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11-26-1895

## To Harry de Forest Smith - November 26, 1895

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO HARRY DE FOREST SMITH

My dear Smith,

You will. I fear, threaten to strike me off your list when I tell you that I do not yet know how either of Saturdays games turned out. I did not think to get a Sunday paper, there was nothing about them in our delicious little daily. And this morning I forgot it again. And yet I deny all relationship with your five year man, This makes me think of the morning after the New York state election when I met Sumner Soule on the hill. "Well," he said, "how did she go?"—"What?"—"New York."—"Don't know." --"Well my God, young man! . . ."

I hope you will keep on sending me Crimsons whether I acknowledge them or not. They fill a little place in my life that would otherwise be empty. They seem to take me back somehow, to the time when I used to sit and smoke in my room at Beelar's and he{a}r Saben come pounding up the stairs, or maybe Latham with some damned sour-bellied criticism of Andrew Lang.

I had a small letter from Hubbell soon after my arrival in Gardiner and

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one from Ford, who tells me that he will spend Sunday with me if I want him. It makes me feel good when such a fellow is willing to ride five hours in the cars and back again for the sake of a few hours with me and my notions and I am wondering "as to how" I shall be able to entertain him. I hav{e} decided to let him entertain himself—and me at the same time. Nothing like a little ingenious forethought.

I ought to ask your pardon for running my friends into your letters as I do, but when Latham writes me that he is not reading anything but Greek, and stuff pertaining to Greek I know you must have

a kind of brotherly feeling for him. He thinks Moulton goes altogether to[o] far in his mechanical dissection<sup>1</sup> of tragedy and comedy and I am inclined to agree with him—though I only looked through that portion of the book.—I hav stopped Antigone on account of my other work, but you need hav no fears on my stopping it altogether. If, by any strange chance, I manage to do anything to live a year or two, it will be that Greek play—that is, unless I am tremendously mistaken.

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Your letter last evening did me a world of good and I only wish that I might give you a decent return for it. But I cannot to-day, and God only knows when I can. What little faculty I ever had for letter writing seems to hav have {sic} left me this fall. Perhaps it is on account of the hard pull my pomes are giving me. If that little book ever goes out, I am half afraid that I shall go with it. Never had such a damned time in [my] life with any thing as with some of those verse{s} which ought to go like bees and things and which want to go like camels. It is hunting for hours after one word and then not getting it that plays the devil with a man's gray matter and makes him half ready to doubt the kindness of the Scheme.

I had already read the clipping you sent me. It was copied in the Reporter-Journal. Sometimes I wish the tiny town of the Kennebec and all the people in it (myself included) could be blown up among the Asteroids<sup>a</sup> and picked off with one of Jules Vernes comets. When I feel that way I almost always go and have a smoke which doesn't taste right. I am glad you are com-

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ing home pretty soon because I want to see how you look. You seem to be enjoying Harvard, and I am glad of that, too.

I see by one of the Crimson's that Jamie<sup>2</sup> is trying for the Advocate Hope he'll get it, for it would put him in the way of meeting some very good fellows. He hust hav talked through his had about my song, for he nev{er} heard it, But then,

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<sup>a</sup> WA reads "Asterids".

he think[s] I am something pretty strange just now and is a better friend to me than he will be in two more years. There is a pathos in a younger fellows friendship that will-nigh kills the pleasure of it.

Yours most sincerely,  
Robinson.

P.S.

You will find the Thomas Hardy sonnet in the Critic for November 23—Holiday Number.

HCL *US*, 235-236. Undated but postmarked November 26, 1895.

1. US reads "distinction."
2. James Barstow.

NOTES