

Monday, March 6th

Dear John,

When I arrived this evening and found your letter waiting, I was glad again that the apartments was clean; it hurts me to read one of your letters in the midst of disorder just as it would hurt me to have you with me in the midst of it. When I arrived here last night, everything was terribly dirty and untidy. I don't think that much had been done for three weeks; Joy had gone away to have the flu in a warmer place. I cleaned house for three hours, partly because I knew that I could not study in the midst of it and partly to make things clean for Joy when she returns; I feel guilty to be so glad to be alone; it is almost to be glad of her being sick. So even her room has been cleaned. Then I worked on more reports.

Today I was as tired as ever and badly prepared for my classes. This letter must be short so that I can get to work for as long as I have energy. You must not speak of my letters to you and the time of their writing as a matter of convenience or "inconvenience". The time at which I write to you is never determined by anything which could be characterized in this way. I could not write to you letters that contained nothing but the emptiness of days in which I work terribly hard and feel completely defeated. I have not taught more than two classes that satisfied me within the past two weeks; and I am far from being the perfectionist I once was. Sometimes I still have that desperate feeling that each class is an examination, that I fail each one of them, and yet still I must prepare again every night for three or four more, and take and fail them. Sometimes the emptiness of the class is painfully obvious; sometimes, as today, I simply know that four out of the twelve girls in the class are finding further reasons to detest the course. The worst though are the Current Events Classes in which I seem to be teaching them to think in the ways I hate most.

I feel the need to be calm and serene with desperate acuteness. I spent a half hour this afternoon talking <sup>with two other teachers</sup> about the English teacher who will probably not come back because of a nervous breakdown. I didn't talk much, just sat and corrected papers while the other two talked. They were trying to figure out a way to reinforce Mary's self-confidence. I think that they were thinking of her good, in part--but even more of the gap in the department. I felt sick and unhappy; I do not like her and can only think of her in terms of the gap. I spent a few minutes with another teacher whose anxiety and struggling embarrasses me so much that I can hardly meet her eye. She is so completely different from me that I cannot reassure her; yet she needs it badly.

I came back from Philadelphia last night with Janet. She inquired into the state of my mind, work, and spirit very kindly and urged me (again) to be psychoanalyzed; but she concluded immediately that you probably didn't like that sort of thing and that if I refrained from wearing lipstick out of deference to you, I would probably not be analyzed. I tried to indicate to her that you were not the principal cause of my resistance to the idea. She regards my religious leanings even more dubiously than you do (if possible).

As for your theology; it seems to be completely logical, though my tired, and never very logical, mind may have missed a turning. This is one of the things which we must talk about. I cannot argue against you because I do not think that matters of belief can be determined by logic or argument

You know that the problem of faith troubles me continuously and that I seem to advance very little. I do not think that these problems are solved by the individual alone. God has a part in the creation of something out of nothingness.

I have been reading about St. Francis of Assisi. I do not think that either you or I would make good Franciscans. I cannot finish my thought. It is better to mail this and to work a little and sleep.

Good night,  
Margaret