

Thursday November 5
Happy Guy Fawkes Day
toonorrow

Dear Rob,

The conference was, as usual, a waste of time - the keynote speaker gave a string of statistics about health sort of in relation to education, and the other two sessions - smaller groups - were too brief for anything to be done or said in depth. But we didn't expect much - and John and I did accomplish some planning in the afternoon. Teaching The Old Man and the Sea to my 11-12's is going much better than I expected because I'm following his suggestions.

Mama took a long corduroy skirt she made for me a couple of years ago which I rarely wore because it wrapped itself around my legs and tripped me - and made a knee-length skirt of it to surprise me. Problem: Although I was the one who bought the material originally, I really dislike it rather strongly. I'll see if I can get away with wearing it just for casual wear - Saturdays, when I get home from school, etc. It is a print - of rather icky colors - and Mama, who sometimes seems a bit color-blind, put a red zipper in it, though the print is green, gold, and pinkish violet on white.

When I arrived home today, I found a book envelope from Offord - with Salvador through Logos this time. Now I hope I can find - or make time sometimes to read all the lovely books we have. I have been reading Civilization (excuse me, Civilisation) - I read a chapter before the program, and it really helps greatly. Elaine and Mike annoy me with their incessant complaints about the program. They want it to be an art history course - which it is not intended to be - and they carp about it every week. I've tried a few gentle comments,

but I think next time I'm going to come right out and say to them that it's all right to say once that you are disappointed because you expected something different. After that it is just as futile and foolish to keep complaining as it is to complain that a violet is not a rose or that someone played Schumann when you expected Bach - nothing is changed, and you spoil any chance you could have of enjoying what is there - besides spoiling or at least taking the edge off other people's enjoyment.

I wish you could have seen the sky on the way home today. Last night we had a wild thunderstorm, and we're evidently still in the same very low-pressure system. There were clouds piled on clouds and in front of clouds - all kinds - with just a couple of patches of blue - but white clouds, grey clouds, pink clouds, brownish-green clouds, lavender clouds, yellow-green clouds - all darkening rapidly but with a strange glow in the air - yellowish - and the trees are really stunning - especially the rich, deep reds with some already bare grey, feathery birches against them. Then mildwind.

I've been making verse cards for John faster than I dare give them to him - I feel two ways about it: I want to share the things I love and find beautiful or comforting or challenging, but I'm afraid of pushing. He says he likes them and finds many comforting - but then he would never knowingly say anything to hurt me. Anyway, I thought maybe I'd send one or two Dagon, too - since you share my taste for quotes. Do you find certain lines and phrases - especially Biblical ones - coming into your mind and being especially comforting?

Please try to find time to write at least a paragraph or two. Phone calls are marvelous, but letters can be read and reread and savored.

Dear little brother - I wish I had words to tell you all you mean to me - what delight and lifting of the heart just thinking of you brings - how much you teach me - how you stretch my mind and my delight in things both great and small. I am concerned about you - and wish you weren't in the Army - and that everything were wonderful, and not just tolerable because you make it tolerable - and I do worry some when I hear a cold or weariness or disappointment and so forth in your voice - but over it all comes such assurance in your basic strength and sense and depth of faith, compassion, and goodness that I can't really worry too deeply too long. I keep finding myself saying or wanting to say "I wish you could know my brother" to so many people. I'll try to be caught up with work at Christmastime so we can talk - but I can't wait for that, so I have to write these talking-out-loud letters, and they do take time. I will try, though.

John does concern me deeply, of course - I see him so much and have learned to read his face and tone of voice pretty accurately (except when my own fears, apprehensions, and so forth get in the way of understanding them) that I know when he is troubled - but he does speak very openly now to me and say I am the one person he can turn to most freely and who helps him most. There is such closeness and openness between us now - but not the openness and frankness of (Please forgive me) your generation that doesn't care whether it wounds or not as long as it is what it believes to be honest; honesty that comes from love - whether storge, philia, eros, or agape - is always courteous - that I am in many ways happier with him than

I have even been before or even imagined possible.

I'm giving a kind of break to my world let's and myself tomorrow by spending a good part of the period playing records of Biblical Passages set to music. Mostly The Messiah but as they come in I'll have the 1st movement - chorus - of the Great Magnificat on and see if that will wake them up (I have them 1st period) - to me it's one of the most glorious packets around - I have it on the player now to inspire me.

This is a pretty strange letter - and I'd better end it now to do some work.

Love,
Lain.

P.S. Drama gave me the verse from Timothy when I graduated from High school.

Study to shew thyself
approved unto God,
a workman that needeth
not to be ashamed, rightly
dividing the word of truth.

II Timothy 2:15