

Dear Sochen,

Sunday
June 4, 1950

I have done a great many things since I left New York late Friday afternoon, and yet it has all been very calm and leisurely; and I feel as if I had been thinking of you, and of you and me, continuously. The ride in the train always does that to me anyway. It represents much more than the distance covered or the time spent.

I like the sinister metaphor in which you describe your mind as a dull knife, "skimming the surface or hacking and marring beyond recognition". I do not think that I could use such a metaphor to describe my mind. I believe that some of the things I have thought are very penetrating, but the process is not so intentional as yours with the knife. Your metaphor reminds me too of Peter when he was very little - how he kept on pulling up the bulb to see how it was growing.

Last night Mother and Papa went out to a supper party. I stayed with Peter to feed him some of the things he likes and then to cram him for his Latin and Science tests. He was very nice and appreciative, though ~~he~~ ^{he} had been groaning and sulking around all day. I thought of you, probably hungry at that moment, and needing, not to be crammed with verbs, but to be "distracted" a little.

Tonight, or tomorrow morning early, I shall go back to New York to finish the work at school, clean the apartment, and see Janet and Bob Tuesday night. Wednesday I will take that 3:00 train. I will write to Priscilla today to ask her if I may stay at ~~h~~Kennew Avenue until she goes out to the country.

It is very beautiful and quiet here. I am troubled by the patternlessness of existence here but for the moment very glad to sink into it. The only thing that I must do regularly is to put cold compresses on a slightly infected eyelid. In the intervals between this ritual I wash my hair, myself, my clothes, dishes, or wander in the garden.

The idea of leaving the beauty of the garden to go to New York seems almost insane. The rhododendron is as I have never before seen it. The rose bush which grows around the big tree is just beginning to flower, and the syringa too. All this and the linden will be over when I return.

I keep wondering how it will be to be with you this time. In spite of the last two weekends there is a gnawing fear. And I remember the last time I was in Cambridge, how beautifully ~~it~~ it began and how painfully it ended.

As usual, I cannot disentangle one anxiety from another. The lack of a plan or pattern for my summer worries me. I cannot spend all that time reading and preparing for next winter's lessons. In fact, to think of all that time still to be spent in New York is very hard. I would like my summer to have a meaning apart from the winter that follows.

Already the affection and appreciation of my parents begins to close around me like a trap. Mr. and Mrs. Yarnall look across the Meeting House at me meaningfully; they will ask me again when I will join the Meeting. And since I am characterless and very tired, perhaps I will say "now".

The roses sent by your parents had just begun to drop their petals when I arrived on Friday. Now Mother and I are going out into the garden to pick fresh flowers! I feel a little bit as you did about the music of the Festival - that I have nothing to celebrate.

Margaret.

