

THEY, INC.

JEANNE GASS

"WELL, LOOK Who's here. Our new tenderfoot himself." Abby eased gently into the big wine-colored chair.

The man across the room scowled and fiddled with his hands and looked at the floor.

Emmie sighed ever so slightly. "I told them we could handle this assignment ourselves."

The man muttered. "Well. This was an important case."

Abby sniffed delicately. Emmie put her hand up to her mouth and whispered, "It's all right, Abby. They probably had to give him *something* to keep him busy. He won't hurt anything."

"Mustn't have professional jealousy, you know," the man added defensively.

A moment of silence passed. Then—

"Nice place," Emmie said with an airy gesture.

"Very nice." Abby tapped her foot silently on the floor. "I wish he'd hurry. We've got a midnight wedding, you know, Emmie. Some trouble about the bride's sister."

"When is Maxwell due?" the man questioned.

"In three minutes and 45 seconds now," Abby replied.

Emmie had been flitting about admiring the room, passing her hand over the smooth surface of a jade vase, and gently patting the luxurious velvet cushions into place.

"Very nice," she said happily, and perched on the arm of the davenport.

"It's really Jenkins' fault we're here, you know. This wasn't *supposed* to happen at all." Abby spoke meaningfully. "He forgot an assignment last week, and let this

Chuck person run away from home."

"Too bad." The man shook his head sympathetically.

"But Chuck will learn his lesson tonight." Emmie smiled in a consoling manner.

"Well, here Maxwell comes," said Abby.

The three watched the library door open. Thurston Maxwell strode in. Mr. Maxwell always strode, even if he was only stepping into his library for a cigarette before going to bed. He liked to think of himself as a stern man.

He took an expensive jewelled case from his dressing-gown pocket and started to seat himself in the wine-colored chair. Abby and Emmie and the man concentrated hard, and Mr. Maxwell changed his mind and took the green leather one instead.

Abby nodded to the others. "I would have hated to move," she said.

Mr. Maxwell flicked his lighter twice before it worked. He blew a lazy smoke ring, and crossed his legs. He always liked to blow smoke rings when no one was around. He blew another, sighed a little, and looked at his watch. Eleven-fifteen. Guess I'd better get to bed before long, he thought to himself.

"He's wrong. Eleven-fourteen," Abby commented.

"Hadn't we better start? It's about time. My record says eleven-twenty-two." The man was anxious and nervous.

"Wait a little," Emmie cautioned.

Mr. Maxwell stood up and crushed the stub of his cigarette into a pewter ashtray. He ran his fingers through his thick hair, slightly greyed at the temples, and picked up a copy of the current "best seller" from

an occasional table. He thumbed through it idly.

"Handsome, isn't he, Abby," Emmie observed archly to Abby. "When is his time up?"

"Eighteen years and three months," volunteered Abby.

"My, you certainly have all the data." The man spoke admiringly.

Abby bridled coyly. "Experience," she said.

During this time Mr. Maxwell had walked over to the bell-rope and summoned the butler, who entered silently.

"Bring my tray at seven in the morning, Stevens," Mr. Maxwell ordered. "I have a busy day tomorrow."

"Yes, sir. Is that all, sir?"

"Eleven-seventeen and one half," announced Abby. "Now *concentrate*."

Mr. Maxwell stood silent.

"I say, is that all, sir?"

"Eh? Oh. Yes, Stevens. Yes."

"Somebody isn't doing his best. We can't muff this job. Now *concentrate*."

Stevens, the butler, turned to leave.

Abby and Emmie and the man concentrated.

Steven reached the door.

"I say, Stevens. Did you hear Mrs. Maxwell call?"

"Mrs. Maxwell? When, sir?"

"Then! Just then."

"Uh. No, sir."

"Well. Never mind. I must be imagining things. Her room's too far away anyhow."

"*Concentrate*," Abby hissed.

"I swear, I heard it again! More like a scream. Stevens, I'm going up. Will you come with me?"

"Yes, sir."

Abby nodded to her confederates in satisfaction.

The two men raced across the spacious front hall and up the wide stairway, to the

first floor, then the second, then the third. Puffing and perspiring, they rounded the landing and ran down the hall to Mrs. Maxwell's door. It was unlocked. They burst in upon a strange scene. By the dim light of the rose bed lamp they could see the stiff and terrified figure of Mrs. Maxwell sitting up in bed. Her well-manicured hand clutched the novel she had been reading. And the slender form of a man was crouched over her holding a small revolver five inches from her heart.

For a surprised moment the four people remained motionless. Then to everyone else's astonishment the slender man flung himself down on the bed, sobbing hysterically.

"I say, how peculiar," said Stevens, his eyes bulging.

"Why, he's only a boy," Mr. Maxwell said wonderingly. "Laura, are you all right?"

"Oh, *Thurston*, I'm so glad you got here in time. I nearly *died*. I simply nearly died. He must have climbed up the big oak, and onto my balcony? I thought I'd die of fright. How on earth did you hear me? He demanded he *threatened* me, and when I screamed he *threatened* me. Yes, he *threatened* me. Call the police, Stevens. Oh, somebody call the police. *Thurston*, I simply thought . . .

"Wait, Stevens. Let's take him down stairs," Mr. Maxwell said.

Down in the library Abby and Emmie and the man nodded happily to each other.

"I wish they'd hurry. We haven't much more time," Abby sighed.

"Here they come," said Emmie.

"So your name is Chuck, and you're fifteen years old. You don't look like one of these robber chaps." Maxwell mused. Then remembered himself and became stern. "But you threatened my wife. That's a serious offense. It is true, isn't it? You did threaten to kill my wife?"



YOUNG GIRLS

BY MARY CASSETT

John Herron Art Museum



PORTRAIT OF A LADY

BY CHESTER HARDING

John Herron Art Museum

The boy was calmer now, but his hands still trembled. He lowered his head.

"Well, I didn't . . ." he began.

"Answer me. Yes or no!"

"Then *yes!*" The boy's eyes were suddenly defiant.

"Then I have no choice but to turn you over to the police," Mr. Maxwell said gravely.

Abby and Emmie and the man were frowning.

"And I thought he was all right," Emmie said sadly.

"He's got a lot to learn in those eighteen years." Abby clucked her tongue. "Well altogether now." They concentrated.

Mr. Maxwell paused with the phone in his hand. He could see the dark fear beneath the defiance in the boy's eyes. He watched his own hand slowly put the phone back on the hook.

"Can you tell me about it, Chuck?" he was surprised to hear himself say gently.

The boy's chin quivered.

"I just wanted some money, mister. I hadda have money, I ran away from home. Last week. Ya see my mom . . . Well, I said I wouldn't come back till I got some money. And you had plenty, mister. I wasn't gonna shoot your wife. But I got

scared. I kinda went to pieces, I guess, when she started screamin' . . ." He clutched Mr. Maxwell's sleeve. "Aw Mister. I'll do anythin' you say. But don't turn me over to the cops. Please. Please . . ."

Mr. Maxwell sat down.

"Well, I'll make you a proposition, Chuck. I need an odd-job boy around the grounds . . ." Now why did he say that? He didn't need an odd-job boy around the grounds at all. He watched the thin face light up. There was something more. Oh yes.

"But first," he said sternly, "we've got to have a talk about this thing tonight. Sit down here. You may go, Stevens. You see, Chuck, society . . ."

"Well, that's taken care of," said Abby peacefully. "We've got to leave. You stay to get the final record," she said to the man. "They'll want to see it." He nodded.

Abby and Emmie moved to the other side of the room.

"They'll both be all right now," Emmie smiled tenderly.

"Come Emmie. Don't dawdle. We've just time to straighten out that wedding," said Abby.

And together the two faded through the window and became a part of the night.

GREEK AND LATIN IN COLLEGE CURRICULA

JOHN E. ROSS

ONE OF The changes in college curricula has been the lessening emphasis upon the study of the classics in literature and language. R. Freeman Butts discusses the historical setting of this change in his recent book *The College Charts Its Course*. Mr. Butts places an emphasis upon two aspects of this condition in education: "the origins of the traditions

that a liberal education should be predominantly linguistic and literary in character," and "the rapidly changing social and intellectual conditions of the nineteenth century weakened this conception of a liberal education in the American college and gave rise to many innovations among which the elective system was perhaps most representative." A study of the historical back-