

Project Gutenberg's A Young Girl's Diary, by An Anonymous Young Girl

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)

Title: A Young Girl's Diary

Author: An Anonymous Young Girl

Commentator: Prefaced by a letter by Sigmund Freud

Translator: Eden and Cedar Paul

Release Date: January 21, 2006 [EBook #752]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

\*\*\* START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A YOUNG GIRL'S DIARY  
\*\*\*

Produced by Charles Keller and David Widger

A YOUNG GIRL'S DIARY

Prefaced with a Letter by Sigmund Freud

Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul

CONTENTS

FIRST YEAR   Age 11 to 12

SECOND YEAR   Age 12 to 13

THIRD YEAR Age 13 to 14  
LAST HALF-YEAR Age 14 to 14 1/2  
CONCLUSION

## PREFACE

THE best preface to this journal written by a young girl belonging to the upper middle class is a letter by Sigmund Freud dated April 27, 1915, a letter wherein the distinguished Viennese psychologist testifies to the permanent value of the document:

"This diary is a gem. Never before, I believe, has anything been written enabling us to see so clearly into the soul of a young girl, belonging to our social and cultural stratum, during the years of puberal development. We are shown how the sentiments pass from the simple egoism of childhood to attain maturity; how the relationships to parents and other members of the family first shape themselves, and how they gradually become more serious and more intimate; how friendships are formed and broken. We are shown the dawn of love, feeling out towards its first objects. Above all, we are shown how the mystery of the sexual life first presses itself vaguely on the attention, and then takes entire possession of the growing intelligence, so that the child suffers under the load of secret knowledge but gradually becomes enabled to shoulder the burden. Of all these things we have a description at once so charming, so serious, and so artless, that it cannot fail to be of supreme interest to educationists and psychologists.

"It is certainly incumbent on you to publish the diary. All students of my own writings will be grateful to you."

In preparing these pages for the press, the editor has toned down nothing, has added nothing, and has suppressed nothing. The only alterations she has made have been such as were essential to conceal the identity of the writer and of other persons mentioned in the document. Consequently, surnames, Christian names, and names of places, have been changed. These modifications have enabled the original author of the diary to allow me to place it at the free disposal of serious readers.

No attempt has been made to correct trifling faults in grammar and other inelegancies of style. For the most part, these must not be regarded as the expression of a child's incapacity for the control of language. Rather must they be looked upon as manifestations of affective trends, as errors in functioning brought about by the influence of the

Unconscious.

THE EDITOR. VIENNA, \_Autumn\_, 1919.

FIRST YEAR, AGE ELEVEN TO TWELVE

FIRST YEAR

July 12, 19 . . . Hella and I are writing a diary. We both agreed that when we went to the high school we would write a diary every day. Dora keeps a diary too, but she gets furious if I look at it. I call Helene "Hella," and she calls me "Rita;" Helene and Grete are so vulgar. Dora has taken to calling herself "Thea," but I go on calling her "Dora." She says that little children (she means me and Hella) ought not to keep a diary. She says they will write such a lot of nonsense. No more than in hers and Lizzi's.

July 13th. Really we were not to begin writing until after the holidays, but since we are both going away, we are beginning now. Then we shall know what we have been doing in the holidays.

The day before yesterday we had an entrance examination, it was very easy, in dictation I made only 1 mistake--writing \_ihn\_ without \_h\_. The mistress said that didn't matter, I had only made a slip. That is quite true, for I know well enough that \_ihn\_ has an \_h\_ in it. We were both dressed in white with rose-coloured ribbons, and everyone believed we were sisters or at least cousins. It would be very nice to have a cousin. But it's still nicer to have a friend, for we can tell one another everything.

July 14th. The mistress was very kind. Because of her Hella and I are really sorry that we are not going to a middle school. Then every day before lessons began we could have had a talk with her in the class-room. But we're awfully pleased because of the other girls. One is more important when one goes to the high school instead of only to the middle school. That is why the girls are in such a rage. "They are bursting with pride" (that's what my sister says of me and Hella, but it is not true). "Our two students" said the mistress when we came away. She told us to write to her from the country. I shall.

July 15th. Lizzi, Hella's sister, is not so horrid as Dora, she

is always so nice! To-day she gave each of us at least ten chocolate-creams. It's true Hella often says to me: "You don't know her, what a beast she can be. Your sister is generally very nice to me." Certainly it is very funny the way in which she always speaks of us as "the little ones" or "the children," as if she had never been a child herself, and indeed a much littler one than we are. Besides we're just the same as she is now. She is in the fourth class and we are in the first.

To-morrow we are going to Kaltenbach in Tyrol. I'm frightfully excited. Hella went away to-day to Hungary to her uncle and aunt with her mother and Lizzi. Her father is at manoeuvres.

July 19th. It's awfully hard to write every day in the holidays. Everything is so new and one has no time to write. We are living in a big house in the forest. Dora bagged the front veranda straight off for her own writing. At the back of the house there are such swarms of horrid little flies; everything is black with flies. I do hate flies and such things. I'm not going to put up with being driven out of the front veranda. I won't have it. Besides, Father said: "Don't quarrel, children!" (Children to her too!!) He's quite right. She puts on such airs because she'll be fourteen in October. "The verandas are common property," said Father. Father's always so just. He never lets Dora lord it over me, but Mother often makes a favourite of Dora. I'm writing to Hella to-day. She's not written to me yet.

July 21st. Hella has written to me, 4 pages, and such a jolly letter. I don't know what I should do without her! Perhaps she will come here in August or perhaps I shall go to stay with her. I think I would rather go to stay with her. I like paying long visits. Father said: "We'll see," and that means he'll let me go. When Father and Mother say We'll see it really means Yes; but they won't say "yes" so that if it does not come off one can't say that they haven't kept their word. Father really lets me do anything I like, but not Mother. Still, if I practice my piano regularly perhaps she'll let me go. I must go for a walk.

July 22nd. Hella wrote that I positively must write every day, for one must keep a promise and we swore to write every day. I . . .

July 23rd. It's awful. One has no time. Yesterday when I wanted to write the room had to be cleaned and D. was in the arbour. Before that I had not written a single word and in the front veranda all my pages blew away. We write on loose pages. Hella thinks it's better because then one does not have to tear anything out. But we have promised one another to throw nothing away and not to tear anything up. Why should we? One can tell a friend everything. A pretty friend if one couldn't. Yesterday

when I wanted to go into the arbour Dora glared at me savagely, saying What do you want? As if the arbour belonged to her, just as she wanted to bag the front veranda all for herself. She's too sickening.

Yesterday afternoon we were on the Kolber-Kogel. It was lovely. Father was awfully jolly and we pelted one another with pine-cones. It was jolly. I threw one at Dora and it hit her on her padded bust. She let out such a yell and I said out loud You couldn't feel it there. As she went by she said Pig! It doesn't matter, for I know she understood me and that what I said was true. I should like to know what she writes about every day to Erika and what she writes in her diary. Mother was out of sorts and stayed at home.

July 24th. To-day is Sunday. I do love Sundays. Father says: You children have Sundays every day. That's quite true in the holidays, but not at other times. The peasants and their wives and children are all very gay, wearing Tyrolese dresses, just like those I have seen in the theatre. We are wearing our white dresses to-day, and I have made a great cherrystain upon mine, not on purpose, but because I sat down upon some fallen cherries. So this afternoon when we go out walking I must wear my pink dress. All the better, for I don't care to be dressed exactly the same as Dora. I don't see why everyone should know that we are sisters. Let people think we are cousins. She does not like it either; I wish I knew why.

Oswald is coming in a week, and I am awfully pleased. He is older than Dora, but I can always get on with him. Hella writes that she finds it dull without me; so do I.

July 25th. I wrote to Fraulein Pruckl to-day. She is staying at Achensee. I should like to see her. Every afternoon we bathe and then go for a walk. But to-day it has been raining all day. Such a bore. I forgot to bring my paint-box and I'm not allowed to read all day. Mother says, if you gobble all your books up now you'll have nothing left to read. That's quite true, but I can't even go and swing.

Afternoon. I must write some more. I've had a frightful row with Dora. She says I've been fiddling with her things. It's all because she's so untidy. As if her things could interest me. Yesterday she left her letter to Erika lying about on the table, and all I read was: He's as handsome as a Greek god. I don't know who "he" was for she came in at that moment. It's probably Krail Rudi, with whom she is everlastingly playing tennis and carries on like anything. As for handsome--well, there's no accounting for tastes.

July 26th. It's a good thing I brought my dolls' portmanteau. Mother

said: You'll be glad to have it on rainy days. Of course I'm much too old to play with dolls, but even though I'm 11 I can make dolls' clothes still. One learns something while one is doing it, and when I've finished something I do enjoy it so. Mother cut me out some things and I was tacking them together. Then Dora came into the room and said Hullo, the child is sewing things for her dolls. What cheek, as if she had never played with dolls. Besides, I don't really play with dolls any longer. When she sat down beside me I sewed so vigorously that I made a great scratch on her hand, and said: Oh, I'm so sorry, but you came too close. I hope she'll know why I really did it. Of course she'll go and sneak to Mother. Let her. What right has she to call me child. She's got a fine red scratch anyhow, and on her right hand where everyone can see.

July 27th. There's such a lot of fruit here. I eat raspberries and gooseberries all day and Mother says that is why I have no appetite for dinner. But Dr. Klein always says Fruit is so wholesome. But why should it be unwholesome all at once? Hella always says that when one likes anything awfully much one is always scolded about it until one gets perfectly sick of it. Hella often gets in such a temper with her mother, and then her mother says: We make such sacrifices for our children and they reward us with ingratitude. I should like to know what sacrifices they make. I think it's the children who make the sacrifices. When I want to eat gooseberries and am not allowed to, the sacrifice is mine not Mother's. I've written all this to Hella. Fraulein Pruckl has written to me. The address on her letter to me was splendid, "Fraulein Grete Lainer, Lyzealschulerin." Of course Dora had to know better than anyone else, and said that in the higher classes from the fourth upwards (because she is in the fourth) they write "Lyzeistin." She said: "Anyhow, in the holidays, before a girl has attended the first class she's not a Lyzealschulerin at all." Then Father chipped in, saying that we (I didn't begin it) really must stop this eternal wrangling; he really could not stand it. He's quite right, but what he said won't do any good, for Dora will go on just the same. Fraulein Pruckl wrote that she was delighted that I had written. As soon as I have time she wants me to write to her again. Great Scott, I've always time for her. I shall write to her again this evening after supper, so as not to keep her waiting.

July 29th. I simply could not write yesterday. The Warths have arrived, and I had to spend the whole day with Erna and Liesel, although it rained all day. We had a ripping time. They know a lot of round games and we played for sweets. I won 47, and I gave five of them to Dora. Robert is already more than a head taller than we are, I mean than Liesel and me; I think he is fifteen. He says Fraulein Grete and carried my cloak which Mother sent me because of the rain and he saw me home after supper.

To-morrow is my birthday and everyone has been invited and Mother has made strawberry cream and waffles. How spiffing.

July 30th. To-day is my birthday. Father gave me a splendid parasol with a flowered border and painting materials and Mother gave me a huge postcard album for 800 cards and stories for school girls, and Dora gave me a beautiful box of notepaper and Mother had made a chocolate-cream cake for dinner to-day as well as the strawberry cream. The first thing in the morning the Warths sent me three birthday cards. And Robert had written on his: With deepest \_respect your faithful R\_. It is glorious to have a birthday, everyone is so kind, even Dora. Oswald sent me a wooden paper-knife, the handle is a dragon and the blade shoots out of its mouth instead of flame; or perhaps the blade is its tongue, one can't be quite sure. It has not rained yet on my birthday. Father says I was born under a lucky star. That suits me all right, tip top.

July 31st. Yesterday was heavenly. We laughed till our sides ached over Consequences. I was always being coupled with Robert and oh the things we did together, not really of course but only in writing: kissed, hugged, lost in the forest, bathed together; but I say, I wouldn't do \_that!\_ quarrelled. That won't happen, it's quite impossible! Then we drank my health clinking glasses five times and Robert wanted to drink it in wine but Dora said that would never do! The real trouble was this. She always gets furious if she has to play second fiddle to me and yesterday I was certainly first fiddle.

Now I must write a word about to-day. We've had a splendid time. We were in Tiefengraben with the Warths where there are such a lot of wild strawberries. Robert picked all the best of them for me, to the great annoyance of Dora who had to pick them for herself. Really I would rather pick them for myself, but when some one else picks them for one for \_love\_ (that's what Robert said) then one is quite glad to have them picked for one. Besides, I did pick some myself and gave most of them to Father and some to Mother. At afternoon tea which we had in Flischberg I had to sit beside Erna instead of Robert. Erna is rather dull. Mother says she is \_anemic\_; that sounds frightfully interesting, but I don't quite know what it means. Dora is always saying that she is anemic, but of course that is not true. And Father always says "Don't talk such stuff, you're as fit as a fiddle." That puts her in such a wax. Last year Lizzi was really anemic, so the doctor said, she was always having palpitation and had to take iron and drink Burgundy. I think that's where Dora got the idea.

August 1st. Hella is rather cross with me because I wrote and told her that I had spent the whole day with the W's. Still, she is really my

only friend or I should not have written and told her. Every year in the country she has another friend too, but that doesn't put me out. I can't understand why she doesn't like Robert; she doesn't know anything about him except what I have written and certainly that was nothing but good. Of course she does know him for he is a cousin of the Sernigs and she met him once there. But one does not get to know a person from seeing them once. Anyhow she does not know him the way I do. Yesterday I was with the Warths all day. We played Place for the King and Robert caught me and I had to give him a kiss. And Erna said, that doesn't count, for I had let myself be caught. But Robert got savage and said: Erna is a perfect nuisance, she spoils everyone's pleasure. He's quite right, but there's some one else just as bad. But I do hope Erna has not told Dora about the kiss. If she has everyone will know and I shouldn't like that. I lay in wait for Erna with the sweets which Aunt Dora sent us. Robert and Liesel and I ate the rest. They were so good and nearly all large ones. At first Robert wanted to take quite a little one, but I said he must only have a big one. After that he always picked out the big ones. When I came home in the evening with the empty box Father laughed and said: There's nothing mean about our Gretel. Besides, Mother still has a great box full; I have no idea whether Dora still has a lot, but I expect so.

August 2nd. Oswald arrived this afternoon at 5. He's a great swell now; he's begun to grow a moustache. In the evening Father took him to the hotel to introduce him to some friends. He said it would be an awful bore, but he will certainly make a good impression especially in his new tourist getup and leather breeches. Grandmama and Grandpapa sent love to all. I've never seen them. They have sent a lot of cakes and sweets and Oswald grumbled no end because he had to bring them. Oswald is always smoking cigarettes and Father said to him: Come along old chap, we'll go to the inn and have a drink on the strength of your good report. It seems to me rather funny; no one wants to drink anything when Dora and I have a good report, at most they give us a present. Oswald has only Twos and Threes and very few Ones and in Greek nothing but Satisfactory, but I have nothing but Ones. He said something to Father in Latin and Father laughed heartily and said something I could not understand. I don't think it was Latin, but it may have been Magyar or English. Father knows nearly all languages, even Czech, but thank goodness he doesn't talk them unless he wants to tease us. Like that time at the station when Dora and I were so ashamed. Czech is horrid, Mother says so too. When Robert pretends to speak Czech it's screamingly funny.

August 3rd. I got a chill bathing the other day so now I am not allowed to bathe for a few days. Robert keeps me company. We are quite alone and he tells me all sorts of tales. He swings me so high that I positively yell. To-day he made me really angry, for he said: Oswald is a regular

noodle. I said, that's not true, boys can never stand one another. Besides, it is not true that he lisps. Anyhow I like Oswald much better than Dora who always says "the children" when she is talking of me and of Hella and even of Robert. Then he said: Dora is just as big a goose as Erna. He's quite right there. Robert says he is never going to smoke, that it is so vulgar, that real gentlemen never smoke. But what about Father, I should like to know? He says, too, that he will never grow a beard but will shave every day and his wife will have to put everything straight to him. But a beard suits Father and I can't imagine him without a beard. I know I won't marry a man without a beard.

August 5th. We go to the tennis ground every day. When we set off yesterday, Robert and I and Liesel and Erna and Rene, Dora called after us: The bridal pair in spee. She had picked up the phrase from Oswald. I think it means in a hundred years. She can wait a hundred years if she likes, we shan't. Mother scolded her like anything and said she mustn't say such stupid things. A good job too; in spee, in spee. Now we always talk of her as Inspee, but no one knows who we mean.

August 6th. Hella can't come here, for she is going to Klausenburg with her mother to stay with her other uncle who is district judge there or whatever they call a district judge in Hungary. Whenever I think of a district judge I think of District Judge T., such a hideous man. What a nose and his wife is so lovely; but her parents forced her into the marriage. I would not let anyone force me into such a marriage, I would much sooner not marry at all, besides she's awfully unhappy.

August 7th. There has been such a fearful row about Dora. Oswald told Father that she flirted so at the tennis court and he could not stand it. Father was in a towering rage and now we mayn't play tennis any more. What upset her more than anything was that Father said in front of me: This little chit of 14 is already encouraging people to make love to her. Her eyes were quite red and swollen and she couldn't eat anything at supper because she had such a headache!! We know all about her headaches. But I really can't see why I shouldn't go and play tennis.

August 8th. Oswald says that it wasn't the student's fault at all but only Dora's. I can quite believe that when I think of that time on the Southern Railway. Still, they won't let me play tennis any more, though I begged and begged Mother to ask Father to let me. She said it would do no good for Father was very angry and I mustn't spend whole days with the Warths any more. Whole days! I should like to know when I was a whole day there. When I went there naturally I had to stay to dinner at least. What have I got to do with Dora's love affairs? It's really too absurd. But grown-ups are always like that. When one person has done anything the others have to pay for it too.

August 9th. Thank goodness, I can play tennis once more; I begged and begged until Father let me go. Dora declares that nothing will induce her to ask! That's the old story of the fox and the grapes. She has been playing the invalid lately, won't bathe, and stays at home when she can instead of going for walks. I should like to know what's the matter with her. What I can't make out is why Father lets her do it. As for Mother, she always spoils Dora; Dora is Mother's favourite, especially when Oswald is not on hand. I can understand her making a favourite of Oswald, but not of Dora. Father always says that parents have no favourites, but treat all their children alike. That's true enough as far as Father is concerned, although Dora declares that Father makes a favourite of me; but that's only her fancy. At Christmas and other times we always get the same sort of presents, and that's the real test. Rosa Plank always gets at least three times as much as the rest of the family, that's what it is to be a favourite.

August 12th. I can't write every day for I spend most of my time with the Warths. Oswald can't stand Robert, he says he is a cad and a greenhorn. What vulgar phrases. For three days I haven't spoken to Oswald except when I really had to. When I told Erna and Liesel about it, they said that brothers were always rude to their sisters. I said, I should like to know why. Besides, Robert is generally very nice to his sisters. They said, Yes before you, because he's on his best behaviour with you. Yesterday we laughed like anything when he told us what fun the boys make of their masters. That story about the cigarette ends was screamingly funny. They have a society called T. Au. M., that is in Latin Be Silent or Die in initial letters. No one may betray the society's secrets, and when they make a new member he has to strip off all his clothes and lie down naked and every one spits on his chest and rubs it and says: Be One of Us, but all in Latin. Then he has to go to the eldest and biggest who gives him two or three cuts with a cane and he has to swear that he will never betray anyone. Then everyone smokes a cigar and touches him with the lighted end on the arm or somewhere and says: Every act of treachery will burn you like that. And then the eldest, who has a special name which I can't remember, tattoos on him the word Taum, that is Be Silent or Die, and a heart with the name of a girl. Robert says that if he had known me sooner he would have chosen "Gretchen." I asked him what name he had tattooed on him, but he said he was not allowed to tell. I shall tell Oswald to look when they are bathing and to tell me. In this society they abuse the masters frightfully and the one who thinks of the best tricks to play on them is elected to the Rohon; to be a Rohon is a great distinction and the others must always carry out his orders. He said there was a lot more which he couldn't tell me because it's too tremendous. Then I had to swear that I would never tell anyone about the society and he wanted

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

