatever to the fact that his beast had ruined my coat, but merely said reproachfully: "I hope you let him have the pieces to play with; he 'll be so lonely this evening with no one in the house except Mrs. Chester."

I have mentioned the fact that of late Duggie has given intimations of having me "on his mind." Of course when a man like Duggie finds time to care one way or the other about what he thinks you ought to do, it's a great honor. He is the busiest, hardest worked, and most influential person I ever knew. He belongs to no end of clubs, and besides being captain of the team he's at the head of a lot of other college things. Almost every day there's a reporter or two lying in wait for him out here to ask about the team, and whether he approves of the athletic committee's latest mandate, and what he thinks about all sorts of things in regard to which he hasn't any opinion whatever – and would n't express it even if he had. Besides all this he manages in some way to study awfully hard and to get high marks in everything he takes. Furthermore, he's in training most of the year, and just now he has to go to bed every night except Saturday at half-past nine or ten. He's almost always amiable and kind to people, and I think he's great. I can't help liking the fact that he drops into my room and sits down and talks the way he does. Some of the fellows at our table found him there the other day and were scared to death. But at the same time I have a feeling that he does n't think Berrisford and I are just what we ought to be. As if people could be different from the way they 're made! I know that sometimes he would like to say things that, after all, he never quite does.

Of Berrisford, I 'm sure, he doesn't approve at all. I don't, of course, believe for a moment that he was anything but amused at the way Berrisford conjugated the French verb for him the other day; but as it is the sort of thing that Berri takes an uncontrollable joy in doing, I think Duggie has an idea that he is n't good for anything else.

Duggie – I can't imagine why – has never studied French until this year. He enrolled in a class only a week or so ago, and though it's merely an extra course with him and he could get his degree

just as easily without it, he goes at it as if it were all-important. Berrisford knows French as well as he knows English, and volunteered to help him with his exercises. The other afternoon Duggie ran into Berri's room and said: "I 've an idea that we're going to have '*je suis bon*' in French to-day; I wish you would write out a few tenses for me so I can learn them on the way over – I simply have n't had a minute to myself for two days." Naturally Berrisford seemed delighted to help him, and gravely wrote something on a piece of paper that Duggie carried off just as the bell was ringing. When he got into the Yard and slowed up to look at it, this is what he found:

Je suis bon  
Tu es bones  
Il est beans  
Nous sommes bonbons  
Vous êtes bonbonnières  
Ils sont bon-ton.

Of course he did n't actually care; but I don't think the incident helped in Duggie's opinion to throw any very dazzling light on Berrisford's really serious qualities. Duggie regarded it, I 'm sure, as about on a par with the way we get out of sitting through our history lecture.

One day when the dreamy old gentleman who conducts the history course was trying to prove that Charlemagne either was or was n't surprised (I 've forgotten which) when the Pope suddenly produced a crown and stuck it on his head, a ripple of mirth swept gently across the room, very much as a light breeze ruffles the surface of a wheatfield. No one laughed out loud; but when between three and four hundred men all smile at once, it makes a curious little disturbance I can't quite describe. The old gentleman looked up from his notes, took off his spectacles, chose one of the other pairs lying on the desk in front of him (he has three or four kinds that he uses for different distances), and inspected the room. But by the time he had got himself properly focused there was nothing to see; the fellow who had made every one giggle by climbing out of the window and down the fire-escape was probably a block away. So, after a troubled, inquiring look from side to side, the dear old man changed his spectacles again and went on with the lecture.

Now, although it had never occurred to any one to crawl down the fire-escape until that day, every one in our part of the room has become infatuated with the idea, and three times a week – shortly after half-past two – there is a continuous stream of men backing out the window, down the iron ladder and into the Yard. In fact, the struggle to escape became so universal and there were so many scraps at the window and in mid-air on the way down over who should go first, that Berrisford evolved the idea of distributing numbers the way they do in barbershops on Saturday afternoon when everybody in the world becomes inspired with the desire to be shaved at the same time. It works beautifully; but of late the undertaking is attended by considerable risk.

At first Professor Kinde stopped lecturing and fumbled for his other spectacles only when he heard the class titter; I don't believe he in the least knew what was going on. But recently he has become extremely foxy. Although he has n't spoken of the matter, he realizes what is happening, and I think the ambition of his declining years is to catch somebody in the act of darting toward the window. At irregular intervals now, throughout his lectures, he – apropos of nothing – drops his notes, seizes a fresh pair of spectacles, makes a lightning change, and then peeks craftily about the room while the class tries hard not to hurt his feelings by laughing. Then, disappointed, but with an air of "I 'll-surely-strike-it-right-next-time," he changes back again and continues. The lectures have become so exciting and fragmentary that Berrisford and I are torn with the conflicting desires to stay and see what happens and to get out into the wonderful autumn weather. Usually, however, we leave, and the last time, just as I was preparing to drop to the ground, Duggie strode in sight. Berrisford,

half-way down, happened to glance over his shoulder. When he saw Duggie he swung around, struck an Alexandre Dumas attitude, and exclaimed dramatically, —

"Sire, we have liberated the prisoners, cut away the portcullis and fired the powder magazine. Is 't well?" Duggie laughed.

"Powder magazines aren't the only things that get fired around these parts, monsieur," he answered as he passed on.

Now, there was nothing disagreeable either in the remark or the way Duggie made it; he seemed perfectly good-natured, and, although in a great hurry, very much amused. But, somehow, it was n't quite as if any one else had said it. I don't know what "reading between the lines" is called when there aren't any lines to read between; but anyhow that's what I couldn't help doing. Duggie's little thrust was made at Berri — but it was intended for me. And that 's what I mean when I say Duggie has me on his mind. He would have Berri there, too, if he liked him; but he does n't. I think he firmly believes that he regards us both with the utmost impartiality; yet I know (this is recorded in all modesty, merely as a fact) that he likes me, and that for poor Berri he has no use at all. Berrisford is tactless; he had no business, for instance, to tell Duggie about the watch.

One Saturday morning when Berrisford had finished his lectures for the day, and I found that a cut was to be given in my last one, we strolled along Massachusetts Avenue, without really meaning to go anywhere, until we came to the bridge across the Back Bay. We leaned over the rail awhile and watched the tide clutching viciously at the piers as it swirled out, and then, farther up, I noticed a flock of ducks paddling about in a most delightful little mud-hole left by the falling tide.

"I could hit one of those birdies if I had a shotgun," I said, closing one eye. (It just shows what a trivial remark may sometimes lead one into.)

"It wouldn't do you any good," Berrisford yawned; "you couldn't get it."

"I don't see why not. I could borrow a boat from the Humane Society and row out," I answered, rather irritated by Berrisford's languid scepticism.

"Well, what on earth would you do with the poor little beast after you did get him?" he pursued.

"What do you suppose?" I exclaimed. "What do people usually do when they shoot a duck?"

"I think they usually say that they really hit two, but that the other one managed to crawl into a dense patch of wild rice growing near by," Berrisford answered.

"I should have it cooked and then I 'd eat it," I said, ignoring his remark.

"What an extremely piggish performance! There would not be enough for any one but yourself. I would much rather go into town with somebody and have one apiece at the Touraine."

"Oh, Berrisford," I murmured; "this is so sudden!"

When we reached the other side of the bridge we got on a passing car, and after we sat down Berrisford said, "You 'll have to pay for me; I have n't any money either here or in Cambridge." As I had just eight cents in the world and had taken it for granted that Berri was going to pay for me, we jumped out before the conductor came around, and resumed our walk.

"If you have n't any money and I haven't any money, I 'm inclined to think the ducks will not fly well to-day," I mused; for the last time we had been to the Touraine the head waiter — a most tiresome person — told me we could n't charge anything more there until we paid our bills.

"I suppose you would just sit on the curbstone and starve," Berrisford sniffed. And as we walked along I saw that he had some kind of a plan. He took me through one of the queer little alleys with which Boston is honeycombed and out into a noisy, narrow, foreign-looking street, lined with shabby second-hand stores and snuffy restaurants, — the kind that have red tablecloths. At first I thought it was Berri's intention to get luncheon in one of these places, although I did n't see how even he could manage it very well on eight cents. However, I asked no questions. Suddenly he stopped and took off his sleeve-links. Then we walked on a few steps and went into a pawnbroker's.

It sounds absurd, but when I discovered what Berrisford was about to do I felt curiously excited and embarrassed. Of course I knew that lots of people pawn things, but I had never seen it done

before, and like most of the things you can think about and read about in cold blood, I found that it made my heart beat a good deal faster actually to do it. In fact, I did n't care to do it at all, and told Berrisford so in an undertone; but he said, —

"Why not? There 's nothing wrong in it. You own something more or less valuable and you happen for the moment to need something else; why should n't you exchange them? If the soiled vampire who runs this place (what's become of him, anyhow?) would give me two small roasted ducks and some bread and butter and currant jelly and two little cups of coffee and a waiter to serve them, and a mediæval banquet hall to eat them in, and a perfectly awful orchestra behind a thicket of imitation palm-trees to play Hungarian rhapsodies while we ate – instead of five dollars and a half, I should be just as well pleased; because it will amount to about the same thing in the end."

Just then the proprietor of the shop emerged from behind a mound of trousers and overcoats and shuffled toward us very unwillingly, it seemed to me. But Berrisford said he was always like that.

"You can't expect a display of pleasing emotions for a paltry five per cent a month," Berrisford whispered in my ear. I don't think, however, that the pawnbroker could have looked pleasant no matter what per cent he got. He took Berri's beautiful sleeve-links (they 're made of four antique Japanese gold pieces), went into a sort of glass cage built around a high desk and a safe, and did all sorts of queer things to them. He scratched the under side of two of the coins with a small file; then he dabbed some kind of a liquid that he got out of a tiny bottle on the rough places and examined them through one of those inane spool things that jewellers hang on their eyeballs just before telling you that you 've busted your mainspring. Next he weighed them in a pair of scales that he fished out of a drawer in the desk, and finally he held up his claw of a hand with all the fingers distended, for us to inspect through the glass.

"Why, you dreadful old man!" Berrisford exclaimed indignantly. "You gave me five and a half last time. I wouldn't think of taking less."

For a moment I supposed that the game was up and we 'd have to walk all the way back to Cambridge and be too late for luncheon when we got there; for Berrisford took his sleeve-links and strolled over to the door, saying in a loud voice, —

"Come on, Tommy; there 's a better one across the street." But just as we were leaving, "the soiled vampire" made a guttural sound that Berrisford seemed to understand, and we went back and got the amount Berri considered himself entitled to.

"The quality of mercy is a little strained this morning," he said when Mr. Hirsch went into the glass cage again to make out the ticket. I always had an idea that a pawn ticket was a piece of blue cardboard – something like a return theatre ticket. But it is n't, at all. It's simply a thin slip of paper resembling a check – only smaller.

Well, we had a delightful luncheon. After luncheon we thought of going to the matinée and sitting in the gallery, but Berri all at once exclaimed, as if the idea were a sort of inspiration, —

"I 'll tell you what we 'll do; let 's economize. I 've always wanted to; they say you can be awfully nice and contented if you never spend a cent, but just think noble thoughts."

"We might go and look at the pictures in the Public Library and then cross over to the Art Museum," I suggested. "It's free on Saturdays, you know." Berri thought that would be charming, so we walked up Boylston Street, stopping at a florist's on the way to send some American beauties and some violets to Mrs. Hemington, at whose house we dined that Sunday night. (She was thrown out of a carriage the other day and sprained her thumb, and we thought we ought to take some notice of it, as she was very nice about asking us to come to Sunday luncheon whenever we wanted to.)

Berrisford did n't care much for the Puvis de Chavannes pictures in the library, – that is, after he found out that they were as finished as they were ever going to be. At first he was inclined to think them rather promising, and said that by the time they got the second and third coats of paint on they would no doubt do very nicely.

"But the artist is dead," I explained. "And anyhow, he always painted like that."

"Why did n't some one speak to him about it?" said Berri.

"There would n't have been any use; he painted that way on purpose. It was his style – his individuality," I said.

"Do you like it?" he suddenly demanded. He was looking at me very intently, and I did n't know just what to say; for although I've gone to see the pictures several times, it never occurred to me to ask myself whether I really liked them or not. I supposed – as every one says they are so fine – that I did.

"I don't mean do you know how much they cost, or what people said about them in the backs of magazines when they were first put up. What I want to know is – Does looking at them give you great pleasure?"

"I think they're simply preposterous," I said; and then we went outdoors again and over to the Art Museum.

We spent the rest of the afternoon there, sitting in front of a painting by Turner called The Slave Ship, and listening to what the people who passed by said about it. I did n't think there was very much to it – it's merely some small, dark brown legs in a storm at sea with a fire burning. But the people who came to look at it murmured all sorts of things in low, sad voices, and several of them read long extracts from a book that Berri said was by Ruskin. When I asked him how he knew, he answered that it could n't well be by any one else. (A great many people say that Berri's a fool, but I think he knows an awful lot.)

It makes one tired and hungry to criticise pictures all afternoon, and when we left the gallery Berri sat down on the steps and said he could never walk all the way to Cambridge in his exhausted condition; so once more we found ourselves confronted by famine.

Now, if mamma were only here I know I could explain everything to her, and she would n't think me so lacking in respect for my ancestors – so utterly lost – as she evidently does. But until she gets my letter (and perhaps even afterward) she will be unhappy over the crude, unqualified fact that I pawned my watch.

It belonged to my great-grandfather and is a fine old thing with a wreath of gold and platinum roses on its round gold face. I got twenty-five dollars on it. Nobody but Berri would have known, and there would n't have been the least fuss if Uncle Peter had n't come to town.

He was in Boston on business and appeared in my room one afternoon a few days afterward. I was ever so glad to see somebody from home, and I introduced him to Berri, who helped me show him the gym and Soldiers' Field and the glass flowers and pretty much everything open to visitors. He had a lovely time and asked us to dinner in the evening.

We had a pleasant dinner – only Uncle Peter kept glancing at his watch every few minutes (he was leaving on an early train). Finally he said: "What time is it, Tommy? I'm afraid I'm slow."

From force of habit I felt for my watch, and then, I suppose, I must have looked queer, for Berrisford began to chuckle, and Uncle Peter, after a moment of mystification, jumped hastily to a conclusion that, I am sorry to say, happened to be correct. He rubbed it in all through dinner and on the way to the station, and I suppose when he reached home he told mamma the first thing. For the evening of the day he arrived I got a telegram from mamma that said: "Redeem watch immediately. Keep this from your father; it would kill him."

Of course Berri had to elaborate the thing in his best style and keep Duggie awake for half an hour while he told him about it.

"I made it very graphic," he said to me gloomily, "but somehow or other it didn't seem to take."

## V

The crash has come, and the Dean and my adviser, two or three instructors, some of the fellows at the table, and even Berrisford (this last is a little too much), have all taken occasion to inform me regretfully that they foresaw it from the first. This is the sort of thing that makes a man bitter. How did I know what was ahead of me? If they all realized so well that I was going to flunk the hour exams, why did n't they let me know then? It might have done some good if they had told me three weeks ago that they thought me stupid; but I fail to see the point of their giving me to understand at this stage of the game that they themselves all along have been so awfully clever. Yet, that's just what they've done; all except Duggie. And strangely enough it was Duggie that I most dreaded. As a matter of fact he has scarcely mentioned the subject. When I went into his room one night and stood around for a while without knowing how to begin and finally came out with, —

"Well, I suppose Berri 's told you that I didn't get through a single exam?" — he merely said, —

"That 's tough luck; I 'm darned sorry;" and then after a moment he added: "Oh, well, there 'll be some more coming along in February; it is n't as if they were n't going to let you have another whack at things."

"Of course I know it is n't my last chance," I answered drearily; "but I can't help feeling that the fact of its being my first makes it almost as bad. It starts me all wrong in the opinion of the Dean and my adviser and the college generally." Somehow I could n't bring myself to tell Duggie what I thought, and what, in a measure, I still think — namely, that the marks I got were most unjust. There 's something about Duggie — I don't know what it is exactly — that always makes you try to take the tone, when you 're telling him anything, that you feel he would take if he were telling the same thing to you. This sounds rather complicated, but what I mean, for instance, is that if he got E in all his exams and thought the instructors had been unjust, he would probably go and have it out with them, but he would n't complain to any one else. Of course it 's simply nonsense even to pretend, for the sake of argument, that Duggie could flunk in anything; but, anyhow, that 's what I mean.

However, I did n't have the same hesitation in saying to Berrisford that I considered myself pretty badly treated.

"I know, of course, that I didn't write clever papers," I told him, "but I at least wrote long ones. They ought to give me some credit for that; enough to squeeze through on, anyhow." Berri agreed with me perfectly that all the instructors were unjust, yet at the same time he said, with a peculiarly irritating, judicial manner that he sometimes assumes when you least expect it, —

"But I can understand — I can understand. It's most unfortunate — but it 's very human — very natural. As long as we employ this primitive, inadequate method of determining the amount of a man's knowledge, we must expect to collide every now and then with the personal equation." This sounded like a new superintendent addressing the village school board for the first time, but I did n't say anything, as I knew there was something behind it that Berri did n't care just then to make more clear. Berri has exceedingly definite ideas about things, but he "aims to please;" he finds it hard to express himself and at the same time to make everything come out pleasantly in the end.

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.