

Germantown  
Sunday, May 14, 1950

Dear Jocheen,

In a few minutes the radio will begin to give a feeble echo of the sand in the midst of which you are sitting. I wish I were beside you. I have so many frightened anticipations of next weekend that I <sup>do</sup> do not know how to feel about it. Please help me as you <sup>do</sup> when you take me to the train. But I forget that this will be very hard for you too. All I really mean to ask is that I should not have to bear responsibility for what I cannot control or prevent or manage.

It is very peaceful here. If I could stay here all day I would, but I have only a few of the books that I need for the incredible amount of work that must be done. My apprehensions are so pervading that I hardly know how to separate the feelings of dread about my work from those which concern next weekend.

About what has happened here I can say very little. Alex will probably tell you something — more defensively and probably ~~about~~ more critically ~~than~~ than I would. It was both better ~~and~~ and worse than I had expected. The worst was that Janet was terribly tense and anxious and that I could do nothing to help her. I think that I lacked both the



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affection and the will. The best was that the Bingham's behaved with kind discretion and restraint and that everyone went away immediately. I have a confused aftertaste, ~~mixed~~ <sup>mixed</sup> of gratitude and reverence with the macabre. The symbolism of the service itself seemed to me quite beautiful for the few brief moments that it lasted; at least, I think that it was that that made my lips tremble uncontrollably and tears came. And now I ~~am~~ am haunted by the terrible ~~parable~~ parable of the house that is "swept and garnished"—just because everything around me is so "swept" and orderly and beautiful; my intellect, whatever is left, tells me that the words and idea have no logical application.

Now I must try to eliminate all of these emotions and plan my work. Plans must also be made for the weekend, though I shrink from the responsibility. Please ask Alexander to tell you about the other people whom Papa has invited. It is possible that some of these people and Peter will drive down with us—but ~~not~~ ~~I~~ will not have to stay with them and make conversation. There is also a possibility that one of my students will drive back with us Friday night and will spend the night here. Alex has very kindly offered to take her under his wing. Without some such arrangement it would be impossible for Lily to go to the



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Festival, since she has no place to stay (she may not be able to go anyway); ~~Walter thought~~ I do not know her very well, but I think that she is the sort of person to whom this will mean a great deal, and that I should do what I can to make it possible for her to go.

I have just made a telephone call to a Bryn Mawr class-mate who was threatening to come to spend ~~the~~ Thursday evening and night with Joy and me. I think that no one will be there except me Thursday evening, though I cannot guarantee it; perhaps Joy will be there.

Mother and I have planned picnics for Friday evening and Saturday noon. It will be, of course, possible to split up in smaller groups, but I think it would probably be better to stay together Friday evening; we will see.

Do you think that your parents will go directly from Bethlehem to Mantoloking? Or will they come back here first for supper? We have planned a simple supper that can be expanded or contracted. Will you go with them to Mantoloking? You must feel free to do what you think will be best for your parents, and what will seem least difficult to you yourself. But you know that I hope you will stay here; and ~~the~~ my family would welcome you warmly.

Now I must pull myself together and get to work. I wish that I could say something "nice" to you, but everything is swallowed up in apprehension. Perhaps when I ~~to~~ begin to work I will feel better. Do not worry about me; the best thing that you could do for me would be ~~to be~~ to refrain from anxiety. ~~WAAAAA~~  
~~WAAAAA~~.

Margaret