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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

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Do right sitting up in a train. If
you should decide to come here, could
you let me know at once? The next
week would be better. As for the date
for the 15th - that could be shifted -
forward, not back. So if you wanted
to come early that week you could. Other-
wise suppose we say the 16th, as you
suggest - to the 18th. That's too
short, but I can't see what else to
do. Can you go to Danbury for the
week-end? What all this amounts to
is - come when you can and want
to, and if you're coming before the
16th, let me know right away, on
account of some necessary rearrange-
ment of my own plans. Sister says
to tell you she expects you to stay
here, and thinks it's just fine you're
coming.

We may possibly postpone our
going home a day longer - de-
pends on this + that. Anyhow, it's
all right through the 18th. I shall
plan on you coming the 16th, which
will work out for me as well as
anything, unless I hear from you
very shortly. I am so glad you'll
be a little rested by then with the relief
from the strained atmosphere. We'll

Friday -

(29 May 37)

Dearest Boy,

I wish you'd stop all that business about being weak. How listen, little one - one person wants you to do one thing and the other another - obviously you can't do both - you have to make a choice - I don't see what weakness - strength has to do with it one way or the other. How do I grant that it's unreasonable - foolish possibly, but not unreasonable. It is generous for you're doing it to make things easier for someone

amused at someone who
thought to put "much love"
at the end of a telegram.
But I was disappointed -
literally to tears. Yes, I
hear you saying "Thank
God I wasn't there"! Any-
how, it's all right

As for the psychiatrist
→ I never thought it was
a "bokey" → I just thought
it foolish + unnecessary +
perhaps I was wrong, if
he does Elizabeth any good.
So far as you're concerned
→ all you've repeated
to me you already knew
for yourself + both Donald
+ I had told it to you.
You see what I mean?
Of course I think he did
better the second time than

else - or at least to give
someone else what she wants.
Besides + anyhow, I don't
want you to do things be-
cause I tell you to, but
only because you have
yourself accepted the
validity of my arguments
I may advance. You've
got to keep the right to
your own judgment, now
& always. All the things
I've said to you about
taking a firm course
with your wife go for
you + others with me,
too. I was a little
amused, and also a little
sore - but your tele-
gram allayed my ~~own~~
fears and soothed my
annoyance by its last
two words! I couldn't be

The fact and I'm glad he
got in the bit about divorce,
for that had been on my
mind. It should be final &
quiescent so, for her sake
more than yours, though I
feel very strongly that
you should be completely
free as soon as possible.
Don't misinterpret that,
angel! I'm not sitting
here, waiting to pounce.
Dier's going to be no
second mistake & you're
not going to jump from
the frying-pan into the
fire, but I want you out
of the frying pan where
you can look around you
& see which way the fire
is.

As for my seeing you
before I leave here - please

considered letting her just
tell her but, if she is?
Or, at least preparing the
ground by admitting that
she was sure you were
both very unhappy? Any-
how, don't go yourself yet,
daddy, please. I'm awfully
sorry for your sister who
has got innocently in-
volved in all this. Still,
I think she's not been
wholly loving or understand-
ing. At least, not if what
you first thought of her
attitude was true. It's a
little of what I think
about your mother. If you
really love people, you for-
give & understand everything
& what's more, you love
them more than you love
your own ideas & no matter
how willing you may be
to sacrifice yourself to your

cause, we'll all be living
in the city, & I do want
you to come here again.
That is sentimentality -
one of the things about
me you wait like usual,
when you've had more of
it. I'm just warning you!

I'm so glad you father's
getting better & that needn't
be so much on your mind.
But, darling, please think
carefully before you go
leave yourself - I think
you'd much better not
yet - you're in no state
yet to face questions,
delicate situations, etc.
sions & all the rest. Wait,
dear boy, wait. It'll all
seem much simpler after a
while. Your sister is far less
likely to be questioned
than yourself. Haha you

concepts of right + wrong,
you cannot insulate them
from love on that same
altar. Oh, damn - I
can't say anything so
right. My vocabulary
has deserted me, and also
my capacity, such as it
is, for dealing with ideas.
I spent the afternoon with
my brokes - that's the trouble.
I've used up all the available
supply of what I was called
the other day "those things
in your head that you think
with". This is a fair reply
to your long, full letter,
which ought to be answered
word by word. But no matter,
how long I kept on, it
I would get no letter.

So, dear, tell me your
plans; + will economize my
powers of expression - of one
sort + another - + you can
put various interpretations

Wednesday -

(26 May 37)

Darling -

Is something wrong? I can't help feeling worried, for I've expected some word from you in every mail this week. I have even gone so far as to be annoyed at you for leaving me indefinitely holding over a perfectly good week-end without letting me know whether you were coming or not! However, I know perfectly well you're not an inconsiderate person so there must be some excellent reason why

Was Dave? It's one
of the best cocktails I've
had in a long time. Thank
God life is so various
→ wouldn't it be awful
if there were nothing
but Ibsen and Shakespeare
peace? Or maybe you
think it wouldn't. If
so, I shall really have
to deal with you, for I
know damned well the
world would be a poorer
place without Fred
Astaire!

I've just made a date
for Friday evening, assum-
ing that even if you did
come, it wouldn't be till
Sat., or at best late Fri.
I've kept Sat. + Sun. free.
And I'm off to N. Y. for
dinner now → with love
+ anxiety → plenty of both - C.R.C.

you've not let me know.
In fact, that's why I'm
worried - do you follow?
What can the reason be?
Perhaps you think you've
already told me → I wish
I could make myself be-
lieve that. I've just re-
read your last letter,
though, and it still
leaves everything un-
settled.

Here is your treasured
clipping! I had one cut
out for you. But I've lost
it - too bad. And I
haven't time now to
embark on my own little
dissertation. Anyhow, I'm
not in such a stew over
it as I was.

Have you seen "Lull

Thursday -

(21 May 37)

George, you poor lamb - I
was so troubled by your
letter of yesterday - all
back in the dark again.
Oh dear, Oh dear! I am
simply swamped with
things that must be done
- principally a set of
monumental papers - the
whole term's work - and
I must write very brief
ly. One thing is important
& must be said first -
This business of diving
together must not drag
on any longer - it is
the most futile infliction
of misery on you both.
Gloom settles about you
in a deep cloud, almost
no time to breathe, for

Be such a goose. In the
meantime, you drag on
your little hell, wearing
down both of you all over
again - & all for nothing.
I still think - & even more
definitely - what I said a
week ago. You must take
hold of this business &
be definite & final. You
hate it, don't you, sweet-
meat? Well, it's up to you
- you're the man in the
case - be decisive & firm
- not because it's what you
want but because you're
intelligent enough to
know that it's for the
good of both of you. Really,
for so reasonable a person, you
can be so unreasonable!
Why would you have to
stop at home if you came
to N. Y.? No reason at all.

Both the pressure is nearly
unbearable - and it's all
quite, quite unnecessary.
You are serving no end of
any importance. @ George,
dealing, can't you stop being
a pair of silly children?
She is to stay" so that when
she does leave it will
appear quite natural" -
and to whom? Those peo-
ple who in a very short
time are going to know
that you've parted anyhow.
You're going back here
next year, so it will be
no secret. Besides, what
is more "natural" than
that she should leave
before you did in order to
visit her family? Why
should there be any
comment at all? Don't

I suppose you'd say "be-
cause I ought to" — even
though you admit that
you're not prepared to do
so. Dear boy, what good
do you think you'd do
anybody — least of all a
sick man by burning
up with your soul in this
state & the burden of
your untold secret in
your heart — & yes, you
would be asked difficult
questions — you'd have to
lie like hell or out with
it. Of course you can't
come yet. But that's
nothing to do with you
coming here. You needn't
tell your family you're
coming, after all. Of
course you shouldn't
go to Buffalo — tell 'em
your wife is not going to be

Then then + so you'd better
postpone it. Then pack
your bag + come here -
for a couple of nights - the
rest of the time to Donald.
Be sensible, sweetheart,
it's much better for you both
to make a definite exit.

I'm much distressed
by the news that your
wife has not a job, after
all. They're hard enough
to find. Heaven knows.
But what you say leads
me to believe she's making
little effort. Darling, I
think it's up to you to
deliver a sermon on the
matter - she must not
be apathetic in that matter
- it will be her salvation
+ it's very important.
Don't let her decline anything
whether she likes it or not.

The servant level - it's too difficult a personal situation to handle.

I have a long speech ready for you on this matter of truth and deceit - all very important & valuable - but no time to deliver it! Come & help me celebrate the finishing of my papers in another week & I'll tell you that & a hor- rible other things.

I shall wait impatiently for further word. Thank fortune your father's getting better.

So - Bless you, my dear -

Courtesana

This is too late to hope for something better & she is evidently too immature to realize the necessity for having one so as to be bending every effort to accomplish it. Well, if she doesn't look after herself, it's up to you to look after her at least to the extent of making her see the vital importance for her self-esteem & peace of mind that she leave work for next year - work that will demand her attention & fill her time - as well as support. "High-class un-derhouse maid in N.Y." is all nonsense - she's not trained or experienced, for one thing & for another, anyone who can afford anything so "high-class" is not going to be some- one who doesn't belong on

know? You ask
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 (14 June 39) of that was you
 hints and, I must say the
 hints went out in a blaze
 of glory! Of course that's
 the thing to do. In the
 first place, it's not a lie
 - all you said was the
 simple truth - she does
 need the position for the
 sake of salary + you are
 spending the summer
 studying in Cambridge.
 Yes, there is an implied
 lie - but so has been
 been between you & your
 parents for many months.
 Of course, in any case, I
 refuse to recognize any

Have answered what you wanted
 for any other ideas of way she

idea into your parents
leads that at least you
are not wholly wrapped
up in each other & there
may be some slight
preparation for what comes
next. I'm for your feeling
distressed at his latest
complication so far as
it affects your problem.
Of course I am dis-
tressed by your father's
illness. You must be
worried and unhappy.
I know so well that
constriction around
the heart when you
live with fear lest
you must face for or you
love the ultimate disaster.
I wish so much if need
not have happened just

moral difference between
an actual verbal lie &
the other kind. Anyway,
in these circumstances,
there is nothing else that
you can do. As a matter
of fact, I think it's all to
be good, — a forced post-
ponement will give you
time to recuperate a bit
after your awful year
before you face the or-
deal. You'll find it
much easier, I feel
certain. You'll have had
opportunity to relax & to
think more calmly. Be-
sides, it may well be
that the separation for
the summer will put the

now — I hope so much
that everything will go
well. I shall wait with
anxiety for news from you.

The matter of your
wife's job for next year
fills me with relief. That
had been very much
on my mind. I'm so
glad it's now off yours.
One item is now cleared
away — check!

Thanks so much for
the red-pencilled reassur-
ance at the top of your
letter. I was terrified
at a special night in
the middle of the week &
my heart would have
been in my shoes only
the S.O. man got me out
of the bed & I had no
shoes on. Anyhow, your
"Calm Yourself" was the

first thing to meet my
eye & it so exactly hit
the nail on the head that
I laughed right out loud.

The letter itself, in spite
of what it contained,
reassured me too, for it
seemed to me that your
attitude was sane and
sensible. Indeed you are
right about the impos-
sibility of "fixing" things
so that everyone is
pleased & happy. It's
definitely something to
have learned that! I
hope you'll stick to it!

Darling, I still think,
in spite of everything,
you'd better come here
to Danbury the first week
in June if you can possibly

The main idea, anyhow
— that your solution of
the immediate problem is
absolutely right in my
opinion.

You will write soon,
won't you, for I shall be
worrying about so many
things — your father, your
wife's interview with the
psychiatrist, etc., etc. I
want very much to talk
to you about that letter
matter, anyhow.

As for the coronation,
my pet, — my interest
was not in the scientific
manner, + I do quite
definitely hold a brief
for the principle actors.
So there! As for Edward,
— to hell with him —

make it. There'll be
another upheaval when
your wife comes back
to the psychiatrist comes
on the scene again.
And you'd better plan to
pull yourself together and
over the minute you can
get away, you'll need
talking to by then!

I have an awful feeling
that the letter I wrote
yesterday was pretty
terrible — a bit on the
brutal side. Skip it,
darling!

Your letter came just
before I had to start
for school, so I've
written this — in bits — I
hope it's not too choppy
+ incoherent. You know

Yes the King's man! And
as for Dorothy Thompson
(I left her at home, but
won't pretend to return it,
though, I think you're
a goose) - that I thought
was for the most part
just smart, superficial
newspaper writing - yes,
did. And I shall
probably eventually ex-
plode in considerable
detail about the whole
thing. She said some
things that were good, but
if you want to know
something about England
you'd much better read
the lines on the other side
of the clipping!
Loads of love, precious,
Constance

72 Front Street
Exeter, New Hampshire

[3 Apr 37]

Saturday -

Dearest George -

I am hoping
that you'll find this when
you go to work Monday
morning, though I don't feel
confident of it, that with one
thing & another - mostly
the Exeter P.O.! I should
have written yesterday but
was in Boston from morning
till late at night. Besides,
I am piqued because there's
been not one word from you
since we parted a week
ago - at least, I am trying
to be piqued instead of
worried. I have followed
you about in my thoughts
- to Danbury, Newark,

Baltimore, Chapel Hill + back
to Rochester, though I expect
that's not like to - narrow.
And I have tried to follow
you thoughts as well as your
body - though that journey
has been a more complicated
one. But that's the one I
really want to hear about,
I want to hear what talking
with Donald did for you -
as much, that is, as you can
to tell. I want to hear
how you felt when you
rejoined your wife, + what
ensued. And so on + on -
send me a map, sweet
child, of your mental +
emotional travels in this
last week. I want to
know how accurate my
guesses + speculations have
been. I have thought so

72 Front Street
Exeter, New Hampshire

Wish about you - trying to
remember the things I had
said, trying to put together
all the pieces of the puzzle
until I get some sort of
coherent whole. It's most
clear to me that
what I've said before is
the truth - that this
Break is the key to the
whole thing. It answers
all the questions, it makes
the pieces fall into place,
keeps aside from being free to
be happy, you will be free to
lead a useful, fruitful life
for which you are equipped
in mind + heart. "To thine
own self be true" - etc.
Yes, I know that's how I've
quoted, but that in itself

is significant because it is
the element of universal truth
in it that has made it so.
You've been devoting your
much of your energies to
being true to something
fundamentally inharmonious
with yourself. That, I suspect,
is what you rather did +
what a bitter brew it made!
She brought so little joy
into her own life or others,
she gave so little of any
value. She has not enriched
the world by living. You can
- and you must, my darling.
Do I seem unkind in what
I say of her? I do not mean
to be, for I feel terribly
sorry for her. I don't think
for a minute that she has
dived really at peace with
herself + that is a miserable,
empty existence to which

72 Front Street
Exeter, New Hampshire

she has desperately tried to
give meaning + dignity by
clinging passionately to her
belief that it was right in
the eyes of God. But her life
is essentially over — yours is
much of it still ahead of you
— it should be her letter
part.

But I intended to write
none of this — I was going to
wait till I heard from you.
So I'll stop it for now &
go on some other time. Be
a lamb + write me a real
letter for me to find on
Thursday when I get back.
I shall feel quite lonely,
getting back at night &
alone! For Sister will still be
here. It will be a delight
& a comfort to find a letter

from you.

I am so glad you are coming here again before we leave. It's a sweet place, George, and haunted by so dear a host. Something more of him will be dead when this is gone, and I do want you to have a little more of it. I still find it so difficult to believe that after these many years in which my life has centered around this place, there will so soon be nothing here that is mine except two graves. But I mustn't talk like this - not to you - not now - though I'm not sure that a dose of someone else's troubles doesn't have some value as an antidote!

Anyhow - no more now of either yours or mine - but a great deal ^{to} my dear -
Constance

Thursday -

(14 May 37)

My sweet angel,

When I pulled
your letter out of the box late
last night I said to myself - this
is going to be an upsetting letter
- and was I right - Gaud!
I simply haven't had 2 minutes
all day to write + 2 min. is just
about all I have now for it's
late. So I must answer in
any detail, but I must say
something.

First the psychiatrist - I am
inclined to think that a mistake
- to consult one over a definite
nervous disorder is wise, to con-
sult one because you find your-
self unhappily married is as
the whole only to confuse things.
There are too many elements in

of all the reasons why you can't
manage it + make up your mind
to come, whether or no. Come or,
~~haha~~ Hamlet, a little action!
The very fact of decision will be
good for you, even in a minor matter.
Stop all this brooding + thinking
over pros + cons, make up your
mind → then deal with the obsta-
cles. This is, after all, something
that can be so learn, one way
or the other, + the determination to
control your own destiny, even
though the matter is small, will
be very good for you. The memo-
rial Day week end is an excellent
idea. To go to Donald is another
one. Write at once to your
father → what if your mother does
read it? She will be disturbed
— yes, — so what? After all, he
can't sneal off + meet you without
her knowing it, anyhow. You can

the situation that he cannot know.
Besides, you are an adult + capable
of making up your own mind +
getting yourself out of your own
jaws. I very much hope you will
not take too seriously what he
says. I regard his analysis of the
situation as only partially ad-
equate + his advice as very definite-
ly mistaken. I should like to go
over the whole thing, point by
point with you. But, there is not
time now — what's more, I
doubt if that is best done in a
letter. What it comes to is —
a lot of other things come to the
same point — that the whole
business has again reached a
point where we need to discuss
it. Darling, I think you really
must come to D. C. For one
thing, I want to see you before
you talk to your father — for
you talk to your father — for
another — but there are too many
others. Stop this instant thinking

put it in such a way that she
won't be only disturbed, that will
do no harm & may well be for the
good as the blow will not strike
her, totally unprepared. If you
can't manage that (& please
considers it seriously) then write
to your brother enclosing a letter
for your father to be given to him
personally. You can simply quit
oppose for being mysterious but
say - I can't for the moment be
helped. Anyhow, get in touch with
him, ^(your father) at once & tell him you
are going to be in Danbury
that week. As for your wife,
if she hesitates about going
before then, tell her all right,
but that's how it works out
best all around & you've got
to do it. I hope she shilly-
shallying, dear - it's doing us
one any good & on the whole

is doing the opposite. Even after you
get here, even after you get to
Danbury, you are not absolutely
committed — but you must come to
a decision about something. This is
a good thing to start on. You are
trying so hard to avoid hurting
people that you're only prolonging
their misery + your own. I fully
understand & appreciate your feelings
— I honor + admire them, what's
more — but enough is enough,
dearie. I have one million + a
half things. I want to say —
must say — but I can't say
a million + a half on paper.

As for this business which you
keep worrying, like a dog a
bone — of whether Elizabeth
does or doesn't love you — golly
— why do you think you're so
fatal? She can get over loving
you, even if she does (and I'm
afraid, my dear, that only two

Examine the Dodge's Dodge's Dodge's

from your father - in-law amused
me - it ^{all} sounded so familiar.
I had ^(Harrison's Law) seen his hat, too! I
hope you tell him that psycho-
analytic + over-romantic are
unusually exclusive terms! You
might be interested to know that
when I had a similar letter under
similar circumstances Dad ad-
vised ^{me} either not to answer it or to
answer it with a brief note saying
there were many elements in the situation
he obviously didn't know + that it
was therefore not really possible to
answer him - polite, regretful, but
firm. As a matter of fact, I just said
nothing.

Please, dear child, write to me
quickly + say you are coming - it
will be only to the good for everyone,
you're losing your perspective + be-
sides, we need to talk. I can't go
home till I've seen you. So -!

much love to you, my poor
harried boy, - set your jaw +
remember we count on you - dear people
Constance

people who know as little about
love as you two could think she
does - still, for purposes of argu-
ment, we'll leave the premise
→ no love so unrequitedly fulfilled
is going to tear anyone to pieces.
I got over loving you, & what's
more, I loved you more than she
does. True, I never lived with
you 24 hours a day - & I never
slept with you. But neither of those
things, when the relation ^{is} found-
ed on disharmony, matters so much
as when it is deeply harmonious.
Now, whatever the psychiatrist
says - to you, or to her - you
must, my darling, keep the
integrity of your own personality.
At least hang on till you can get
to Donald & to me. There are ways
in which we understand you
better - yes, really, even if we're
not professionals.

Your account of the letter

Tuesday -
(19 May 37)

Angel -

Thanks so much for
the "note" which gave me
satisfaction out of all pro-
portion to its length. I ex-
(^{sorry - will} ^{try to} ^{forgive}) spect it was Don-
ald's visit that was doing
you so much good - for
something certainly was. I
shall keep it on hand to
reread the next time I get
one of the excessively indigo
ones - just to remind me
that you do emerge! And
here it is already practically
the middle of May. It will
all be over soon, darling.

turned out to be an old Exeter
boy + one who had known
Dad well and admired
him profoundly. You can
imagine how happy it made
me. He said he'd gone from
Exeter to Princeton, but there
were no men there as grand
as Mr. Rogers. It was the
strangest experience for a
cocktail party - so definitely
in a different key. The rest
of it was perfectly according
to type - some people light,
some only exhilarated, every
one either very funny, very
confidential, or very avowed.
Thank God I can take my
liquor like a gentleman!
I had a perfectly mad
week last week, anyway, or

Then you can sit back and
devote yourself to recovery.
Do you know yet what
you're going to do for the
summer? I hope the suggest-
ion of Cambridge which you
made when you were here was
not a passing fancy. It would
be such fun to have you here
- Besides, I really do think
it would be a good idea for
you, apart from anything to
do with me. When, how, + where
are you going to break the
news to your father? Or is it
not kind of me to ask you
that yet? I guess he guesses
if you like - I guess himself.
I want to a cocktail
party on Sunday + found
myself sitting next a man who

one of my very good friends
(Maunette - have you ever heard
me talk about her?) decided
on Monday she couldn't
stand her husband one
more minute, and I spent the
week in a complete mental
listening to her, listening to
Ernest (the husband) in long
telephone conversations &
talking it all over endlessly
with Willie who was the go-
between for them & a good
friend of mine, too. It was
something I knew would
happen sooner or later &
you know me - my advice
is under those circumstances
→ the sooner the better! I
thought often of you, be-
cause the situation was the

same, but all the circumstances
so totally different. Anyhow,
it's all over now — when she
makes up her mind, she makes
it up! Ernst sailed for Europe
on Saturday + Harry is off for
Paris in a couple of weeks.

All very sensible + with a
minimum of agonizing though
last week was bad. Willie,
poor dear, had a hell of a time
— 2 or 3 hours of sleep every
night + the rest of the night
snoring + drinking, with Ernst
trying to calm him down +
straighten him out. I just
hated it at first, but am
now recovering my equilib-
rium.

I'm getting up at dawn tomorrow
— to hear a king of England crowned
in Westminster Abbey! So I must stop
now. Annabitha of Lodi, my little angel
Constance

you're all wrt
about "first bad," Sunday -
- I'll leave it out in my next!

Dearest Boy, (3 May 37)

What a darling,
you were to send me a special
card just when I was getting
to the point of sitting down
and writing you in one of my
minor panics. It was a thought-
ful thing for you to do. Of
course it frightened me for
a minute, but you had
anticipated that, too, and
you very first words re-
assured me. And then your
picture tumbled out in my
lap - and it was all just
like Christmas! You were a
duck to send me that. @

represent. It's your mouth that
will save you from your
mother's world, George, for
it could yield to an "inflexion"
of the senses - though
only a subtle one - never gross.
It's your mouth that will
light the Puritan in you -
and I'm backing it - boy,
am I backing it! Any-
how, as you may perceive
- your gift was received
with delight and gratitude.

How for your letter, you're as
idea head much better you
sounded than in your last
letter - quite like yourself. I
felt cheered. I expect it's
partly the sun - marvellous
words - worshipping sun. I had
just come down from the

course I refuse to regard it
as doing you complete justice
but all the same, I do think
it's good and I like it
better the more I look at it.
What I most like about it
is your dear curly mouth -
yes, I do, but that I fail
to realize how beautifully
your eyes are set, nor that
your forehead is the sort
generally described as "noble";
nor how well cut your nose
is, nor how fine the line of
your jaw - but - it's your
mouth I'm counting on, your
generous, sensitive, mobile
mouth. That's the part of
your face that belongs to
me - or at least to what I

roof myself when the boy
brought you letter - leaving
stayed up just as long as I
dared - until he began to feel
friendly, and I guess I just
left in time, judging from the
shade of pink on my back.
There's nothing like it, is
there - it's life-giving,
healing - one of life's major
blessings. I lay there and
felt it first as sweet and
warm as a caress, then
gradually wrapping me in
a sort of great soft
blanket which excluded
all other sensation and
finally seeming to penetrate
through skin and flesh
to the very marrow of my
bones and to whatever
recesses my soul is hidden in.

touching with soothing fingers
all the sore places in my
heart. It's not the Puritan
in you, my darling, that
loves the sun - it's you
mounts! For it's a surrender
to the senses, you know -
it's pagan - in fact, I'm not
at all sure there isn't a
connection between it & the
sex experience - think that
one over!

Well, to turn to the other
matter you wrote of - your
distress over the effect of
your activities on your family
& and your wife's - does
you great credit. You should
feel that - but I think you
need not feel it so strongly
as you do. You must not say

out any question of yourself,
what right have you to do
that? She's young, her best
years are ahead of her - in
all probability, she has
many years in which to be
of use & service in the world.
Their lives are essentially
over - they've had their
chance - to sacrifice the
young to them is to sacrifice
the future to the past - so
obviously wrong that I need
not go further. Darling, I
quite understand how you
feel about your mother & the
effect on her, but, darling,
- you mustn't, truly, truly
you mustn't - not quite the
way you do feel. George, she's
not wholly an innocent victim.

you feel selfish because of
what you are about to do -
for it's not selfish, dear child,
it is, as you quite well know,
the only wise, sane, and
decent thing you can do with
things as they have turned
out to be. In the very
same sentence in which you
accuse yourself of selfishness
you say you know eventual
separation is inevitable, &
that separation now will
be far easier ^{for your wife} than one post-
poned several years. Now,
George, don't you see how
absurd you are? What it
comes to is that if you post-
pone the inevitable you
sacrifice Elisabeth to some
vague possibility of sparing
your parents? And, leaving

of circumstances — you and
of both leave know, people
coming from essentially
that same background in
whose lives the result was
not the same. She will be
terribly hurt because you
have not conformed to his
pattern she had made for
your life. It was character,
not circumstance, that made
her the sort of person deter-
mined to force others into
her pattern. Yes, she thought
it was one ordained by
God + that therefore she was
justified, but in that very
fact there is a sort of
spiritual arrogance that
again has nothing to do with
circumstance — who is
she to know the purposes
of God? Do I see a hand,

dear, and do I hurt you? I
do terribly want not to —
and I do with absolute
sincerity feel ~~truly~~
deeply sorry for you
mother. She has lived a
godly life, according to her
lights, and little joy has she
got from it. But, sweet one,
she has had her chance +
out of it there has come not
only an impoverished life for
herself, but precious little
enrichment of other lives
through her. That gives her
even less right than most
have to try to force ~~it~~
you or anyone into the path
that seems to her right. You
have your own now, people
— will you follow that little
right, narrow, barren path

interweaving + complexity of human relationships makes it essentially inevitable that we should hurt others in order to preserve our own integrity as human beings.

No, dear boy, you won't burn back — I know that. My words are not an attempt to convince you that you must not, for I have complete confidence in you. I try only to make you see it perhaps in a slightly more rational — a less painful light. I don't want you to visualize this situation as a sort of struggle between you ^{with} me & myself for possession of you. I don't want you to go through it because I am more important to you than she —

or are you going to take the highroad — not, if your ~~conscience~~ conscience troubles you, for the flowers that grow along its edges, but for the men & women who travel it with you & who have need of you, as you of them? I know you'll do her an injury, & I know you're too gentle, too deeply loving, to think that justified by the injury she has done you. I don't minimize anything, but you must be a man, you must make your own life. You're not a boy any longer, but an adult human being & you must make your decisions like one. Certainly one thing we all know when we're grown up is that the unavoidable

but because fulfillment is the
right of every living soul &
because I and my world
offer you that. As for me
personally, I feel no certainty
that I leave any function to
perform in your life other
than as a sort of symbol
which is valuable to you at
present. When it comes to the
white experience of love, I
think you will do well to
hesitate. It must not be any
compromise the next time,
George. You should have
enchantment and ecstasy
→ yes, now. You should
have glory and splendor.
You must find in it some-
thing to compensate for all
fast despair & misery, all
future sorrow. Remember, I

expect nothing from you be-
yond affection and friendship.
That I should feel very
bitter at losing.

Well, to be prosaic - the
job! Darling, I'm delighted
over the invitation to return
to Rochester. I'm inclined to
feel you should accept it,
anyhow, bearing something
very good elsewhere. I
know it was what Dad
hoped would happen - &
that having stayed a 2nd
year, you might stay a 3rd.
He said it was a good step-
ping stone for you & that if
you could get more than one
year out of it, he'd be very
glad. I don't want to be
meddling, nor to urge you to
do anything against you

excellent thing, to leave that
impression behind you at
Rochester. Dad said it was a
coming institution & one with
increasing prestige & influence
→ that for you to be a success
there would be a real benefit.
You would not like Detroit &
it's no good saying that that
doesn't matter → you're not
one to lose himself in his
work & the idea of you
living in that intensely
mid-western community with
its strong materialism, its
provincial stupidities — etc.
etc. — you know the list —
for a period of years makes
me shiver. About Phila-
delphia, I do not know — if
you're offered that, let me know

better judgment, but I
should feel it was definitely
worth moving down Detroit
for. It would give you another
year to hunt up a place in
the part of the world you'd
like to live in for a number
of years, & what's more, I'm
sure it will build up a
better start for you — 2
years at one place is much
better than one — to have
been asked to return is
always excellent, as I
need not tell you. Be-
sides, you've been under a
terrible handicap this
year, in your work & in
your social relationships
→ you'll undoubtedly be a
more valuable & useful person
next year & it would be an

April 24, 1937

Darling Child,

I was terribly distressed by your last letter, as you know I should be, but that does not mean that I'd rather you didn't tell me the things that distress me — on the contrary — I feel some security about you so long as I know you're not keeping things from me — things known are never so bad as things imagined. Besides, you couldn't fool me, anyhow — an attempt to do it would only make me frantic to know what it was you

through a hell of a lot, too, and
it will get you through to the
end. As for the weakness,
you're mistaking yourself. The
things you did that seem to
you weak you did ~~for~~ ^{for} a
number of causes, all working
complexly together — your
sensitivity, that conflict be-
tween two worlds which has
gone on within you for so
many weary ~~years~~ years,
your ignorance of life —
etc., etc.. None of this can
be called weakness — hold
up your head, child, look
the world in the eye, and
know yourself for a man.
This doesn't mean I think
you should feel no sense of

were not telling me! So dismiss
that, now & for good.

As for this matter of your
"thoroughly weak character —
perhaps superficially strong, but
fundamentally weak" — my
sweet, I laughed at that —
yes, laughed. Gaud, the silly
stew you get in about your
own character! How listen-
as for that thing on the surface
you think I'm mistaking for
strength — it's just obstinacy
— false that on the chin! The
truth is the contrary of your
statement — the weakness
is superficial, the strength
fundamental — you'll see. It's
got you through this for —

guilt — you should, and I
honor you that you do. But
your fault came more than
anything else from ignorance
and to put that on the same
moral plane as deliberate
malice is absurd. Also, I think
the guilt should be shared
— though again, I think the
ignorance probably was.

As for how much she loves
you — perhaps you're right
when you say as much as
she can love anyone, although
if so, it was not such a
love as to leave disaster
in its shattering. What you
mean by breaking her
dream I do not know —
disillusion? Surely no one

can have reached her age
without meeting that before,
especially as she had had
already other disillusioning
experiences with men.

Then, let me tell you
something else, dear — there
are two things that enter into
the degree to which the loss
of love + the breaking of its
ties make you suffer —
the amount you have surren-
dered yourself to it, and the
length of time it has lasted.
Those who have the capacity
for self-surrender and to
whom love has meant that
go through something which
I think is agony though that
is a word which I am very
chary of using. That I do not

enable little things — ex-
periences shared, — things felt,
talked of, thought about —
always together, so that
day and night are filled
with endless reminders —
all this she has been
spared — and will be. She
has not experienced a love
that has built itself into
the very structure of her
life so that to have it torn
out is to go crippled — per-
haps for years, perhaps
always. Nothing is more
certain, George, than that
she'll recover — probably
pretty rapidly.

I'm troubled by the job
situation for both of you —
of course you sayin' she's

for a minute believe is true in
her case — in fact, it's quite
impossible, as you know. She
has never really given herself
to you. And that makes the
humiliation of you not wanting
her, though sharp, not deves-
tating at all. When you have
really given your whole self, to
have one gift flung back at
you seriously undermines your
self-esteem. But she didn't.
And the time has been so
short — years of living together
in harmony, building up
between you that third
person who is neither "you" nor
"I", but "we" — that
she's not had. The immen-

done nothing of late about
getting me is disturbing. Are
you letting her think she
needs it? Be careful not to,
doubtless, for that would be
unfair. As for yourself, I
wish you could get back
in the good graces of Prof.
Horse. I think you were un-
necessarily frank with him
— I know Dad thought
so. In fact, he thought
you went out of your way
to be honest far too much!
You've got to sell yourself,
doubtless, and this business
of explaining to people how
you're not this, that & the other
that they might think or want
you to be is a poor idea. Try to
make them think you're what

they want + then compromise
a little with yourself + try to be
what they want. You see, I feel
very strongly that wherever
you land next year, you must
stay for at least five years +
that being the case, you
must do all you can to get
in a place fairly tolerable. The
idea of your having to be in
the middle west worries me
— have you read the re-
views of the new Lynd book
about Middletown? Well, that's
what it's like, and you'd be
better off in U.S. — yes, you
would!

I'm so sorry about your
discovery of your sister's feel-
ing about Donald. Love doesn't

see, you own immediate reaction
is to say you'll not tell Donald.
I know how fond of Eva you are,
and I do feel terribly, darling,
that you foresee difficulties in that
quarter. Don't be too certain
yet, though. If she loves you
and you tell her freely what
you feel, have felt, and
have suffered, it seems to me
altogether likely that though
she may not understand ~~the~~
in the sense of feeling she
would have acted in the
same way, she will to some
extent, and with sympathy
and accept. When you really
love people, there is no question
of the battle you refer to, but
only of a readjustment,
a shift of position in you

always mean understanding,
does it? It seems a little
strange, even so, that she has
not seen in which world
it is that you blossom +
expand - or if by chance
she has seen, that she can
feel anything but glad.
Of course Elizabeth should
never have told you - need I
say that she wouldn't have
if she loved you? After all,
Eva herself had kept it
from you - her own tact +
silence should have been
respected. It can only hurt +
make things difficult for you
to know it. However, it's not
a major matter + perhaps it
would all have come out
when the bomb explodes on
your family, anyway. You

attitude toward them.

As for my worrying about you
I'm not sure, dear, that I don't
worry about you less than you
do about yourself, for I feel
perfect confidence in the eventual
outcome, for I have faith
in you. For the present, you
live in your own little hell,
I know, and for that my
heart is torn. I would give
much to be able to ease
it. But I have a perspective
that you cannot leave, living
in that beastly mess, and
a belief in the future. Clear
up, sweet one, if you need be
in a mess, it's just swell
that you're in one it's possible
to get out of! Go out &
get bright & forget yourself,
loads & loads of love -
Constance

Saturday -

(17 April 37)

Recessions -

You were so dumb to
send me the p.c. if you couldn't
write a letter. At least it
eased my mind a bit just to
know you were alive and able
to hold a pen! Your French
just leaves me breathless -
imagine being able to prattle
on like that! Of course it did
have a few queerish spots, but
mine would not only be
guessed but would run out
after about a sentence and
a half and even that

shadows right around you?
I know quite well how
miserable the whole business
is, and how great the strain.
But I think it is not so
bad as you make it, darling,
and I wish you could a
little more take the long
view — get the whole
matter in better proportion.
It is so short when you
think of it as out of a life-
time, and what's more,
so infinitely less damage has
been done than might have
been. Suppose you had had
children, suppose you really
were breaking a woman's
heart — suppose a hundred
other things. Not that I am —

sentence and a half would
be carefully planned to fit
my vocabulary, and include
no irregular verbs or sub-
junctives! Can't be that
you're one of those with a
native gift for languages?
Oh dear, — and me with none,
either native or acquired.

I wish your letters reflected
a more optimistic mood — not
that I find it odd that they
shouldn't, but I should feel
easier in my mind if they
did. Darling, the time is
so short now — can't you
fix your eyes on that end
instead of on the gloomy

inimize the mess, either - but
merely that I think you
are intelligent enough to
make yourself see it in
perspective. The thing is
settled, George, there's only
one road to go now - make
yourself accept that not only
intellectually, but emotionally,
and relax. True, you did
a very foolish thing - both
of you, but you have mind
enough to know that you
did it through inexperience &
lack of knowledge of your-
selves & each other. That
being so, you must not
waste your energies in regrets
or torment of conscience, but

you must look ahead and see that your life from now on will be happier & more useful because you have learned a great deal about living in this last year. The wife is all spilt, dead, and nothing is more futile than to wish suddenly you'd not stumbled you see. Life is ahead — always — till you're dead. If you can make yourself really accept that, you'll rest — truly you will. If your wife is still behaving badly, I think you have a right to feel a little detached and a little scornful, even while

world so new and all". Think
of the long, sweet, summers, —
so soon to come, with the
black days behind you, and
with rest and peace for your
weary soul: Cheer up, dear
child — 't's not so bad —
truly, truly.

How be a lamb and
write me that you're feeling
better — that you're a bit
rested. Do you sleep? If not,
you must do something
about it, you know, for
that you must have.

Buckets of love, darling —
Louisa

you pity her.

"What my soul holds dear,
imagine that it lies in that
way which thou quest, not
whence thou comest."

I think perhaps you
should read detective
stories — good ones — they
occupy the attention without
involving the emotions —
a very present help in
time of trouble!

Are you having a
succession of heavenly days
— warm & soft, full of
promise, fragrant, radiant?
It's hard to feel pessimistic
about anything "with the

Saturday -

(11 Apr 37)

Sweet Lamb -

I was so grateful
for the letter Tuesday night. It
had just been one of those days
piled ^{out} ~~up~~ by an unkind
Providence for testing the charac-
ter - and mine lead you to
pieces under the test! You know
- everything goes wrong for no
reason at all until you're in
a furious rage at practically the
whole world. It finished with
my arriving at midnight in
a drenching rain, umbrella-
less + loaded with bags +
bundles. I ~~felt~~ felt like a
wet hen - both literally +

implicit, in your letter, was warm and sweet in that rather bleak moment.

But enough of that. how I'm going to scold you — no, not scold you, but enlighten you! Darling, you must never, never tell a woman she doesn't love you as much as she says she does — and particularly you mustn't tell your wife that under the present circumstances. Oh dear, why didn't I think to tell you that — I suppose because it never entered my head you would. Don't you see, her whole picture of herself at present is as the woman wronged, the faithful heart

figuratively. The beautiful final touch was that — it was too dark + wet for me to see the fresh paint on the house door till I'd got into it! Did I need a letter? Oh yes, oh my! I threw my wet things + hitnes + you got myself into a nightie + negligie, mixed myself a drink + settled down on the sofa with my mail — sawing your letter for the last. Then I went to bed, soothed in body + spirit. No, that doesn't mean that I was untroubled by the things you wrote, but only that — it was reassuring to hear from you and that the two affections, both expressed +

trampled in the dust? That
saves her pride, puts her in a
position of moral superiority,
dramatizes the whole thing,
with her in a martyr's role
(one which we all find a certain
pleasure in) and when you tell
her she's not deeply in love
with you you shatter the
whole structure for that was
its foundation. You put her in
the wrong, too, you deprive
her of the bitter pleasures of
self-pity, no wonder she was
angry and upset. And it
does no good, for though you
bolt undoubtedly went home
— she'll build up her defense
mechanism again & it will
simply give her one more

cause for bitterness against you.
There are lots of times, Leon Boy,
when there's simply no sense
in telling people the truth
about themselves! Don't think,
from all I say, that I feel
no pity for her, for I do —
much more than you might
believe. But my primary
concern is that you should
be saved, and besides, I
see no future happiness for
either of you, so long as you
remain together. I'd be
better off in the end alone than
with you, who have needs
she is unequipped to satisfy.
She wouldn't believe that now,
of course, but that's because,
whatever she says of you, lies

giving - not because we're
unselfish, but simply because
in the end the soul is more
richly nourished by loving
than by being loved. You
don't know this when you're
a young girl but by the
time you're really a woman
with adult emotions you
do know it. Another thing
you know is that there are
some relationships that never
cut across each other. Your
wife's jealousy of Donald was
juvenile - yes, it was. Jeal-
ousy is a natural enough
emotion, heaven knows,
but that's an absurd place
for it. She should, at her
age, know that what you feel

idea of human relations is so
childish! She simply isn't
mature enough or wise enough
to know that for two people
fundamentally inharmonious
to try to live together is an
increasing torment for both.
And as for whose ideas of
love are childish, ^{and} my
goodness, she doesn't, the
alphabet! She looks on the
whole thing like an adolescent.
She obviously thought that
once she'd got you married
to her, nothing further was
necessary, which is terribly
childish. She doesn't know
that for a woman love is
self-surrender, that all its
great satisfactions come from

For Donald only makes you a
more emotionally complete
person + far from depriving
her of anything, it only
makes you a better lover.
There is something in the
really deep friendship between
two men which to any
woman with an understanding
of human relations is a
source of deep satisfaction.
She sees things brought
out in her man that are a
pleasure for her to contemplate.
Besides, it lessens her respon-
sibility — there is someone
to whom she can turn him
over, knowing he will be
content, leaving her free
for her own private feminine

joys & satisfactions. I think
your wife is still immature
enough to think you must be
her sole possession — & to
think that's going to make
her happy. She has no
knowledge of the complexity
of love — and neither has
she any idea of the complexity
of you! The combination is
pretty hopeless, isn't it, darling?

Then there's this, dear —
she's behaving badly. Well,
goodness knows most of us
do when ~~you're~~ we're hurt
— all the tears, the recrim-
inations, the bitterness, the
complaints are natural

That the next step in his
business is divorce — the
sooner the better, for that equiv-
ocal state of being neither
married nor free is difficult
& unhappy — and my dear
sweet boy, you have no idea
of what will emerge by way
of vindictiveness or meanness
in people you've every reason
to think of as perfectly
decent until you've been
through the divorce business.
I'm speaking not only from
my own experience but that
of others whom I've known
well. What I'm getting at is
— don't give them anything on
you. Remember her parents, for
instance, will have not one

enough. But it's not when
we're mortally wounded that
we cry out most loudly.
When our hearts are really
broken we are not angry,
George, for it would be to deny
our emotion its dignity and
its meaning. You see what I
mean, don't you, darling? She
is a pathetic figure, not a
tragic one. She will recover
far more quickly than she
thinks (but don't tell her so!)
and incidentally, far more
quickly than had your
marriage lasted longer.

Let me also drop in you
ear one bit of worldly &
practical advice. Remember

show of sympathy for or
understanding of you. Certainly
the less said about me the
better - not, darling, that I'm
afraid for you. I'll be involved,
but because if they once get
the picture of you as a man
who turns his interest to
another woman a few weeks
after marriage - don't you
see how it could look? They
might well feel themselves
justified in making things
as difficult + painful for
you as possible. Of course
that would be short-sighted,
for if their daughter is to
have any chance of remar-
riage, certainly the sooner
she is free the better - but

people often are short-
sighted when they're
angry. You'd probably better
destroy my letters - perhaps
you've already done so -
certainly you mustn't keep
them where they're accessible
to anyone but yourself, least
women, under these circum-
stances, would read them if
they could get their hands on
them, and aside from their
incriminating character - I've
said a lot of things that
would be very painful for
to read. You'll have to
assume a slightly suspicious
attitude, dear. Guard your
tongue as well. Am I being
cynical? Well, I know what

God knows I couldn't blame
you, but oh, I do wish you
could. It worries me so. I
clear myself by the thought
there are only two months
more - I expect you do, too.
And, dear child, once it's over
it will be completely over. In
no time at all it will be
unreal to you - as if it had
happened to someone else.

In the meantime, set your
feet & hang on. I've loads
more to say, but must
stop.

With so much love, dear-

Constance

Thanks for the Puck - what
did you think of him? Careful, now!
I hope you get the Philadelphia job - let
me know.

I'm talking about - in general,
at least. And if in this par-
ticular case caution is not
necessary, so much to the
good - you won't have
done anyone any harm by
talking it.

This is getting much too
long and I must stop.
I feel of course all the time
troubled because you say
you're so terribly tired. I
wish somehow you might
rest. Can't you relax a little
now that your mind is
essentially made up and
the end of the wretched
business of living together
is in view? Perhaps not -

Saturday -
(20 March 37)

Angel -

There's no use talking about anything now, when I shall so soon be able to talk with you, not to you, as I'll not even say my say about the various job possibilities which I've, needless to say, been thinking over a lot. But I want to be sure all the arrangements for Thursday are clear. I have a date for cocktails that afternoon - it seemed needless to do.

so don't waste time getting
yourself a dinner - just buy
a sandwich to keep you going
& save the hours a meal
would take for me!

To get here by car (per-
haps you already know this)
cross the Queensboro Bridge
(at 59th St. but has to be
approached from 57th or 58th)
& come straight out Queens
Boulevard to 47th St.

Now - have I covered
everything? You might just
drop me two words to verify
all this.

So - until Thursday - very
much love, my darling -

Constance

clime when you said you'd
not arrive till 8 or after. So
- if you should decide to
~~be~~ come by train, let me
know the hour & I'll meet
you since I'm going to be
at the Biltmore from 5
o'clock on. Or - if there
should be a slip, go & sit
in the ^{1st} waiting room as near
as possible to the magazine
stand & I'll find you there.
If you're driving - I'll be
home by 7:30 at the latest
& shall expect you for dinner
at some time or other. If
you're not here by nine
I'll eat & give you yours
whenever you do arrive,

Tuesday -

(17 March 37)

George dear -

I'm a great relief
to me to know that I'm go-
ing to see you & be able to
look you over thoroughly -
both literally & figuratively. I
should know so much better
& so much more about every-
thing that's been worrying
me then. Thank you, my
dear, for giving me the oppor-
tunity. I know that in
many ways you'd rather not
- I'd not go into a discussion
of that now, but I will say
thank you. And also I will
say that I would not have
pressed the point if I'd thought

you to an intolerable degree
— quite literally intolerable —
and free of me or any obliga-
tion to me until such time as
you are damn sure you want
to surrender that freedom. Per-
haps this seems inconsistent
with my demand to see you
which I've not allowed you to
deny. But I don't think so,
George (though like everyone,
of course I sometimes rationalize)
for I think still that there
are ways in which I can
make some contributions to
help you in this struggle —
I think there are always
things a woman can say +
do in dealing with personal
relationships + emotional
situations. And I'm certain

it would make things any
harder for you in the end.
And if you don't believe that,
wait + see!

This you must be sure to
understand, George — you are
under no emotional commit-
ments, so far as I am concerned,
holding you have written or
said to me involves you in
anything, at all. The fact that
you are not legally free means
nothing at all to me, one way
or the other, for freedom in what
is fundamentally an emotional
relationship, is in the spirit
+ cannot be affected by the
law in any way. But
emotionally free you must
be — free of this bond
which would eventually in-

that the whole business has
reached a stage where I need
to see the patient - correspon-
dence isn't adequate enough.
This is not to deny that I
have purely selfish reasons
for wanting you to come - but
only to say that I think
there are enough unselfish
ones for it to be fair for me
to have been so insistent.

Don't worry for fear you're
going through the misery of
getting one will stone infested
from around you need only
to have another one attack
itself before you've had a
chance to draw breath!
I've no intention, my darling
child, of falling in love with ^{you} _{it}.

Don't drive - you'll be
too late - too tired. You're expected at 8:30 in the night.

again under these circumstances.
When, as, and if you are sure
you want me to, then go to it
and see if you can make me.
I simply don't know whether
you can or not, but I do
know I'm not going to do it
otherwise. This is neither
pride nor coquetry, but just
the fact of a carefully erected
emotional barrier, which will
not melt, but must be broken.
You certainly don't want to
deal with it now - perhaps
you never will, and certainly
you'll never be obliged to. I
think you don't yet know
much about the relations
between men + women - I
don't think you quite under-

bodies - not just because they are different personalities, but because they are different sexes. It is all very exciting, very stimulating, rather difficult - but infinitely rewarding.

But it's much too late to go on with this - I'd no intention really of beginning it. However, it may have served the good end of reminding you that, whatever ~~the~~ you're going through now, there is a brimming cup of a very heady wine waiting for you when you've drained this bitter one. Heaven knows whether you'll drink it with me or with some other woman, but you have the capacity

stand the nature of our present relationships, nor what its possibilities are, which ever way it turns. Certainly your marriage has given you no idea of what can be built up between a man + a woman + wherein it differs - in more than physical ways - from any relation possible between two of the same sex. This is not to question the relative superiority of either the one or the other, but just to point out that it's never the same - or if it is, you're simply not getting from it what is there. It's not just friendship with a spice of sex - but an interplay of minds + hearts differing as much as

Will you let me know as soon as you can what time
to expect you? Please come as early as you can. I'll have

for it, you're a man in a
man's world, and you'll find
it sooner or later → probably
sooner, for ~~as~~ I suspect that
you're ripe for it, once the
emotional exhaustion of the
present struggle is over, as
it will be in only a few weeks
now.

Don't worry so much, my
dear, about how selfish, un-
fair, brutal + what-not you've
been. A marriage is made by
two people → she wasn't
forced into it → + she can
just take her share of the
blame for its collapse → as for
the original mistake.

So - bless you - and take
care of yourself - Constance

4313-47 St.

Long Island City, N.Y.

March 11, 1937

Dear George,

This note is to be
very brief as I am supposed
to be ready to leave the
house in ten minutes and
I must also dress. How
like a woman!!! I just
want to offer you an extra
leaf - you would be delighted

to have you use it at any time with or without notice.

"I actually & do + know much about your affairs but having been happy in our marriage we believe all the more in divorce - I'm sure you understand what I mean. I think for sensitive and understanding people it takes a lot of

courage to make such a step and courage is one of those things which one talks about as "little" but as you well know I advise you thoroughly for doing this - does that sound strange too? I'm in the little & do & you life at least and I feel sure you will both set much more on that.

Well my ten minutes is
up and I must now
get ready to be late.

Our best to you -

Katharine Wright

March 9, 1937.

Darling -

How are things going?
Don't you think I'm being moderately good about being patient? Or do think about you so much, and fret inwardly that you are not where there is some loving person to watch over & tend you through this ordeal.

Which brings me really to a subject which has perhaps by now begun to make you fret inwardly - since you're too anxious to fret outwardly! And that is this matter of you

try and be sane about this
→ give yourself 10 days of real
peace for the good it will do
yourself + everyone else con-
cerned. Your own need is des-
perate + you know it.

As for me + where I come
in → you do know, don't you,
my dear, that I am consider-
ing you + your needs as of
first importance + that my
own desires, though I hope
they'll fit in, are not with-
ing me. Of course I want
awfully to see you — for my
pleasure + even more for my
reassurance. It will be a
little disappointment to me if
I can't — so don't inflict it
upon me if you can possibly
help it. O, I must see you

vacation. Have you come around
yet? Darling, you must have
some common sense about
this — and to spend your vaca-
tion with your family + less is
just not common sense. Am I
an interfering, bossy, busybody?
I don't care. Somebody's got
to be — you don't look after
yourself + you have such
fantastic ideas about your
duty. Your heaviest duty at
present, my angel, is to get
yourself in some sort of decent
shape for coping with the
next few months. There's no
point. I know, in my repeat-
ing the arguments of use al-
ready used at length. I
just beg you once more to

at the end or not at all,
then of course I'll do it, but
if there's any other way it
could be managed, it will
be far less difficult. For one,
I'll have to go in for some
duplicity - & it'll be much
easier to explain arriving in
Egret a few days late, than
leaving it nearly a week
early. I'd just as soon let
it all ride till the last
moment. But Bess is
clamoring for dates, so,
"darling, can you pull your-
self together & make up
your mind what you're
going to do? Then I can
plan accordingly. I shouldn't
allow myself to push you
like this if I thought there

were anything to be gained
for you by postponement, but
I can't see that there is —
it's only two weeks off work,
and you might just as well
decide to be done with it.
It'll be good for you to get
one thing settled, even if it
is only a vacation. What
I should most like would
be for you to come straight
here on the 25th + stay
till the 27th + then go to
Danbury for the rest. So the
26th if you feel you must
— but not otherwise. I'll
not be trying, darling, truly,
I won't. But I do so want
to see you. I don't suppose
you realize just what all
this has meant to me —

grateful to you? My life has
really meant something to me
since you were here - and
for two months before that it
had not. I can never love my-
self really in anything but
people - I love my work, but
not that much. Oh well, I
can't go on with this - it
would take too long. But
it is not fair that you should
not realize that you have
done so much for me. And
all this is part of why I so
much want to see you. I
dread going to Exeter more
than I can say, but I think
it would be easier if I'd
seen you first. There's a very
complex emotional pattern be-
hind that - I don't know

quite aside from any question
of being or not being in
love - either of us with the
other - you see you came to
me and reached out a hand
for help at a time when
what I most needed in the
world was to be myself, needed.
Things suddenly took on form
and meaning again. This is
all very complex - it would
take me a long time to
really put it all into words
intelligibly. Perhaps there is
no need - though I'm not
sure that it is it better in
the long run. I put most
things into words. For now,
I will leave it, but do
you understand, dear, when I
say that I am terribly, terribly

I don't see what's about "or"? I don't see much I love to you. The subject, did come my heart - Constantine

whether you will understand it or not - it's specifically feminine, I think. Anyhow, there's the fact - I can explain the rest when, as, and - if I see you. So - will you let me know, angel, as promptly as you can, what you are going to do and when you are going to do it?

I've a feeling this letter is horrible - in fact, I don't dare send it for fear I'd never see it. This is just one of my bad days, & I'm so sorry. I don't want to seem selfish or peremptory, for I want so terribly to help. Darling, you really are wonderful about the whole wretched business. I had dinner with Donald last night - he is definitely one of the grandest persons I know.

March 6, 1937.

Well, my pet, what a wavy
little missive that was I
found in my box when I got
home last night! I have been
since then a battleground of
conflicting emotions. I altern-
ate between relief that you
so quickly returned to a
reasonable & realistic view of
your present plight, and
fear lest ~~with~~ the increased
strain may bring collapse
before relief comes. It is that
fear that prompts me to
say what I do now - you
must go one step further, my
darling, than you yet have,
and stop this business of

ought to see the doctor to
find out why you are so
tired, she has no grasp what-
ever on the realities of the
situation — now will she have
bill too late. And as for
fairness — my dear, this is not
fair — you are laughing before
her eyes something that you
know (you admit it — but if
you didn't, it would still be
true) as I know + you say
Donald does, is forever out of
her reach. My darling, I know
you do it out of your tender
heart in the hope that her
reason may bring her to the
point of realization for her-
self. But that is, as I have
said, not possible, and you

"giving her a chance". I know
you for doing it — I know that
you do it at great cost to
yourself in order to be fair to
her + to let her convince her-
self of what you know to
be the truth. But, dear, she
won't convince herself — not
for a long time, at least. And
you can't go through that. She
is tenacious, she means to fight
for something she still hopes
to get. My dear, no one gives
up hope under such circum-
stances until it is taken from
her — not relinquished. Besides,
she is not a particularly
reasonable person + so will not
be convinced by evidence
right before her eyes. If she
could say to you that you

are - so far as she is con-
cerned, only postponing the
moment when she must
face a final fact & when
consequently, recuperation can
begin. The postponement only
prolongs for her the miserable
alternation of hope & despair.
It can do her no good, &
may easily make it harder.
This I say since I know
your concern for her is genuine
& deep & that you are trying,
at terrible cost to yourself,
to be kind & just to her.
So, on that ground alone,
I can say - George, you
must make this final at-
once. As for the whole
matter from your point of

write me at once, don't let me hear of any more
of it unless you are absolutely
in touch with what you thought
of in your letter to me. Don't let me
hear of any more of it unless you
are absolutely in touch with what
you thought of in your letter to me.

view, the necessity for immedi-
ate cessation of suspense +
strain is too dreadfully ob-
vious to even be mentioned.
My darling - no one is going
to benefit if you have a ne-
vous breakdown - think of
those you will drag down with
you. There is only one end
possible to all this and it
should come at once - immedi-
ately - instantly. Don't
wait another day. It will
take all your courage +
strength, dear boy, but you
have it, and the relief will
be immense. Also, whatever
you believe this or not, it will
in the end be a relief to
your wife - finally one can

to duplicity, like it or not,
yes, you will. You have got
to leave those 10 days at
this time where you can rest
- rest your heavy body &
tormented spirit - where
you will be loved, where
above all you will be under-
stood. George, to impose his
heavy load upon your
strength is not courage - it's
foolhardiness. It will help neither
your parents nor your wife.
This has nothing to do with
my own desire for a share of
your vacation - this is
something you must do whether
I see you or not. You need is
desperate, George - remember
you're adult & be as sane
about this as you possibly can.

always face somehow or other
- suspense wears away the
soul.

I still think that it is
essential for you to go to
Donald for your vacation. To
spend it with your family &
hers under the present cir-
cumstances must not be
brought up. Of see, as a
matter of fact, no adequate
reason for keeping the
secret from your family till
June. What difference will
a few months make one way
or the other to them? To you
it may make infinite difference.
But if you are determined (to
please don't be bill you've
considered very carefully),
then you'll just have to resort

Thursday -

(5 March 37)

Dearest George -

You're certainly
being peppered with letters
from me this week. And
I'm afraid you think "peppered"
is all too accurate. I've
a horrid feeling that my
last letter was a bit harsh.
I should, I expect, have
waited a bit longer to
answer ^{yours} ~~it~~ - though, what
I really needed was to be
able to talk with you
(definitely with, not to).
Letters are too easily mis-
understood. But this goes do

and will only make the whole thing harder for your wife in the end. I know, from my own experience, that the earlier a mistaken marriage is dissolved, the better the chance of eventual happiness for those involved. I don't want to see you making the same old mistake I did. And it won't help her one bit, my dear. And whatever you do, be perfectly certain you don't involve a child in this.

I've a suspicion that if I go on it will just be a series of repetitions of what I've already said. So I'll stop after I've dealt with one more matter — the spring vacation. I think the best thing in the world

understand, don't you, darling — that my concern is for you? The thought of prolonging, or repeating, with variations, the strain you've barely been able to withstand, appals us, knowing that I said in my last letter do I retract though I'm not sure how tactful my expression was. I'll not go over the ground again, but I feel terribly strongly about everything I said. My dear, I cannot say too often that the sooner you break this up the better — there can't be any other cultivate answer — and postponement does us one any good — it may have serious effects on you,

you could do would be to
spend it with Donald. I'm
sure he'd love you to, and
I think nothing could help
more to clarify your own
mind and at the same time
to relax your troubled spirit
than a separation from your
wife spent in the company
of ^{one} who has a wise and
loving understanding of you,
whose only concern would
be that you should find
some measure of happiness.
Certainly if your wife has any
capacity for dealing with this
situation, or any knowledge
of human hearts, she would
recognize at once the wisdom
of a brief vacation from each

others. I am certain it's vital
for you. So be a dear child
and do it. You can't possibly
go home, you know. So far
as your blooming conscience
goes — your obligation now to
all those you've involved in
this is to get yourself in
shape to deal with it wisely
and strongly — however
that may be. Don't think
I fail to realize that I am,
in some sense adding to
your present misery. Be-
cause I'd not leave you
alone but insist on pulling
you one way while your
wife pulls the other. A kind
— I hope I am fighting for
your own happiness — but
I am sure that were you to

even greatly exacerbate your present state. As for my own part in this vacation - I still feel as I did on Tuesday. Don't worry for fear I'll go all emotional over it, George - I don't weep - not at such moments, and I shan't make a scene, nor tear you to pieces. I quite definitely do not believe that it will add complications. The very fact that you said you ought not to is in itself an admission that you should. Do you understand that? I think there is much, my darling, that you do not yet understand, but I cannot be that you should again be swallowed up by that deal.

put yourself in Donald's shoes, he would be. You can surely gain no emotional or intellectual perspective on your situation till you have a brief period of rest and separation. Please, dear, take this very seriously, and do it - if for nothing else, to relieve the worry of Donald (for he must be as troubled as I) and myself. Do not allow yourself to say you must go home. What - even you owe your parents, you owe your wife + yourself at this moment primarily the solution of this situation + going home will not help one atom - it might

no shall be in all of me then for. I am vacating in this frame of mind - which I want you to embrace

in life that was eating the
soil out of you. It's true - I
may be wrong, though God
knows the evidence is the other
way - but if I am wrong,
come & convince me of it. Are
you afraid? Ah, then you'd
better come! You do not follow?
Never mind.

What does Donald know
of what has happened so far?
I suppose as much as I?
What does he say?

Oh, my dear, I do worry
so about you. If you'd just
say you'd come here in 3 weeks
& then go to Donald & wait, I'd
feel a deep relief & try to convince
myself till I can see you, & really
see how you are, & hear all the
things that are so vital but that
there is no time to write - a heart cannot
be written. You just count but

March 2, 1937.

2

George, my dear,

What a boy!

You start a letter by telling me
not to worry and then give
me in the rest of it one hundred
and seventeen first class reasons
for worrying. I'm much more
worried now than I have been
at any time during the last
month. When I think of the
state in which I saw you
after six months of marriage
— six bridal months in
which whatever there might be
between you two should be
at its height — and then see

may be done to everyone concerned.

Perhaps you expected me to reply to your letter in effect "Just as you say - it's your life, and your decision + I withdraw from the debate". Well, I'm going to disappoint you. You haven't done so well when you've made your own decisions, and for once I'm not going to keep still. I'm going to answer some of the things you said - and I'm going to do even worse than that, as you'll see.

First of all, I think you will be extremely foolish not to insist upon your wife's taking the job you mentioned.

you, after all, lacking the strength to turn you back on the whole wretched business - then I leave, I think, good cause to worry. Does that sound as if I were scornful? I don't mean it. You are, heaven knows, in no state to have to face a real ordeal. That you should have gone down under that unobitonal barrage without surprises nor shocks me - but does trouble me deeply. What you need is to have it all settled and behind you - this is, my dear, only a postponement, and in the meantime, considerable damage

Your own next year is still
uncertain + insecure, besides
which I'm by no means
certain his attempt to patch
up your marriage won't
have collapsed in a very
short time. Jobs are not
easy to find, it's sheer
idiotry not to take it — she
can always drop it if after
all it's not needed. There
are more teachers than jobs.
2) you separate, ~~she~~ she'd
need the job — to fill her time
as well as to support her.
Don't be children about it,
but face the practical
elements of the situation in
a sensible fashion. To be
sure, there are other in

many ways more important elements, but this matter of the job can be dealt with - the others can't as yet.

Next - I'm disturbed last has expressed desire for a child complicated things. Whatever you do, George, don't let that happen. I feel no certainty that she really wants one - it's just the traditional step for the wife whose husband is slipping from her. It seems so strange that she should consider such a thing at a time when you are so obviously in no state to deal with added strain, and a pregnant wife, then a small baby always produce losses.

really abnormal, and indicates
a profound lack in her - the
same lack that you feel. And
there's nothing in his world that
can be done about it - it's
like blue eyes - if you're
born with them, you have
them, and that's that. It is
tragic + it is pitiful, but
not so much as it seems to
us, for it is an inadequate
emotional equipment that
makes it impossible for her
to draw people to her with
sufficient force, and that
also makes her suffering less
than yours would be under the
same circumstances.

You say you are facing
an essentially different set
of facts + would have to

live upheaval + strain. Also
your financial situation is
not such at present as to
justify it. All this apart from
the fundamental disharmony
between you two.

That she was "totally un-
prepared" for what you said
to her is either not true, or it
is final proof of the impossibil-
ity of your marriage, that
any woman could live with
you intimately in the state
you've been in + not know
things are terribly wrong
argues a serious insensitiv-
ness + total incapacity for
responding to your needs.

Your saying that she has
no intimate friend is very sig-
nificant. That's so rare as to be

works through to a different
~~conclusion~~ decision. Don't fool
yourself, George - the facts
are just as you just saw
them really, only now lightly
colored by the emotional
scene you've been through.
There is nothing new whatever,
you were surprised because
she wouldn't let go - but
you shouldn't have been. Any
woman could have told you
she wouldn't. You believe
she's not been unhappy
just because she ~~says~~
says so - which, is no reason
at all.

I think I detect the last
Puritan again - or at least
his shadow - in some of
the things you say! You've

write
nearly
whenever
worried
about
you.
I
can
not
under-
stand
how
you
can
not
get
to
break
from
that.

got to break from that,
dear child, or you'll always
be at odds with yourself.
The picture of yourself as
isolated on the altar of a
sacrificial marriage doesn't
even a moral beauty to my
eye, because it would
serve no good end. She fights
the admission, but it's in-
dubitably true that she would
not be happy in the end -
and as for you, you'd be
destroyed. How much longer
do you think you could
stand such strain as you've
been through? There's no
reason to think it will be
lessened. Supposing by
some miracle you do - it
will seem. Remember that

unjustifiable interference —
perhaps it is — I don't really
care. It's got to be done. It's
not going to see you swallowed
up again without a vigorous
protest. You've got to be
saved from your own better
nature!

As for the vacation — I'm
not going to accept that,
either — even against your
express plea. It will not
"inject into this situation
any more factors" — it
will only make really clear
to you factors that ~~you~~ are
already there, though you're
trying to turn your back on
them. It is far more likely to
clarify than to complicate.
After all, you've involved me

you leave felt a strong
emotional attraction for me
— there is a need deep in
your nature, a hunger not
satisfied in your marriage.
You can stifle it only
temporarily + at intervals.
Supposing you dismiss me
entirely, manage to put
me behind you as a passing
incident. Presumably there
will be another woman who
will arouse the same
response in you. There will
be a series of bitter con-
flicts with yourself. And
how much happiness is
that going to bring either of
you?

This may all seem to you

Sunday -
(1 March 37)

Angel -

I felt simply terribly
over not getting off to you an
instantaneous reply to your
last so important letter, but
I didn't get it till too late
Thursday to write, so I did
it practically with my
breakfast Friday morning,
then decided to keep it and
take it to the Grand Central
at noon on the theory that
it would leave town
more promptly, and then (
this you will never believe,
but it's the absolute truth!)

crisis, was to get word to you
as quickly as possible to let
you know I loved you, trusted
you, + thought incessantly of
you. God knows that's little
enough, but I did terribly
want to do that tiny bit. And
then I just wandered off into
thoughts — true, they were of
you, but what practical
significance has that? I'm
so ashamed. But that's not
all! I considered mailing it
in Dallas, but upon investiga-
tion discovered it would go
more quickly if I took it
back to D.C. later, so I
still clung to it. Then the
parents of one of my most
favorite girls from last
year drove over to school

I was thinking so hard
about you that the letter
— right in my hand — I
carried right past the mail
box and onto the train! I
recovered consciousness
when the conductor came
around and I had to put
down the letter to open my
bag. God, it makes me want
to do a thing like that — the
air was so blue with my
unspoken wishes of myself
that the people who got in
at 12:05 ^{hr} P.M. thought it
was the smoker. How dare
you have another revelation
that ought to disillusion
you — the one thing I could
do for you at this unhappy

to pick me up and take
me home with them for
dinner. The result was a
simply charming evening,
but I got back to N.Y.
about midnight + the last
collection at night is 11:00!
I considered a special
delivery, but realized
you'd not be at the univer-
sity by the time it got
there, so abandoned that.
I spent the whole train
trip composing non-
committal telegrams, with
the idea of sending you a
night letter. But anything
that could be perused
safely by any old person
who got hold of it was

me, or me!
some alive
I must stop.
—
German, de wood
The air is washed and
Wink, seen child, good a word. But low - C. 1911

Just so damned non-commit-
tal that it didn't mean any-
thing. So I gave that up,
dropped my silly, inadequate
& belated letter into the slit
along with a couple of
penitential tears and went
miserably home. I have
since then continued to
think about you — most
of the time. If you hadn't
told me you had no tele-
phone (why haven't you,
silly?) I should have
called you up in much
easier to manage than
telegrams. I hate so to
think of you being alone,
though I suppose you're
no such child about going

think + think about it - I
picture you as I saw you a
month ago, then I read over
your letters, particularly the
last, and try to put all
these things together to find
out how you are now, how
you're getting through it,
what sources of strength
you had to draw upon, what
your resistance was, etc. etc.
Then when I have the
answers worked out. I re-
mind myself that there are
still many unknown elements.
So still I need very much
to hear from you that you're
coming through with the
flag still at the masthead.

through things go alone as I
am. Just the same, I wish
you could simply have
come here for the week,
and just to be filled and
made much of and soothed
and encouraged. Failing
that, I wish I might
have talked to you on
the telephone - Failing
that, you'd think I
might have got a letter
to you - damn - that's
when I keep coming out!

Darling, are you all right?
Do you feel better, worse, or
just the same? Is it a
relief yet? Are you glad
yet that it is out? O

time -
another
of
17
time -
another
of
17
time -
another
of
17
time -
another
of
17
time -
another
of
17

Page after page - and I've
said nothing except to give
you something of a picture
of the ether I'm in. My
word, you'd better fall in love
with someone but don't
get in ether - you'll find
them very trying in the
long run.

I saw "Rembrandt" last
night - have you? I think
you must. It's very beau-
tiful - and such a scene!
I could have seen it right
straight over again. It's
astounding, how the English
can do historical pictures so
that the illusion is absolute -
they're not "costume pictures"
or spectacles - you simply
find yourself transported
wily, wily into another place.

Friday morning -

[29 Feb 37]

Dearest George -

No, I am
not worried - not really -
but naturally I am troubled
- deeply, not because I have
any doubts of you being all
right in the long run, but
because you are going through
a miserable time, and I wish
terribly that that strain need
not be imposed upon you.
I wish also that you need
not be alone - that I might
be there just to hold you
hand.

All that I said is my

Before long now, my dear,
everything is going to be
much better. The two big
milestones on your path to
serenity of mind are now
behind you — your admission
to yourself of the middle you'd
made (+ that, with all its
ramifications is much the
most important) and now
the admission to the other
person most concerned. So
although my temporary
concern for you is great, I
feel under that a genuine
relief.

Don't take it too hard,
dear boy — remember — but

Sunday letter I still feel —
and I do believe that — it's
all for the good for both of
you that everything is
out. I don't want to say
more until I know more.
Write me as soon as you
can all that happened +
all that was said — or as
nearly so as possible. In
the meantime, my darling,
I think of you incessantly
— I should offer prayers
for you, if I knew a god to
offer them to. We ~~are~~ were
of us know our strength till
we are forced to draw upon it
— yours is ample to meet
this need, that I know. And

passé. Both of you are going
to be happier before long
than you've ever been in
here last six months.

Write me soon, if only a
few words, just to reassure
me — and when you can,
write at length.

With much, much love, my
darling —

Constance

February 25, 1937,

George, you old meanie, what
is this, anyhow - an endurance
test? Of so, I think I'm
doing pretty well!

Well, I saw "The League
of Kings" last night, and
was quite carried away. I'm
getting more & more excited
about Maxwell Anderson,
anyhow, and having already
this season been in some
things of a stew about
"High Tor", this just proved
to me that I was right!
Of course this all brings us

it stands up. Of course it was incomparably produced by the Theatre Guild at its very high best and extremely well acted. It is, at least in the first seeing of it, difficult to separate the play from the production and performance. But it gave me the feeling that I was hearing things said that had some of that ultimate quality of the great speeches in "Richard II" and said in a more modern idiom, very nearly as well. The great difference was that to Shakespeare kings were part of the unalterable structure of society, whereas to Maxwell Anderson they are only a rather pitiful vestige of

back to that little matter of poetry again, for that's certainly a lot of what gives him such a grip on my imagination. At the major emotions seem to me to be intensified and dignified by being expressed in poetic form. I was reminded last night of "Richard II" which I'd seen so recently and which dealt also with the fate of kings, and there was much in the comparison that was flattering to both. I should like to see the Anderson one a hundred years from now when it's no longer "modern" + discover how

an outworn tradition. But both of them think in terms of the human problem, of how man is to deal with the fate imposed upon him by circumstance. I wish you might see it - it's certainly important, though I can't tell whether it's great or not.

I'm listening to your (sic) orchestra play the "Enigma". I wonder if by any chance you are, too.

Don't forget me entirely, precious. I might blow up again, you know!

Bushels of love, darling
Constance

February 21, 1937.

George - Darling,

I think I never did reach the point in my last letter of saying to you that all you wrote me last week about you doing or not doing research was really unnecessary - I knew it all - truly, darling. I am perfectly aware of all that you said and of its truth, and heaven knows I want you to do just those things that best use your gifts - and that give you the most real satisfaction. But I think, too,

about is your welfare - not
just fitting you into a pattern
already made in my own mind?
I want you to be as nearly as
possible happy, and to use as
nearly as possible all your
capacities - those two things
are, I'm sure, interdependent.
I think you'd never be in
your present predicament
had you been more realistic
- that it is the grasp on
reality you have painfully
attained which is getting you
out of that unhappy mess
- but that you've got to
keep a firm hold on yourself
or off you'll go into an ideal
world again! That goes for

that you are going to have to
make some sort of compro-
mise sooner or later with the
educational world as it is, not
as it should be - just as
with the rest of life. Compro-
mise is not something that
comes instinctively to you,
either, poor dear - you are,
you see, too strong, + too
much of an idealist. Life is,
in reality, so much of a
muddle of an infinitely
complicated balancing of
small fragments of the
good. No, I'm not saying
this right at all - nor am
I, I'm sure, getting the idea
across. But you know, don't
you, that what I'm concerned

This matter of a job — and for another that I'll speak of in a minute. I think you need stability in your life and that you must find yourself a job that will last for a while which will certainly involve some compromise. Now for the other item — you said in one of your first letters that you thought it was a good thing for you to break up your marriage because it was "abstractly right" to do so rather than in the hope of reward. Now that, my dear child, is just unrealistic. In the first place, you probably won't ^{manage} ~~do~~ it, because it's human nature to danger the hope of

reward before ourselves. Then
you'll feel either guilty or
somewhat ashamed because
you had decided to do other-
wise — and there you'll be
again — in conflict with your-
self. Or you'll be able to do it
off & on — & the off intervals
will trouble you for the above
reasons. Or just possibly — for
you are strong willed — you'll
achieve it, in which case
you'll be imposing a steady
& unnecessary strain upon
yourself. Of course you must
go through this quite definitely
& admittedly in the hope of
reward — that's the way we
deal with life, dear boy — by
setting our eyes & our hopes

on the road you're taking,
not back over your shoulder
at the wrong one you're leaving
behind.

Oh dear and oh dear — all
this probably sounds sentimental,
silly, obvious — or perhaps
merely irritating. But sure I've
not said what I meant. The
older I grow the more am
I impressed by the inadequacy
of words to deal with the
complexity of thought + feeling;
— but at the same time, the
more am I impressed by the
necessity of being articulate in
order to deal competently
with thought + feeling! Human
beings must perforce live a
social (in its widest sense)

upon a positive goal which we
intend to achieve + if you try
to achieve the correction of a
mistake because it's abstractly
right you'll get yourself all
tied up again — that's un-
too idealistic to be practical.
Whether the reward is to be
myself, or another (and don't
be too sure I'm what you
really want, for you might
easily find someone you
much preferred), get through
your ordeal because there
is something positive you know
you want, not because it
is "right" for you to get away
from what you know you
don't want. You'll get through
it with a clearer mind + heart.
That keeps your eyes fixed

existence and communication
between them is a vital matter.
I seem to have reached an
impasse!

And speaking of communica-
tion — or of words — there is
this little matter of poetry!
I think, my darling, that
you are too rigid. I think it
is of the very essence of the
poetic spirit that it must be
allowed a certain freedom.
"Poetic license" is not only
an accepted literary con-
vention but a phrase of
profound meaning. To elim-
inate the Wordsworth sonnets
because they are not orthodox
is to me like eliminating cer-
tain people from ones acquaint-

ause because they don't wear
the right clothes. In both cases
there's a certain lack displayed,
but in both it seems to me the
lack is one that may be easily
much overbalanced by virtues.
They're the best Wordsworth
sonnets fall short of the best
Shakespeare ones, but they're
better than the poorer Shakespe-
peare ones, — yes, my pet,
they are, in spite of a certain
disregard of the rigid conven-
tion of the form. For they
have incomparable lines — and
groups of lines, with the com-
bination of sound + thought
that makes great poetry.
Do you realize the sheer in-
tipicability of words, my dear,
— with their infinite capacity
for overtones + undertones of

early proceed upon your tender
mind. You still have a sub-
conscious lumbering for things
to follow a vast set of rules.
And as your own emotional
life reaches full maturity and
is allowed to expand and
flower you will find satisfaction
in an ever wider variety of
experiences. Do I, by any
chance, sound a bit silly?
God knows I've no such in-
tention. In fact, I gasp a bit
as I say all this, for I have
been keenly aware ever since
I first knew you of my intel-
lectual inferiority in talking
with you, + to have the
temerity to talk to you like
this really surprises me!
I'm not sure that I should
have it were you actually
here to answer back!

emotion or thought, with this
sheer beauty of sound, and
the extraordinary way that
they lend themselves to
arrangement in patterns? And
it's in poetry that all these
qualities can be used to the
fullest advantage. Of course I
can't believe that you will
not eventually be enraptured
by the miraculous art - it's
all up you alley, I'm certain.
You do, I think, sometimes
have too strong a feeling for
forms + conventions, but I
suspect that though that is
partly a natural aptitude
with so finely tempered a
mind it is also partly a
hangover from the deeply
formed habits of rigidity so

Anyhow, that's enough of that. To return to you - I don't think you need to worry too much for fear the domestic situation will explode before you mean it to - for I don't believe it would be so bad as you think and I do believe that you'd be relieved to leave it over & everything out in the open. So I shouldn't worry about it at all, well I you. After all, George, she must essentially know - she can hardly believe her marriage to be a success. I cannot conceive of living with a man who feels about me as you do about her and being anything but completely aware of it. I'm not sure you won't both feel better when it's all out. Certainly,

it can't come to her as a
great shock, so for you to get
yourself all worried about it
is foolish. I suppose she may
raise hell — or she may do
worse and seem heartbroken
which will be dreadfully hard
on you. But she'll not really
be heartbroken because break-
ful as it may seem to her at
first, it will be the end of an
impossible situation which
even at its worst moments is
something of a relief. I have
reread several times what
you wrote in your last letter
about it until I could see &
understand not only your
words but their infinite im-
plications, and George, I
just don't think there was
ever anything there to build

possible for you to detach
your body from your soul
sufficiently to accept any
experience as a satisfactory
physical ~~experience~~ one when
it brings no other satis-
factions with it. But all
this is mere speculation - I
don't really know either what
your experience has been or
what you feel about it, so I
guess I'd better shut up.
Anyhow, I'm sure that if
you feel no desire for her body
and that much seems
clear from what you say -
certainly nothing could be
more foolish than to attempt
to force it. But I have to
admit that I understand
how she feels. I suppose it's
all because sex does go so deep

on. I was, by reading those
paragraphs, absolutely & finally
convinced that the whole thing
must be put an end to as soon
as possible. And certainly, if I
can see it with so little to go
on, she, who has lived with you
in the intimacy of marriage
for 6 months must know it a
thousand times over.

I. One maladjustment
physical as well as mental,
George? What you say
about asking the doctor to
order you to drop all physical
relations with her would
lead me to think that,
though it's so rare for a
man to feel that way that
I still don't feel sure.
Knowing you, it seems to me
conceivable that it is in-

Journal of the Happiness of the world
written on it. I reflect of love - unadmitted -

below our civilized + rational
surface. For a woman to have
been desired + to be so no
longer in so short a time is a
blow at her self pride + her
resentment is deep + instinctive.
This doesn't mean, dear child,
that I think you should do
in any way differently from the
way you have done. After all,
if she loves you at all, she
must want to do what she
can to help relieve your
present tension, whatever her
instinctive reactions may be.
Are you any better yet,
precious? Please say yes.
I'll be so glad + relieved when
there comes + you do make the
break. But it seems as if in the
meantime there should be
some improvement. Don't
think about it, darling, one day
more than you can help. Make

February 18, 1937.

Darling Boy,

You are an angel,
and again an angel to be
loving and patient with me
when I am being irrational
and exasperating. I try to
think of good reasons why I
should get worried, and in
the end have to admit that
I do just because I do, and
mostly for no better reason. But
I have no business to burden
you with my fears, and I am
so sorry - and ashamed, I'll
honestly do better now - any.

~~I hope you'll like~~ leaves
wind - I started to say
something I changed my mind
about!

There are innumerable things
in your letters that should
be answered - I probably
shan't get to them all - at
least not to-night (I wish
you were here, then I could
say them) but first - my
darling, you were sweet, sweet,
sweet to remember that it
was Valentine's Day and to
say the absurd and adorable
things you did. I have read
and reread them - as I have
many bits of your letters - and
feel each time my heart grow
warmer and tender. You are
so mistaken - and so dear. It

low, for a while! Of course when
I read your letter last night
with all its nice calm reasonableness
I saw myself as a silly,
panicky, and very trying woman.
Not because you said - or even
implied - it, but merely because
your words so calmed me that I
could see myself. Sometime
I'll regale you by a list of the
things I'd imagined as having
happened to you - good heavens,
a nervous breakdown was
only an item! Well - I'll be
good now - and you do forgive
me? You see, I told you
things would begin to emerge
out of the rose-coloured mists
with which your loving -
and mistaken - imagination
has surrounded me.

still seems to me unreal to
leave you writing me love
letters. But, my dear, while
we're on the subject of your
letters — as I read them and
get the "feel" of the yr that
is behind them, I do really
worry less about you (in spite
of the outbreak!) for there is
in them a feeling of freedom,
of release, of spontaneity
that has not been there for
many a long year. No, it's
not complete yet, but that's
a minor matter, really, which
will be accomplished more
by time than effort. You're
going to be all right, my
pet, and I say with this
with considerable assurance.
Yours is — or was — in the main

a malady of the soul, and
you have got at its roots, with
such courage and straightness as
I shall not cease to praise or ad-
mire, and the rest will take
care of itself — I hope without
too much pain for you, dear child.

Then there is this on my
mind — the idea of not seeing
you at all in the spring
vacation disturbs me no end
& I've been stewing around
about it and I think we'd
better put our heads together
and see what can be done,
how — what is the first possible
moment you could get to
N. Y.? Also what is the
last possible one you could
leave N. Y.? We'll just
have to make up our minds
to evolving plots, you know,

bit of deceit. So - here's the best
plot you've evolved so far! First,
is probably (not certainly) driving
up to Epater on the 26th to
bring back Sister + Joan on
the 28th. How couldn't you work
it to come straight to N.Y.
on the 25th - + drive up +
back with them? You've a perfect
alibi - the opportunity for a
free trip to Epater to see your
many dear old friends! As a matter
of fact, you know the Hogges would
be thrilled. There is no occasion
for mentioning me at all. Just
to make it all much better, I
might be able to use the
chance for driving up as an
excuse for not starting bill
Friday myself + could go up
with you. You could leave a
bed for Thursday night in

doubtless. Anyway, this sub-
rosa correspondence is getting you
in good training. The ease with
which you take to it is scan-
dalous - but very heartening
- it's such beautiful proof
that the silver cord is broken.
As for me, I learned long ago
that truth (or shall we say
honesty?) has little virtue in
itself, but only such as is
given it by circumstance. By
and large, it's bitter stuff to
puture one times + seasons
when it serves no good end, but
only makes unnecessary pain
+ difficulty for everyone con-
cerned, and this is certain-
ly one of those times. There
is no one, of those involved
in this present situation, who
isn't better off if we go in for a

the Creighton apartment. They
think it's all a swell idea -
especially Hugh, who would thus
have company + help on the
driving. Now what do you think,
Lamb? Don't be obstructionist.
It would do you good - really it
would.

It's lovely to hear from you
often enough + fully enough to
get some sort of picture of
your life as it goes from day
to day - bits of events, bits
of thoughts, bits of emotions
- all put together I feel
that I am with you a great
deal. It is, at best, a slow
+ inadequate sort of give
and take of companionship,
but it is much better than
if you were a less excellent

letter writer. You are really a
dear and a darling to take
so much of your time and
energy to write.

Well - to come back to your
letters - thanks Van Doren
is all wet - no, perhaps only
damp - about "Camille" Even
he, you may have noticed,
gave high praise to P. P.
Anyhow + besides, Donald felt
the way I did about it -
so there + so there! Thanks
can go + sit on a back.

I'd see you get an Exeter
bulletin sooner or later - just
haven't had time to attend to
it yet. The picture in it is
only a half-ton, of course,
but from a very good original.
Eventually I'll see that you

handwritten made with Bourbois!

It's midnight, and I've not even begun to answer your second letter — I'll save it for one of those spare minutes I'm expecting over the week-end. You it's got to be answered — by God, can I sit & just listen when you reduce poetic experience to sonnets & Walt Whitman? No, I cannot — we'll deal with that at some length presently. I don't believe you've had tried — or rather, I don't believe you've let yourself. Oh dear, I want to talk about it now, but to-morrow is crowded — I've got to go to

get another one, but at present there are no spares. There are some excellent snapshots — one I'd particularly like you to have, but I haven't the negative & shall leave to get a new one made from the print.

It's all nonsense about your not taking part in the conversational orgy of the famous Tweedy-Hastings-Carr dinner — in the first place, you can talk damn well yourself, in the second place there were subjects discussed on which you would have been vocal, & in the third, last (& I fear largest) place, any one would have been vocal on any subject after three

Write down my dear - a lot - + the 2000

bed. Of course if you were here I should not be able to resist finishing you off here + now - but one pen is much easier to resist than one person!

Have you written to Williams? to Dr. Perry? I think you might tactfully mention to him that Dad was your very special sponsor - at Williams as elsewhere + that the loss of his support is a grave one to you in that way as in others. Dr. Perry was very genuinely + deeply devoted to Dad + if he thought of you not merely as you, but as a protégé of Dad's, I think he'd make special effort.

Write me about the Bot. Society - was it as heavenly as you expected?

Sunday -

My dear,

(15 Feb 37)

This is going to be
scratched off in a great rush,
but the next few days seem
to be fullish and I have ten
minutes (yes - 10) now so
I'll use for them! you. Any-
how, I'm leaving fits about
you - fits and fits. I expect
I'm being definitely irritating,
but George, I'm so terribly
aware just now of how
easily, how swiftly,
and how mercilessly direct,

threat? Well, I'm not sure,
but you watch your step.

I saw Dr. eminent Richard
the last evening, and was
shaken and exalted. My
senses were delighted, my
mind stimulated, and my
heart deeply stirred. It
is extraordinarily beautiful
to look at — and at
moments carried by such
golden words as no other
man has ever written.
It has grandeur + sublimity
both and deals with the
human material in incred-
ibly wise and tender and
compassionate fashion for

can strike. So many things
could have happened to you —
and I've thought of them
all! Now, you see, it's you
that must be patient with
me — presently I shall learn
that you can be silent a
long time and still be all
right. Or at least I shall
presently get my fears
~~from~~ better under control!
In the meantime, forgive me,
laugh at me, but write to me,
no matter how briefly, instantly!
I came within an inch of
calling you up last night
→ there, I guess that'll scare
you! No that a deliberate

one who was still under
thirty years of age when he
wrote. Somehow you must
see it, darling. I shouldn't be
content until you do, so
that we may talk of it
together.

I must stop now - I've
used 15 of my 10 minutes!
Much, much love, my
little darling -
Constance

Do you think it would be a good idea for you to
tell me just how many letters you get from
me just as a check, ^{Thursday} - on which
people all getting where they should and
nowhere else? Or am I being silly?

Darling -

(1172637)

I know this paper
doesn't even fit the Louisa
envelopes, but I am not to be
deterred - I bought it and I
will use it, and you'll just
have to make it. It was your
idea, anyhow! Oh, and I
meant to say that I had
already mailed my letter
to you Monday before I
read yours and that's why
it was so bold - all
covered with return addresses
and what not.

not, and I do. There's no reason why you should write me letters except when, as, and if you please. The above suggestion is for reassurance, not for communication.

How did "Eyesless in Faza" go? Did you finish it, and what did you think? If you'd only been here longer, I could have read it to you - to save you eyes, and have the fun of sharing the book with you. It reads ~~so~~ aloud well - any style so fine does, of course. We read quite a bit of it together at the Thomases last summer - Mary + Bunny and I. Oh dear, I can think of so many reasons for wishing you were here instead of in Rochester.

Are you all right, my dear? When I don't hear from you I begin to worry about you. Yes, I know if I say things like that I'm just adding a burden to the all too many you already carry. Supposing you do this - get a quarter worth of post cards and when you're too busy or too low or too tired or that to write just drop me a p.c. now + then with maybe two words on it - maybe none - anyhow, I'd know you were - relatively speaking - all right. If you were in better shape, so far as health is concerned, I shouldn't worry, but you're

I'll bet I could even
make you like New York, if
you'd just put your mind on
it a bit!

Do you ever read poetry?
I think it's very good for
the anguished soul. Having the
things you feel put into a
form of great beauty, so dig-
nifies and ennobles them as
to make them easier to bear.
Or else you find yourself
losing the sharpness of your
wisdom in reading of emotions
remote from it, but so strong
not to carry you with them.
You're too sensitive — both of
ear and mind — not to derive
great satisfaction from it, I
should think. Perhaps all this

is very superfluous - but you
generally talk of the things - that
either move or interest you,
and you never have ballad
of poetry, so I thought per-
haps I'd say my little say
about it! I got the habit
so far back it's all in the
mists of my childhood. Dad
used to read it aloud to us
all a great deal - and he
read it as a musician performs
fine music, so that I realized
very early the complete experi-
ence of poetry - that it
involves mind and heart and
ear. The night before my
mother died Dad and I sat
up together until dawn -
and much of the time he

good bits?

I've been spending a great
of the day on the intellectual
level of the nursery - amusing
Joan who has a cold. And
I can't seem to pull myself
together and be either interesting
or entertaining. Besides, I went
to bed very late last night
and was dragged out of bed at
dawn by a gent who wanted
to break a date because when
he'd made it he'd forgotten
he'd already had another! This
may be true and may be a
factful exit. But this morning
I could have wronged his
neck, anyhow. In fact, I
was so utterly dazed or raging
that I said yes, I would have
a date with him Monday. That

was reading to me. Some of
the things he read that
night I think I shall hear
in his voice as long as I
live.

Well, just for a bit of
comic relief, let me pass on a
couple of gems from "Punch".

"Make money at home to
pay your income-tax" suggests
an advertisement. But do try to
remember that it must look
home-made.

A writer states that many
^{who} men are drinking to-day very
drank during the war. The same
indictment might be levelled
against shaving.

Don't you think those are

after the angry waters had subsided and calm, ^{was} restored, I remembered that I had a date for Monday! So I had to call him up and begin all over again. I'm certain he doesn't believe I really leave but that I was just being feminine and hitting back. So first and last, it was quite a stew about nothing and started the day on a lower level! So I might just as well stop - this won't get any better even if I do sleep on, and besides it's time to throw myself together some dinner. I wish you were here for it, dear, dear George - and for much more. - or look of that, write to me, darling.
My dear love to you, sweet boy - Constance

Tuesday -

(187.6637)

Proccions -

How do you like
this for an atmosphere of
conspiracy? I've no idea
what a 34 envelope is but
I can imagine nothing
less feminine or personal
than this one. As for the
typewriting, it's definitely
odd but very unsuspecting
for surely no man could
love a woman who pro-
duced anything so strange

suggest the necessity of caution
— there mustn't be any
mess or scandal, but at the
same time I think the
chances of it are infinitesimal
— you would seem to also
most anyone so unlikely
a prospect that the attention
of those looking for a juicy
bit would be concentrated
elsewhere. Besides, you've
been there too short a time
for anyone to be awfully
interested. And I think
you do need the letters — and
I want to write them — or
is that all rationalizing be-
cause I want to write
them?

That was a wonderful

looking. They'll just think
you're corresponding with a
lunatic and pay no attention.
As for the paper — my own
didn't fit, so I got this —
the best the neighborhood
could produce, and I really
can imagine nothing worse.
My moral sense survives
the strain of a clandestine
correspondence with a married
man, but whether my aes-
thetic sense is going to
survive the strain of this
revolting combination of
odds + ends I'm not sure!
I know Donald is right to

letter that I got yesterday. You say all sorts of absurd things about me, darling, but in the very saying of them you reveal your own lovely spirit. You should be proud of that letter - it was so sensitive, so manly, so modest, so tender. But, George says, you do exaggerate so my meager virtues. Think a little of my faults - of the things you don't like about me - you need an antidote. I wish heaven those beautiful things were true of me, but they're not, and now is the time for you to recognize it.

example, but has some quotations from his own beautiful writing — and a fine picture. Bless you, my darling —
Katherine

I'm glad you want to a doctor, though I wouldn't, if I were you, make myself too miserable doing what he says. Hugh says one of the fundamental rules of the psychiatrist in treating serious nervous disorders is to let the patient do anything he wants to, short of suicide! I don't see why the same principle might not be useful in minor nervous difficulties like yours. Don't wear yourself out denying yourself things you crave, such as cigarettes, unless it gets very extreme. Do everything you can that will relax you or ease tension — and I'm not sure cigarettes

anyhow, though it will take
time to get back to normal.
But sleep this thought right
in the front of your mind,
my pet — that every day,
every minute brings you
nearer to a perfectly definite
end. The major problem is
settled, the minor ones will be
easy enough by comparison.
And when it's all behind
you, you'll have such a hold
on life as you've never had
before, because you'll have been
come yourself as you've never
been before, and that sense
of your own integrity will
give you courage and power
to fulfil yourself as you
never have before.

Don't come in there. Sleep is
the most important and you
simply must get that. Don't
let yourself lie awake. Take
an alcoholic nightcap — even
if you don't like it — or drugs
— or sometimes one and
sometimes another. I remember
Dad's saying to me firmly
that I'd do myself more
harm by not sleeping than
by anything I took to make
me. And don't worry, dear,
for really it is true that the
worst is over. The inner con-
flict is resolved and that's
what's been tearing you in
pieces. Everything will fall
into place now — you'll see.
I think you'll presently
find yourself less nervous.

All right. I'm going to have
an article about Dad - it's
meant to be in with the
magazine really.

It's getting too late for us
to tell you in detail how pleased
I am to see you going in for
copies of gambling - not to tell
you loads of other things in
my mind. But at least I
must finish off by saying
— stop that nonsense to go
after the Cornell job - this
very minute as ever is. I told
you what I thought of it
before you wrote about it - I
could all over again and
add a lot, too, but it would
all come to the same thing,
in the end, I wish we had
Dad to turn to - he'd be sure
to know someone. But we
haven't, so stop talking about
not being good enough - re-
member what Dad thought
about you - people didn't fool him
much, you know.

Do you get the Exeter bulletin?

4312 - 47th Street,

Sunday -

(8 Feb 37)

Angel -

Something queer
seems to have happened
to my pen, so you're going
to have a worse than
usual job reading this.

I'm just back from
having supper with
Josephine Lansing and
her husband - did I
ever tell you about her?
She's assistant curator
of paintings at the Metro-
politan and, as you can

claimed to be sorry for
her, though I don't think
there's anything more
undermining to the self-
respect of any normal
woman than to have
no attention from men.
Then last year she
simply dazed all her
friends by marrying,
quite without warning,
a man who had just
divorced his first wife!
Even my darling father
said he just couldn't
believe it! This was the
first time I'd been to
their home so of course
I was filled with
curiosity, and really
I got a lot of satisfaction

inagine, a very intelli-
gent person, and with no
end of character. But
she's one of the plainest
women I've ever seen,
and with apparently not
one atom of the usual
feminine capacity for
making the most of
what you've got —
and no technique with
men. She literally never
had men taking her
out, much less falling
in love with her, and
it would have been
pathetic if she hadn't
been the sort of person
so incapable of self-
pity that you'd feel

factious out of it -
they're so obviously
happy in each other -
not radiantly or ecstat-
ically, but with a
lovely feeling of peace-
ful companionship. You
go away ~~feeling~~ ^{saying} "There's
a story that came out
right" They're not in
heaven, but I doubt if
either of them really
very much wants to be
- or perhaps has the
capacity for it. They're
not exciting people -
just steady and good
and sometimes interesting
- certainly two of a
kind and it's so
satisfying to realize that

such people do find each other and make a pleasant harmonious life together.

As a matter of fact, they might have seemed more colorful to me had I not had such a gorgeous sparkling evening yesterday. Oh darling, you should have been there - you've no idea how much I wanted you - there was really almost a phys- ical gap. Of course I don't need to describe it to you, for you know them all so much better than I, and you can probably imagine it far better than I could

chattans? They're gorgeous,
but after the first ball
of the first cooltail, all
of you inhibitions are
gone. I meant to stop
at one, but when
Donald urged the second
I couldn't bear to admit
that I couldn't take it,
so I kept on drink for
drink with the men. But
I also wish to record
that I fell down w
stairs and talked
perfectly intelligibly - at
least people answered
what I thought I'd
said! And Donald at one
point called the waiter &
said "Could we please
have a massage of
patches?" Screams from

tell you about it. Such
a flow of wit - oh me,
oh my! We talked
about everything on
earth, and everyone
talked so well and
at the same time they
were not one atom
highbrow (in the latter-
some sense) so I didn't
get scared and self-
conscious in spite of
knowing perfectly well
that they were all much
more intelligent and
much more sophisticated
than I. Of course there
is this - I had had
three cooltails of solid
dynamite! Has Donald
ever inculped you into
buying his special Mar.

the rest of us! There was
one beautiful moment
when the conversation
had somehow settled on
Verlaine and I thought I
was going to make an
impression by quoting
my favorite bit (the
one bit of French poetry
I can quote), but before
I could work it in the
talks had swept on
and I was left with my
poor little quotation dead
on my hands - wasn't
that bitter?

I had a very good
evening Friday, too,
but I can't go on quite
forever, and there's
one other thing much
more important than

all this chit-chat, I could
hold me about the Cornell
possibility — for heaven's
sake, my dear, go after it
— tooth & nail! And now
listen to you Aunt Corie's
— you've got to give up
some of this modesty
business — you've got to,
you've got to convince
yourself that Cornell would
be damned lucky to get
you, which is quite true,
though you may regard
it as a fable, if you
choose, just so long as
you realize what a good
fable it would be for
Cornell to believe in. You
must sell yourself, darling,
deeply as you love it.

you would not be isolated
in some deadly hole where
no one would set any
value on those things you
leave to give. I know it
means committing your-
self to some research, but
darling, you're going to
have to do that sooner or
later - sacrifice your
standards + to some ex-
tent your academic integ-
rity. Dad said that
two years ago and I'm
sure he knew what he
was talking about. It's
wrong but it's true - and
there you are. Key investi-
gations on the Williams
business came to nothing
- I'm so sorry, but I
was afraid they would.
Go after Cornell and go sure

You've got to take the
world as it is, to accept
the fact that for the
most part people accept
you at your own valua-
tion. You'll be of most
value to society, my
dear, if you can get
yourself settled down in
a place that has some
quality where you'll
find some other of your
own sort, where you
own really some powers
can be used. They ^{never} will
be in any of the little
third + fourth rate
places. Cornell is not
Harvard, I know, but
it's not bad, either, and

you're the man for them.

Last Sunday evening was the first time in two and a half years that I had found again the dear companion of that summer. Where had he hidder all that time? You won't ever do it again, will you?

Oh, there's one other item to be attended to - I think you should go to a doctor and see if he can do anything to get you into a better state of general health - you can't go & get sick in the middle of this. There aren't so many months left, but you've got to get through them just as well as you possibly can. So do it, like a good boy. Bushels of love, my little cream puff - fortune

Tuesday -

(4 Feb 37)

Darling -

I started to write to you Tuesday, then decided I'd better wait till I'd heard from you - and didn't get your letter till I got home last night - late, very. So here I am, with my ears cocked toward the radio and a heavenly Bach concerto - and it's not everyone I could write to and listen to Bach at the same time. (That one's pretty subtle, but I do * hope you didn't

on Monday
You left me ^{on Monday} feeling uncertain both as to what you now feel for me and as to what you thought I feel for you. You never once said "Here and now, I love you" — and your only question to me was "Did you love me?". The whole situation was of such great delicacy that I could do no more than guess at what I was supposed to conclude — I couldn't face you with direct questions when it seemed to me that you might quite well not know the answers yourself. So I waited to see what you

miss it.)

Well, at last I have a letter from you in which I don't have to read between the lines to know what's going ^{on} in your mind. Though I've really got quite acute at that — do you know, when your last letter came, the whole and exact truth flashed through my mind as I read it? But I dismissed ^{it} as too improbable — and felt rather ashamed!

But because your letter left me in no doubt whatever as to your feeling, I must answer it with equal directness.

would write — and of course your letter which does not, like your conversation deal with the past, but with the present, leaves me in no doubt. But, my darling child, I'm terribly afraid you did misunderstand. That, I expect, is my fault — I was dazed and bewildered and I suppose let you infer something I did not say and was not alert enough to see that you were inferring it. You asked me only if I did love you not if I do — and I did, heaven knows. But love is like everything else — it cannot live unrequited. I loved you for a long time

before I made up my mind
that you quite definitely
did not want me and
that if I were to be an
adequate human being, I'd
got to pull myself together
and get over it. That took
time and effort, but I did
achieve it, as I realized
when I got your letter
last summer. It did make
me feel low for a while,
but it didn't seem a
cruel and shattering blow,
as it would have, had
I still been in love with
you. Do you understand
all this, my dear? I want
to be honest, and I
want also to give you as
little pain as I possibly
can. It would be much
easier for me, I think, to

I am not in love with
you — though just where
the line between those two
lies, I do not know, but
I'm sure there is one
somewhere. There is a very
special tenderness that I
feel for you, but exactly
what it's meaning is, I do
not know. You see — I keep
saying "I do not know"
— and I think that's at
the bottom of the whole
thing. Sometime I shall,
of course — but I'm not
sure that it really matters
very much that I don't
now. There is at present
no practical necessity for
decisions — by the time
there is, the present con-
fusion of my mind and

just deceives you, so that
I need not remove from
you now, when you need
it, any slightest bit of
support I can give you.
Perhaps in the end that
would be wisest — per-
haps, with careful tending
and encouragement the
feeling which was once so
alive will return to new
life — if it does, I shall
have hurt you now for
nothing — and how
foolish that would be!
But if it does not, I should
have lulled you into a
false security, and should
in the end do you real
damage, whereas I do not
believe that I am now.
I do love you, George, but

heart will be untangled.
In the meantime, my little
dear — I can give you
very freely all that you
really need. I am not sure
that you yourself really
know what you are going
to want when this is all
over. The future is for both
of us in the laps of the gods
(who was it that said that
when she left things in
the laps of the gods they
always got up?) and
we must devote all our
energies to dealing with
the present. That's not
going to be half as
difficult as you think,
and when it's cleared
up, we'll be able to
deal with everything
else, just through the sheer

relief of having the whole
wretched business behind
us.

The worst part, darling,
is nearly over and you
must know that — for
the agonizing thing is
gathering together your
courage sufficiently to
absolutely face things and
make a decision. That's
what tears you apart
— and once it's done,
you have gained strength
in the doing of it, and at
the same time have
reached the top of the
rugged mountain over
which your road lies.
The rest of the way will
be easy, but it will
be down hill. That you

twice - or seventeen times
- before loving a woman
like that, my dear. Am I
taking a terrible risk in
drawing your attention to
that little item? And what
would you not say if she
knew that what I was
ashamed of was that I
had tried to keep my
marriage going? How
comic life really is!
Don't forget that, dearling
- it is funny - prac-
tically all of it, really -
along with all the solemn-
ity, the bitterness, the
misery - still it is funny
- I think because we
take ourselves so serious-
ly, with our little brief,
favoured lives. The gods

have so soon reached the
top is evidence of what I
have known all along -
and told you repeatedly
- the strength of your
spirit. You made a mis-
take, but you have al-
ready faced it - dear,
brave boy. Nothing will
ever defeat you, George,
not when you can stand
up to life like that.
Allow me to point out to
you that when I made
the same mistake, I was
neither brave enough nor
wise enough to do what
you have done, but
wasted good years trying
to patch up something
that had never really
existed. You should think

must laugh, must
pray — even though gently
and tenderly.

I must stop writing,
— I do love talking to
you — I've always had
difficulty in stopping,
haven't I? There is some
deep inner harmony between
our minds — or is it our
spirits — or our hearts?
I do that love — or what?
Probably or what — any-
how, I've got to get my-
self off to a cocktail
party (till that to you
mother) and I can't go
drifting with platitudes
about LIFE!

Write me quickly and
tell me about yourself.
With my dear love —
Constance

(enclosure
letter from VS)

4312-47th St.,
Long Island City -

Sunday -

(11 Jan 37)

Dear George,

I have wanted
to wait to write to
you, till I could really
write - but that would
be to put it off almost
indefinitely, for the letters
that must be written
never stop - between
us we've already
written more than four
hundred, nor is the end
in sight - and were I to

and since you are not,
there is much I should
like to write. Perhaps
it will never get written,
no, said either, perhaps
even it's better that it
shouldn't, but at least
you will know that your
friendship has ~~been~~ meant
something to me in these
dreadfully difficult days.

It was a rarely
beautiful life, George,
a life in the years that
I have known it quite
without flaw, and one
which has immeasurably
enriched everything
that it touched. I had

wish like I could write
as much as I want to,
you would be forced to
think my silence un-
grateful and unfriendly.

And I, on my side, I
was glad to get your
letters — more than
many — and I have
thought of you often in
these last weeks, for
you are in my mind one
of the people who most
fully understood my
dearling father, and saw
him for the really great
man that he was. I
have wished often that
you were within reach,

a close share in it, and
for that I shall be
thankful till I die, but
the price is heavy to pay.

This is a very bad letter
— I've written too many
to-night, and last night
and the night before. Will
you understand and for-
give me? And will you
be generous and write
to me? I need my
friends so terribly —
life suddenly seems so
terribly thin, so empty
of warmth.

I had a sweet letter
from Donald Tweedy — I
was so grateful for its
spontaneous warmth.
Constance

[11 Jan 37]
~~I have wished, I feel sure or actually
to you I feel sure, that we might have
been within reach of each other these
latter weeks, and I have wished
fate that it was otherwise.~~

I am sorry indeed that we have
not been within reach of each other
these latter weeks. I must have
been more careful, but that gladly,
and gladly indeed have done what I
could to lighten the pain. What are
the things you would have said to me
which you have not been able to
write and feel perhaps may never
be said I don't know. I hope that
you will say them sometime. Somehow
or other I feel more & more than
must is said which might better
be left unsaid and least must
which is ~~left unsaid~~ ^{unspoken} might better
be spoken.

Thank you for saying that you
think I understood your father.

Following March 25. ~~I hope~~ During
them I hope to get back to the Hudson,
and if I do I shall try hard to get to
New York. But in the meantime
write me when you feel you want
to and can, - word from you is
ever welcome.

With the best of courage to you

for the really great man that he was.
I wish it were so. I did love
him deeply and admired him to the
point of feeling it sacrilege to
emulate him. I realize ~~too~~ more
& more keenly how little I deserved
the measure of friendship he showed
me and how little grateful ^{say it}
appeared to be. But I am grateful
for it and grateful to you for
the lines when you brought us
together in remembrance of that friendship.

~~I regret you do not think it
worth my effort to get to you
something for me - something
for the future when you feel you can~~

~~I~~ I shall not write you more
now. What I would have to say to
you were I to see you I cannot
write, and the rest isn't worth
putting down. When I shall see
you I don't know - I hope possibly
during the last week of the ten days