

Roommates . . .

by Martha Boatwright

The window was up, and a cool spring breeze made the organdy curtains flutter back and forth across the window sill. The room was just like any other college room . . . two cots, a desk, two dressers, two chairs, and a lavatory. However, the furniture had all been painted white, and this made the room a little more cheerful than the others with their dark brown furniture. The rugs were made of old stockings, dyed a darker shade of green than the chintz counterpanes on the cots. Pennants were hung at all angles on the walls, and a bulletin board full of odds and ends was tacked beside the door. The top of one dresser was cluttered with bobby pins, tan no. 1 pancake, raven red lipstick, mascara, and the picture of a handsome lieutenant. The other dresser was almost bare. On it were a few pins, a light shade of powder, and a small tube of tangee lipstick.

Seated at the desk trying to solve a chemical equation, was Penny Adams. She was an intelligent looking girl with short brown hair that curled softly about her round face. She wore odd-shaped blue rimmed glasses that just matched the blue in her eyes. Her lips had only a faint tinge of pink that complemented the natural glow on her cheeks.

As she finished the last equation, she heard someone running up the hall. She listened to the rapid footsteps. Yes, that was Cherry. Penny adored Cherry. They had roomed together for two and a half years, and during that time Penny had grown to love Cherry as much as she did her own little sister.

It is surprising that the two girls got along so well together, because they were exact opposites. Cherry was a beautiful girl with long blonde hair and soft green eyes. Her nose tilted at just the right angle, and her lips were the size and shape every girl longs for. She was five feet five inches tall and weighed 112 well-distributed pounds.

Suddenly the door banged open, and in ran Cherry.

"Penny, I have the most wonderful news." Her face was flushed and her eyes danced excitedly. "I'm going home this very day."

"Are you out of your mind?" asked Penny, who was quite startled at such a remark. "It's only Tuesday and you know you don't have the cuts or the overnights. Have you forgotten you flunked lit?"

"I don't care if I flunked everything. I'm going home and I'm not coming back! Terry just called me. Penny, we're going to be married." Cherry turned away from Penny and went over and gazed at the picture on her dresser.

"B-b-but you can't," said Penny, when she had recovered her senses. "You're so young!"

"Nineteen's not so young any more. Why, I know girls that marry when they're seventeen."

"But those girls are different. They don't have the opportunities you do. They can't go to college and get an education. They can't . . ."

"I've had two and a half years of college. I've probably learned everything I'll ever learn anyway. You can't talk me out of it, Penny. You know how this whole year had been. I've lived for the hours when I would be with Terry. Everything reminds me of him. I don't enjoy anything without him. Even that week-end at Dartmouth was no fun because all I could think about was how it would have been with Terry there. And in classes it's just as bad. I can't listen to the prof because I'm day-dreaming of that week-end at the beach last year with you and Jim and Terry or the time we went on the picnic to the top of Grandfather's mountain. I can't study because my mind is always where Terry is. If I stayed here it would only be torturing myself, and maybe mean losing him. Terry wants me to marry him, and that's what I'm going to do."

By this time, Cherry had pulled her largest suitcase out of the closet, and had begun to take things out of her drawers.

"Are you going to tell your parents?" asked Penny, who saw there was no use arguing with Cherry. Penny knew that once Cherry made up her mind she never changed it.

"I wasn't going to, but Terry says I must. I guess it's better in the long run. They would probably never forgive me if I didn't tell them. I know they will put up a big fuss, but they'll soon give in to me. They always do. Terry's going to tell his parents, too. He told me to tell you and no one else."

Cherry was throwing things haphazardly in her bag.

"C-can I help you pack?" asked Penny, still dazed by all that was happening.

"Would you mind? You know how I hate to pack, and I'm so excited I hardly know what I'm doing. You pack and I'll get dressed."

Penny took the things Cherry had thrown in the bag out again, and began folding them smoothly.

"You won't have to pack everything," Cherry added. "I'll take only the things I need. Then after the wedding and honeymoon, Terry and I will come back and get my other things."

"What time are you leaving?" Penny asked without looking up.

"The six o'clock train. That will get me home at ten-thirty. Terry said he would meet me. Be sure to pack his picture."

"Aren't you going to tell the dean or anyone that you are leaving?"

"I'm going to sign out to go home for a few days. After I get home I'll call and tell them I'm not coming back." Cherry turned around quickly and faced her roommate. "Please don't tell anyone, will you, Penny?"

"Of course not," Penny laid another skirt in the bag.

"I knew I could trust you," Cherry glanced at Penny. "I'm going to miss you, Penny. We've had such fun together. I'll never know how you put up with me so long. You're so sweet and study so hard. I'm selfish and hate books. If it hadn't been for you, I would

have flunked everything I've ever taken."

Penny still did not look up.

"I hope you can get another roommate. Anyone will love having you. Maybe you and Betty can room together. She and Mary fuss all the time." Cherry slid a white sweater down over her head and turned to look at herself in the mirror.

"Is that all you want to pack?" asked Penny as she looked around the room and into the closet.

"Yes, I think so. You've been a lamb to do it for me. I'm all dressed now and ready to go."

Penny looked at her. She was more beautiful than ever before. She was radiant all over, and looked as if she were just leaving for her first day at college rather than for her wedding.

"Are you sure this is what you want to do, Cherry?" Penny asked almost pleadingly.

"Yes, Penny, I know it is." It was seldom Cherry was serious, but she sat on the edge of the bed now, and pulled Penny down beside her.

"I'm not like you, Penny. You're smart and intelligent. You're the type for college. I hate studying, you know I do. I've learned all I'll ever need to know. I was going to marry Terry when I graduate next year . . . everyone knew that. There's no sense in putting it off until then. I'm not going to get any more out of college, and it's just a waste of money and time for me to stay here. Please try to see it my way, Penny. I love Terry and he loves me more than anything in the world. He'll be going back overseas soon, and this time I want him to know he's got a wife waiting and not just a scatter-brained college girl. Maybe I'll come back to school again after he leaves. I don't know now. But the fact remains . . . I love him, and I want to marry him."

She paused. Penny didn't say a word. Then Cherry went on. "Can you understand my side, Penny? Please do, because I want you to more than anyone else. After all, you introduced me to Terry." Penny stood up and looked at Cherry. For a moment neither of them spoke. Then Penny said, "Un-

til one minute ago I never thought marriage should interfere with college, Cherry. I know now that you really love Terry."

Cherry got up, kissed Penny on the cheek, picked up her bag, and ran out of the room. Penny was alone. For a long time she sat on Cherry's bed and gazed out of the window. Then she got up and walked slowly to her desk. She picked up her pen and her stationery. A tear fell on the blue paper as she wrote, "My dearest Brother Terry . . ."

Utopia

by Roberta Huffman

I used to think that college students in the Middle Ages must have led horribly dull lives, constantly studying Greek and, worse still, Latin. I had visions of emaciated, pale-faced scholars sitting motionless in their hard chairs hour after hour while the stern, eagle-eyed professor stood before them with a Latin book in one hand and a rod in the other. How mistaken I was!

It was the students, not the teachers, who ran the schools in the Middle Ages, and a rowdy bunch of students they were, too. They had a set of regulations for the teachers to follow, and the teachers abided by these regulations or were awfully sorry they did not. Teachers could never be late to class, and they had to close the minute the bell rang. If, however, they did not cover all the material in one period, were fined. If a teacher wished to get married, he must get permission from the students. If the students approved of his fiancée, they graciously allowed the teacher one day for his honeymoon, only, of-course, after he had paid a fee for his absence.

The Medieval teacher led not only a rather restricted life but a dangerous one. It was no uncommon occurrence for a student to throw a rock at a teacher if the teacher ventured to disagree with him. Of-course there were fines for throwing rocks at teachers. After all, even a teacher had to have a little protection. For throwing a rock at a teacher and missing the mark, a student was fined about three cents. If, however, the teacher was not

agile enough or too old to do some expert dodging and the student did hit him, the poor student was fined six cents. Once a particularly bold, forward sort of teacher actually dared to throw a stone back at a student who proceeded without delay to cut his throat.

Although Medieval students were not burdened with academic regulations, they did have social regulations and etiquette books to follow. Etiquette books recommended very highly to the students the practice of washing their hands when they got up and their faces too, if they had time. And if a Medieval student wished to be considered a gentleman, he certainly had to have good table manners. By good table manners, Medieval etiquette books usually meant the proper procedure for eating fowls. A student was to scrape every morsel of meat off the bones with a knife, but it was not considered the very best form to gnaw bones. When he was through with his bones, a gentleman always threw them under the table—never in the middle of the floor!

Now I see that the Medieval student was in no sense the frail creature of dust I once thought him. He was, on the other hand, quite a healthy lad; and the student who sat awe-stricken before an abundance of learning was an exception.

(If you are unwilling to take my word for all these amazing facts, run over to the library and plow through the three volumes of *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* by Hastings Rashdall. Believe me; it's a lovely way to spend six weeks.)

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