

Monday, November 9

Dear Rob,

Have you heard of Hemingway's book about bullfighting, Death in the Afternoon? One of my "NR's" has.

Poor John - He came over yesterday afternoon to work on lesson plans, and while we were having tea Drama came down groggy and a bit giddy from a long nap and started one of those conversations that can be sort of followed only if you know Drama and have already been in on several conversations on the same subjects. She started with Hemingway - because we were working on the Old Man and the Sea - asked if John likes him (he does - the writing, not the man) - then said she doesn't and suddenly leaped into her pet theory that as men grow older they become better looking but women as they grow older look worse via a comment about Hemingway's looking better after he grew his beard. I think John was rather bewildered by the transition, and he held his own in the subsequent discussion arguing that women, older ones too, were better looking than men - and that the difference in taste and opinions was due, perhaps to the difference in attractions. He responds to her teasing and goading, though she complains after he leaves that he's too slow. I'm not sure what she expects - I'm certainly not as at ease with his family as he is with ours, and she is after all his mother's age and you do treat people with respect for their age. Sometimes I feel like falling through the floor - but he survives and still comes back, so I guess it's all right. His mother sort of crowned the whole thing yesterday though - just as he was leaving she called because she wanted to start dinner.

Thursday

I know I'm not doing very well with this letter, but I'm still not doing anything interesting or exciting - and though I've been thinking, it's all pretty circular - nothing new.

I'll send for tickets for a few things - all in sets of 3 so that if you would like to go ~~with~~ with Jack and Joel or Jack and Joel or any other combination of friends, you can. I can always see these things at some other time.

Mama and Dad have both seemed particularly well lately. Even when Mom has a headache, it seems to go away fairly quickly. She made soup - first of the season - the other day, and bought more makings yesterday, a good sign.

Have you written to Mrs. Gray yet?

Friday

Much of Civilization last night was on Dinner - it was chiefly about the Reformation. I enjoy it thoroughly, and Mom and Dad watch it too, but I really don't think it would help students much. It is too general, too personal - and requires much additional knowledge to fill in gaps, background, etc. I'm glad you told me to buy the book. I read the Chapter just before - or at least the same week as the program.

It is Friday the 13th and typical November weather - rain all day and cold and falling leaves in drifts. Maybe we'll have a fire when I get home; it's suitable weather for one. Actually, this time I think it has been Dad more than Mom who has been rather impatient for an excuse to have a fire.

Saturday night
I'll mail this before church tomorrow, so -
willy-nilly, it must be finished. I can't
promise anything until very late next week -
report cards are due Thursday.

There's a reference book in the library on
biblical allusions in English literature - I
used it last year & again this for a test for
World Lit. One I copied to use as an example
in class & particularly think you'll enjoy (I
think you have read the book, haven't you?)

In Gomme Butler's "The Way of All Flesh",
Theobald reflects upon his son Ernest's
shortcomings at Dr. Skinner's school. "Then his
thoughts turned to Egypt and the tenth plague. It seemed
to him that if the little Egyptians had been anything
like Ernest, the plague must have been something
very like a blessing in disguise. If the Pharisees
were to come to England now he should be greatly
tempted not to let them go."

Another - Thoreau wrote to Parker
Ollsbury about "the present condition of
things in this country":

Blessed were the days before you read a
President's message. Blessed are the young,
for they do not read the President's
message. Blessed are they who never
read a newspaper, for they shall see
nature and, through her, God.

I think I like that best of all & found

When I got home yesterday, Mom & Dad had
piled up the winter curtains & draperies (it
looks nice and warm) - and, I later
discovered had laid a fire, but it hasn't
been lit yet.

I've decided that I'm mad as John -
I still love him dearly; in fact, I couldn't
be so mad if I didn't - but I am
mad. Now if I can only get to the point
where I can let him know it - maybe
it will clear the air, snap him out of.

His blue funk a bit - and maybe ruin
a beautiful friendship (but maybe that
would be all right, too, since that is not
quite what I want - or at least not all
I want). Don't worry; I think it's a
healthy kind of anger - if I can just
find the right place, time, and way to
let it out. I may just shock him
speechless - but I'd rather shock him
into a good blaze of temper himself -
I've never seen him in one, but I think
he needs it for his circulation - he's been
looking pale lately. If it ever comes off,
I may let you know - but it will
probably take me a while to work up
to it.

Be good
Stay well
Eat well
Be brilliant
Have fun
Write to us
Write to Mrs Gray

Love,
Lois

If I take the wings of the
morning, and dwell in the
uttermost parts of the
sea; even there shall thy
hand lead me, and thy
right hand shall hold me.

Psalms 139: 9-10

For God hath not given
us the spirit of fear;
but of power, and of
love, and of a sound
mind.

II Timothy 1: 7
