

# Cor Harvardianum, Cor Nostrum

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## The Heart of Harvard, Our Heart

by

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CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

## Cor Harvardianum, Cor Nostrum

Salvete omnes! Praeses Faust, decani professoresque, hospites et familiares et condiscipuli, salvete! Convenimus in hoc universitatis camporum oculo, qui per annos iam transactos factus est noster, profecturi vitae novum in gradum. Cum diversis rebus studuerimus et diversas vias secuturi simus, existitne tamen aliquid quod nos omnes didicerimus et quo omnes uti possimus? Equidem sic arbitror: cor Harvardianum, cor nostrum id nomino, id est fervorem animi.

Ego quidem, cum modo advenissem apud Harvardianos, quid exspectarem nescivi, nisi mentes refulgentes et multum laboris et intellectus incrementum. Haec spes certe non me fefellit. Quotiens de schola vel de hora discipulis adiuvandis exhibam mente laete fatigata, sane mirabar sapientiam ingeniumque professorum et condiscipulorum. Non tamen Harvardianorum sapientia sed calor atque ardor insperatus per hos annos quattuor me tetigerunt.

Non, mihi si linguae centum sint oraque centum, aurea vox, comprehendere tot fabulas possim, quae quidem vobis ipsis sunt pernotae: professores qui litteris electronicis longioribus ad quaestiones respondebant et non solum mentes sed etiam domos atque corda perlibenter pandebant ut itinera nobis pararent et nostras res foverent. Bis professores mei ita operis pulchritudine affecti sunt ut ad lacrimas fere commoti sint, unus cum legeremus quomodo Ovidii Orpheus suam Eurydicen iterum amisisset, alter quomodo Tolstoiani Levinus et Katherina reconciliati essent. His omnibus observatis, universitatis imago aliquantulum frigida duraque in mollius dissolvere coepit.

Hoc modo universitas nostra similis est bibliothecae Widenerianae. De saxis silicibus et marmore facta, aliis aedificationibus amplitudine atque robore praecellens, vere dignum sapientiae templum quoddam videtur. Sed re vera, sicut vos recordamini, haec bibliotheca aedificata est tamquam matris monumentum memoriae filii sui, Henrici Widenerii, discipuli Harvardiani qui *Titanico* in naufragio periit. Quam ob rem tabulata superiora disposita sunt circa spatium apertum et in medio situm est cubiculum Henrici ipsius cum libris et scrinio eius ubi bibliotecarii flores vivos adhuc ponere solent.

Sicut matris pietas bibliothecae formam naturamque effinxit, ita quoque animarum nostrarum fervor res nostras fingere potest et debet. Si cor nostrum commoveri sinemus, si artem quae nos stimulat sequemur, operarum nostrarum studium nobis gaudium feret et nos sustinebit per longas horas et cottidianae taedium vitae. Non autem nobis solum sed etiam aliis prodesse potest. Nam eodem modo quo professorum studium nos excitavit atque delectavit et quo deinde corda eorum laetificavit studium nostrum, ita si superabimus pavorem ne vulneremur, si calorem fovebimus et eum aliis largiemur, illos inspirabimus et illis vias novas aperiemus.

Progredate igitur ex corde Harvardiano cordibus vestris ad recipiendum atque donandum paratis! Avete atque valete!

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## The Heart of Harvard, Our Heart

Welcome to all! Greetings President Faust, deans and professors, guests, friends, relatives, and fellow students! We have come together in this gem of the Harvard campus, which has become ours over the past years, about to begin a new stage in life's journey. Although we have studied different things and will pursue diverse paths, is there nonetheless something that we have all learned and of which we can all make use? Indeed I believe there is: I call it the heart of Harvard, our heart, that is enthusiasm.

When I first arrived at Harvard, I did not know what to expect, beyond brilliant minds, a great deal of work, and my own intellectual growth. I was not disappointed. Many times, as I left class or office hours pleasantly exhausted mentally, I certainly marveled at the wisdom and talents of my professors and fellow students. But it was not Harvard's erudition that touched me over these past four years but a warmth and enthusiasm that I could not have anticipated.

Not if I had a hundred tongues and a voice of gold could I narrate the many stories so well known to you: professors who responded to questions with lengthy e-mails and joyfully opened not just their minds but their homes and hearts to organize excursions and encourage our interests and projects. Two of my own professors were so affected by the beauty of a work that they were moved almost to tears; one was reading with us Ovid's depiction of Orpheus' second and final loss of his Eurydice, the other, Tolstoy's description of Levin and Kitty's reconciliation. After I had seen all this, my somewhat frigid and lofty image of Harvard began to dissolve into something softer.

In this way our university is like its library, Widener. Made of granite and marble, standing with solid strength above the Yard's other buildings, it is a fitting edifice for a temple of learning. As you will recall, however, this library was actually built as a mother's monument to her son, Harry Widener, a Harvard student who died in the wreck of the *Titanic*. For this reason, the library's upper floors were built around an empty space so that the first floor could be occupied by Harry's room with his books and desk, where even now the librarians regularly place fresh flowers.

Just as a mother's devotion shaped the form and nature of the library, so our enthusiasm can and should shape what we do. If we allow our hearts to be moved, if we pursue what stimulates us, our zeal for our work will bring us joy and sustain us through long hours and the tedium of daily life. But this enthusiasm can benefit not only us but others as well. In the same way that our professors' zeal excited and delighted us and our zeal, in turn, brought them happiness, so if we overcome our fear of vulnerability, if we cultivate warmth and share it with others, we will inspire them and open to them new horizons.

Go forth, therefore, from the heart of Harvard with your own hearts ready to receive and to give! Farewell!

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