

Sixteen Lovely Ladies

April 11th, 1924

We've received another package from the Europeans; among other things it contains more of Francis's G-d-forsaken poetry. I swear the man writes such things just to destroy my soul. As with all of his drivel, I will have to stare at it to see if it contains a hidden message. About half of his ridiculous poems contain secrets, which is enough that I have to read every single one. Forcing me to read everything is undoubtedly his goal. Would that I had the ability or willingness to produce such tripe myself; at least then I could be revenged, somewhat.

Sixteen lovely ladies at Saint Edna's Chapel School
Seek out sins and mischief of every shape and kind
Saint Edna's always watching, though; Saint Edna is no fool
A good girl thrives; a bad one seems to die or lose her mind.

Three girls tried to break out on a quiet Thursday night
It would not be quite fair to say they vanished with no trace
Searching started in the morning, once there was some light
Three shoes were found, a bit of foot, and two socks made of lace

One lass skipped class to catch a fish; the water tried to choke
She lived but she will sing no more; she cries about the deep
Three perished in a fire while they tried to sneak a smoke
And yet another lost her wits from nightmares in her sleep

On frigid Wednesday, eight AM, attendance time is here
The students line up; Sister Martha sighs and wrings her hands
Half the students gone or dead; a horrid rate, I fear
But seeker, can you tell me where each present lady stands?

Celeste

A tiny one; she's such a dear,
Her nose is pert; her eyes are clear

Ivy

She looks in the mirror and picks at her face
Another red mark that she cannot erase

Lindsay

Her hair is long, her hair is thick
It's everywhere; it makes me sick

Desiree

Lips as bright as a ripened cherry
Demeanor like a bluer berry

Amanda

She places all her woes behind
Once upon a meal she's dined

Margaret

The eldest young lady; she's eighteen today
She helps the young ones who don't know the way

Evelyn

On scholarship, she's kind but broke
(Her mother ran off with some bloke)

Iris

Cheeks bright as a rosy morn
She's been tall since she was born

Adriana

Sweet but klutzy, she breaks a dish
Again for grace and poise she'll wish

Theresa

Over her the boys all fight
Her beauteous face is such a sight

Emma

Beautiful hair but flyaway strands
Easily fixed with elastic bands

Opal

Alone at dinner
Not a winner

Nellie

In art class she is drawing sheep
O'er the picket fence they leap

Dani

She frowns, trying to determine whether
To wear the ribbon or the feather

Penny

Always calm and always cool
A graceful creature, born to rule

Rebecca

Sitting quiet on her bed
Embroidering with golden thread