Spring Song

A murmur as from countless tiny throats
Persistent sounds, but all so soft and low
I scarce can hear it. I but feel and guess
It is the voice of things that live and grow;
The voice of silent things, dumb teeming life
That thrills and quickens in the earth below.

Above this subtle music, stronger chords
Make harmonies. The meadow lark's refrain
Alluring sweet is trilled; the robin's call
Sounds gaily with the killdee's minor strain.
The world is full of music, piercing sweet,
So perfect that its joy is almost pain.

The great gold sun rides high in depths of blue,
A gracious monarch he, who rules alone
All life, and draws from it the harmonies—
Strange subtle melodies of every tone.
The music of the growing grass and trees
He makes, and all the bird songs are his own.

Adorer of the sun am I, and so
A little of his music I would sing
A little add to all this harmony.
This music of each living, growing thing.
Dear mother earth, let me rejoice with you,
For life is good. Behold it is the spring.

Montana Buswell, '09.
"Frances," called her father, "the carriage is waiting."

"Yes, I'm coming," answered a clear voice from the back part of the house.

Mr. Ward looked up from his newspaper to see a small avalanche descending upon him. The impending misfortune did not look very formidable, however. It resolved itself into a young girl of perhaps eighteen, in a brown suit, with hat and furs of the same shade, and with brown eyes that utterly shamed them all. Instead of having brown hair, such as nature intends to go with brown eyes, Frances had a lustrous black; this was only one of the many ways in which she defied conventionality. Her vivid coloring and the dimple that played high on one cheek gave an indescribable vivace to her face, which the demure eyes only heightened, instead of lessening.

Frances clasped her arms tightly around his neck, and he held her close to him for a moment. Then resting his hands upon her shoulders he said seriously:

"You know, Frances, that I have always been proud of your fine sense of honor. You are like your sainted mother in that respect, and I want you to grow to be as fine a woman as she was. I won't ask you to win honors in your lessons or in music, I will say nothing about the number of dances you go to, or the money you spend; I only ask one thing of you."

"What is that, father?"

"That you always do the square thing. It may not be easy, sometimes it will be very hard; but I want to know that I can depend on my little daughter to do the square thing under all circumstances. Then I will be content."

"I will, father," she answered tremulously. "You can trust me."

In half an hour Frances was flying along on the train that was to take her to her first year of college. Looking out of the window with unseeing eyes, she wondered what college would be like. Who was going to be her roommate, and would the
girls like her, or would she be lonely? She hoped she would get to go to the first dance. She smiled as she thought of the sign that her chum had given her to hang in her new room:

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: can't do without men."

Then her brown eyes became serious as she thought of her father.
"I'm all he has left, now that mother is gone," she whispered to herself, "and I must not disappoint him. Oh, I will be strong! I will do the square thing!"

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It was three months later, Frances was kneeling on the floor beside the open window, resting her arms on the sill, and looking out into the night. Her room was dark, save for the occasional glance of a stray moonbeam. The campus was quite still. Suddenly the chug-chug of a machine stabbed the silence, and the powerful eyes of the car peered through the trees down by the gate. Swiftly, smoothly the machine shot around the driveway and stopped at the door of the Hall. The siren shrilled forth its imperative summons, and in answer a window was raised on the second floor, and a girlish voice called, "All right!"

In a few minutes a merry crowd of girls ran down the steps, laughing and talking, and piled into the car; all but one, which Frances recognized as her roommate.
"Marie, come and sit with me", called one of the girls.
"No, she's going to sit in this seat", chimed out three others.
"You're all stung," she cried gaily, and sprang into the front seat beside the driver.
The engine throbbed and the machine glided away into the blackness.
"Oh," murmured the girl in the window, "I can't stand it, I can't! I can't give her up! She is mine!" and the tears which had been welling up in her heart and throat all the day, now had their way.

In a little while the sobs ceased and she became calmer. Her thoughts drifted back to the past months and found comfort in the recollections of the old happy days. What queer fate had placed Marie and she together as roommates! They had
never seen each other before they came to college, and yet in one short week
they became such friends as one rarely sees. How congenial they had been
from the very first! Neither one ever appeared without the other; they
attended classes together, went every where with each other. The girls in
the school had jokingly called them "the inseparables", and so they were.
There had not been a flaw in their friendship, in all those months of constant
companionship, until the last week, when the rushing for the two sororities
had begun. Then for the first time, Frances had known what it was like
to be left at home alone, while Marie went out.

It had all be so strange, sitting alone in the room without Marie:
Frances remembered how she had tried to fix her mind on her lessons, had
started to do a hundred things; but she could notbanish that adorable
roguish face which seemed to peep at her from every corner of the room.
Sometimes the vision smiled and called her "Frannie", which had been
Marie's pet name for her roommate; again it looked sadly serious, and the
blue eyes seemed to say, "I am going away, dear. I am going into a land
where you will be a barbarian."

At the thought of that, Frances buried her head on her folded arms,
in silent anguish. The cool night breeze stirred the curtains and fanned
her cheek gently. The moon slipped from behind its cloudy veil and shed
a kindly radiance over the dusky head as if to hear its burden.

The next day, after helping Marie dress for a matinee party to be
given by Omicron Phi, the sorority that was rushing her, Frances took a
couple of pillows and a book, went out across the campus, and sat down in
the shade behind a hedge. After reading for an hour or so, she fell asleep,
and late in the afternoon she was awakened by the sound of voices on the
other side of the hedge.

Yawning drowsily, she wondered whose they were; her sleepiness, how-
ever, overcame her curiosity and she was just on the edge of the land of
dreams again, when she heard Marie Van Eman's name mentioned. She
sat up with a start to hear what was being said about her roommate.

"All the girls want her;" a voice went on, "I haven't heard anyone
say a word against her personally. Didn't she look darling at the matinee,
this afternoon, in that cornflower dress?"

Like a flash Frances understood who was talking. It was Cynthia
Allen, a member of the sorority that had given the theatre party, which must
be all over by now. She listened eagerly for the other voice.
"Yes, I never saw Marie look prettier, although of course she can't compare with Frances Ward as to real beauty."

That person, on the other side of the hedge, blushed with delighted surprise, as she recognized the voice of Aline Stewart, a girl whom she thought had disliked her.

"But of course we can't pledge Marie," Cynthia continued, "with that disgrace in her family."

"Oh, you mean about her brother?" said Aline. "It seems a shame, when we all want her so much, to think that she has to be kept out of Omicron Phi by something that is not her fault."

"Yes, it does," agreed Cynthia, "but if we don't take her, most of the girls want to pledge Frances Ward in her place. We can't take both; it has to be either Marie or Frances. Let's go in to dinner."

As the voices died away, Frances realized what she had done. She had eavesdropped! In her eagerness as to what they were going to say about Marie, she had listened to what was not meant for her ears. A burning shame overspread her face. Then she fell to thinking over what they had said. What was that about disgrace in Marie's family? Marie had no brother, Frances knew. What could they have meant?

Suddenly she understood. Marie had told her one time, as a joke, of an incident that happened when Mr. and Mrs. Van Eman and Marie were spending a few days in a little country town. They had left early one morning, and while on the way to the train, had heard that the safe in the hotel where they had stayed had been robbed of several hundred dollars during the night. Beyond feeling glad that none of them had put anything in the safe, they never gave the matter another thought. A few days afterward, however, Mr. Van Eman happened to pick up a newspaper, in which a detailed account of the robbery was published. The thief had been caught, and gave his name as Arthur Van Eman. As he was a young man and apparently well educated everyone immediately decided that he was a son of Mr. Van Eman, "a gentleman, who with his wife and daughter had spent several days at the hotel, and had left early in the morning, the night after the robbery was committed," to use the words of the paper. It went on to say that suspicion pointed very strongly to the Van Eman family, and that every effort would be made to trace them.

The idea was so ridiculous that Mr. Van Eman just laughed and showed the paper to his wife and Marie. As they were leaving in a few hours for New York, he did not even take the trouble to deny the report, and the incident was forgotten.

Frances wondered how the sorority girls had ever heard of it.

"What an absurd tale to believe," she said to herself. "The idea that Marie would have a brother that was a criminal!"
The girls did believe it was true however, and what was more, if they didn’t find out differently they were going to pledge her.—Frances Ward!

It was not until then that the full enormity of what she had heard burst upon her. It rested with her whether Marie would be pledged to Omicron Phi or not, for she alone knew the facts about the so-called disgrace in Marie’s family, and if she kept silent, what would the result be? They could go back to the old happy times, the days of close friendship again. They would still be roommates, for even if she were pledged, Frances resolved that she would not go to live in the sorority house that was being built on the hill. She would stay with Marie.

"And if I weren’t pledged," she told herself, "what matter? Marie and I would still have each other, and I would rather be a barbarian with her than an Omicron Phi without her. She laughed happily, and went in to dinner.

That evening, when Frances was walking around the campus with some of the girls, one of them exclaimed:

"Oh, I have a T. L. for you, Frances. One of the girls said you were the squarest girl that she ever knew."

"How lovely!" and Frances blushed with pleasure.

She thought no more about it then, but later when she was writing a letter to her father, the careless remark of the classmate came back to her. She stopped for a moment. Was she keeping her promise to her father? Yes, she had kept it so far, that was certain, but how about now? With a rush of remorse, Frances realized that she was not doing the square thing by keeping silent as to Marie. The right thing would be to tell the Omicron Phi girls the truth of the matter. She saw it all plainly now. How could she have been so blind before?

"But it’s none of my business," argued something within her. "If the girls had come to me and asked me if it were true, then of course I should have told them so. As it is, I am not supposed to know anything about it."

"That doesn’t excuse you from doing what is right," whispered her good angel. "You do know all about the matter, whether you are supposed to or not, and you must tell the Omicron Phi girls for Marie’s sake."

Ah, there was the point! If she explained the affair to the girls, they would without a doubt pledge Marie, for had not
Cynthia and Aline said so? Then that would be the end of everything; she knew that. Marie would go to live in the Omicron Phi house, for she had as much as told Frances that she would, if she were pledged, and Frances would be left alone.

"Here is your chance," whispered that something within her, which would make itself heard. "You know Marie has been horrid to you the last few weeks. She hasn't done anything outright, but she has hurt you so many times with mean little things. She never hardly talks to you any more. The minute she gets home from some party, she rushes off to one of the other girl's rooms, and never seems to think you like to be told about it."

"Marie is just thoughtless," argued Frances' better self. "She does not mean to be unkind."

"Yes, but she ought to try to help you bear things, and not make it harder for you. Why, even one of the Omicron Phi girls who is rushing her said she was treating you 'rotten', that anyone could see that. Now if you keep quiet about that brother-affair of hers, no one will ever be the wiser, and everything will be all right."

"Oh, I can't," moaned Frances, "I can't let them go on believing a lie about Marie. And yet how can I give her up? I love her so!"

Her eyes were misty with unshed tears as she picked up Marie's picture from the dressing table, and looked at it hungrily, silently for a time. Then she whispered ever so softly:

"Do you know what those eyes of yours are asking me to do, darling? They are pleading with me to sign my own death warrant. It sounds funny, doesn't it?" Her voice caught in her throat. She rose unsteadily and went to the door.

"I must tell the Omicron Phi girls now," she murmured, as she turned the knob, "while I have the strength."

Marie was pledged to Omicron Phi late the next afternoon, and Frances went down to dinner alone that night. As she came near the door of the diningroom, she stopped for a moment and leaned against the wall, with her eyes closed.

"Now they will all look me over to see if I have a pledge pin on," she said under her breath. "Oh, the torture of those eyes, the pitying ones as well as the sneering ones! If I only didn't have to go in all alone!"

A burst of gay laughter grated on her ears; she quivered, and then stood bravely erect. The girl who had tried to do the square thing passed into the diningroom.

HAZEL M. LYMAN, '13.
She sat looking out reminiscently, sadly upon the campus below her. Her arms were on the window sill, and her head rested wearily on her clasped hands. The moonlight fell softly on her, and made the tiny tears sparkle as they fell from her long lashes upon her cheek, and rolled down onto the sill. Some of the boldest moonbeams danced past the girl and explored the room behind. Some touched lovingly the roll of white that lay on the table near the window. Others more bold than the first went farther in and danced about the mysterious black heap on the chair. Still others played about the wall, sorrowing that the pictures and pennants were no longer there. The bare walls displeased them, for without pictures, how could they play hide and seek? One group of daring fellows made their way to a far corner where stood a huge trunk. In that they found plenty of recesses for hiding places, and danced merrily among the things heaped upon it.

No sound broke the stillness of the night, save the girl's sigh as she sat looking. Outside, too, the moonbeams were running riot, and the soft summer breeze stirred the leaves of the campus trees. The whole place was lighted by the beautiful mystic light, and the tall trees along the walk threw weird shadows over the grass.

The eyes so heavy with glistening tears contemplated the scene before them. How often before they had looked upon that campus flooded with moonlight,—that campus significant of such good times,—that campus from every corner of which jumped old memories to confront her,—that campus that had seen so many hard struggles during her homesick Freshman days.

Off in the far corner rose a tall elm tree, and the gently swaying branches seemed to call her attention to it. "Don't you remember me? I sheltered you that first day so long ago, when you were lonely and homesick, and wanted to leave."
How well she remembered that day! Could it have been four long years before? What a foolish little Freshman she had been! How terribly serious she had taken herself. The smile fought for a moment with the tears, but the tears conquered as the girl remembered that it surely was four years ago, and that all was over.

From another corner—over by the Gym—the dear old Gym—stood a lilac bush heavy with blossoms. The soft scent was gently blown to her by the wind and with it came memory again. There it was—yes, right by that bush, that He had asked her to the first dance. That also, seemed almost too long ago to remember. Still—yes, it was perfectly clear now! She had been so happy, so happy! She had been the first Sopomore to get a "bid".

Again tears dimmed her eyes. The scene became blurred and indistinct and the moonbeams made pearls of the shining drops on her cheeks. Those dear, dear dances! What good times they used to have. And yet—that awful floor. They compared it to sandpaper, she remembered, and finally got so that they knew where the rocky places were. Her eyes turned to the Gym building standing alone in one corner of the campus. The moonlight beams softened the hard lines, and memories became softened too. That physical director! How all important he was. How the girls all hated Gym. It was so much bother, you know, to have to go over there just to play with a dumbbell or two. This time smiles conquered tears, and the dimples showed themselves as she thought of the days when the girls had gone over to watch the class basketball games. Those yells that startled the dust in the top of the building. Such clapping when your team made a basket.

Although she could not see it, she knew that just behind the Gym was the football field. There it was that they used to yell—to yell until the very mountain shook. She could see in memory, those figures fighting and running after the ball. How proud the girls always were when the boys made "good", and how they waved the pennants, as the team filed from the field victorious. But those games—she sighed—. No more would football mean to her what it meant then, even tho' she might come back as an alumna, the chief interest would be gone, for would not the boys be gone too? Ah, yes.
The tears were falling fast now, for as she thought of the many happy hours spent in the college, and of the morrow when she would leave it all, her heart failed her. She rose from her sitting position on the floor, and slowly looked around her room. There on the table, thro' the misty film before her eyes, she saw the roll of white tied with her class colors. That simple roll of paper stood for the four years of joy and sorrow, of work and pleasure. Near it lay the black mass of her cap and gown; symbols of Senior dignity, they were. Today was her last day as a Senior. Over in the corner stood the big trunk open as tho' waiting for the last things.

Again she turned to the window and stood gazing out, but not comprehending the rare beauty of the scene before her. Suddenly the clock in the tower began to strike midnight.

"One—two—three—," she counted, as the deep notes struck. "Ah," she murmured, "twelve o'clock. It is all over."

No, she was mistaken. All was not over, the clock tolled not the end, but the "Commencement."

LOUISE SMITH, '13.
YESTERDAY

ALMOST yesterday it seems to me, I was a college lad, with all the hopefulness of youth before me and not a single care in all the world, yet, what a stretch of years lies between that yesterday of memory and the today of reality. Oh, yes, what a stretch of weary plodding years.

As I write this in the old room of our college days, where many a night I toiled for the success of a tomorrow’s lesson, there comes to my ears, borne softly by the evening breeze, the cheery tiskling of a mandolin with manly, happy voices carrying the tune of an old song of college days.

Somewhere, close by, a jolly crowd of good fellows is gathered together in heart to heart fraternity and cheer and true good fellowship.

Just a chill comes to my heart, as I realize truly for the first time how very far I have drifted on my course since the old days, and the care free way of living them. For I too, was once the welcome comrade in such a crowd—and I know—I know!

Now it is another song they are singing. “For its always fair weather when good fellows get together with a stein on the table and a good song ringing clear.” Those seem to be the words; but after all, what does it matter, words are only words. It is the spirit there—the spirit and the feeling.

I wonder if they realize how much of perfect life they are tasting now, how long it will be ere they again know such sunny golden hours as they are living now. Will they, do you suppose, come back in after years and sit by the open window as I am sitting and hear other men and other voices
singing those old songs they once made ring so well, even as I did also and not have come into their hearts something that is heavy and dead, and to their understanding the first keen realization of all that was once theirs? If they be true men I say, they will feel those things and know with tears in their eyes, unashamed as they are in mine.

Just for the time let us suppose that we are united again to be with that old crowd in the dim days. Now we are all together in one of the rooms that made our lounging place then. We will light up our pipes, fellows; this is to be a night of it I am sure.

To you, old man, and you,—what shall I say? We all were to live over the good old days, but I cannot tell of them. I cannot. It seems so clear, so real, but I have not the skill to draw a true picture of feeling, of emotion, of fellowship. We are there again, true! But can one tell of the meaning of the laughter, the way the songs pull at the heart, the manly glance from eye to eye, or the good cheer, the rare good cheer? No! I can realize, I can live again; but I cannot tell; I believe sacred things must be this way. Perhaps it is best; who knows?

But there, the far away tinkling has ceased and the voices and the song died away. The spell is broken. The wind is chill now, just like the days before us. I will gather up these papers and slip away, for there are tear-stains upon my cheeks and I must hide them. No one shall see. I am not ashamed, but they are sacred tonight. What is that!

"For it's always fair"—It's only an echo, that is all.