

and the expected guest, the thought of whom was always upsetting his level ways; also he was ready to quarrel with the expected chaperone—"Who, by Jove, ought to be here by now." How awkward if Mary comes first (he had never called her "Mary" before!) and finds him alone in this abode of mere man, this den of lions, insufficiently guarded by the Abigail, who at this moment was, he hoped, engaged in preparations in regions down below. As he tried to face the compromising dilemma he heard on the pavement leading from his gate—"the pitter-patter not in vain of eager little feet." Whose little feet? Her's, or those of the chaperone, presumably also little. The door bell rang, and the pulses in his temple thumped in unison with the clang. By projecting three feet of his length (half his entire person) out of the open window, (open because a roaring fire in the grate was encouraged in order to make things look cheerful), he could have seen enough of a figure in profile on the threshold, to judge from its colours and curves, whether belonging to the maid or the matron in question. If pronounced and vivid that would betray the chaperone, if dainty and delicate that would mean SHE. But he dared not look, neither did he confess even to himself which he hoped to see. If the chaperone, then conventions triumphed; if the fair maid, ah then, how sweet, how awful, none being near, to hold her hand, look into her eyes, and learn in one moment, what? Did he really wish to put anything to the test? Either himself or her? The Stupid Man pretended he did not know, and while he was busy blindfolding himself, Abigail opened the door, and in walked She.

Fresh, pure, stimulating, like the October air without, she stepped lightly, gaily in, held out her hand and in the sweet clear tones that always thrilled his soul, exclaimed,—“Am I late?” and unembarrassed as though no such things as chaperones existed, went straight to the chair placed for her by the fire, saying—“What a jolly room! High ceilings! Big windows, just the opposite of our would-be artistic flat.” A pause, while he stood spell-bound, dumb, then her comforting criticism broke out anew, “And what heaps of pipes and deep chairs and cushions and things.” A sigh, and, “No wonder you like being a bachelor!”

\* \* \* “LIKE BEING A BACHELOR!” It was a fact, that during the extent of his college life, the length and breadth of the “Arts” course, the heights and depths of his “Science,” he had always told himself, and others, that he “liked being a bachelor,” and had no other ambition than to yield to the spell of McGill or any other High Court of Learning in whose shadow he dwelt, piling up degree after degree as other men pile up gold (his pile of gold was already made) and let the end come, finding him still a Student, and by choice still alone. Now he saw, as by a flash of lightning “The writing on the wall”—“Weighed in the Balance and Found Wanting,”—such a life now seemed empty, profitless, such a prospect naked and unpleasing, and why? He did not put the question into words, still less the answer, but the revelation was complete, though the expression of the Stupid Man’s face remained unchanged, even when a frantic pro-