

Pensione Isola,
Via dei Serragli, 109-
Firenze -
October 8th, '27

Laurie Darling:

4^{two} dear letters from you, quite close together. It is sweet of you to write, dear, but with all those many many letters you have to answer, I feel as though you had quite enough to do. You mustn't spoil me. But I do love hearing about everything. You know that. You got me so worked up over the possibilities of the old stable that I find I'm quite taken aback & much disappointed to hear it won't be available. However, as you say, it may work out all for the best.

Perhaps you are meant to be free so you can come over and join me in the Spring. Would you like it? Shall we dream of it, anyway? Maybe by the middle of May you could get off, & come & join me in Florence. Then, after a week or 10 days here, we might go

over to Venice. And from there, across to Dalmatia for a fortnight, before going back to the U.S. ???

I have recently met a nice Miss Taylor who has just been in Dalmatia, & she's got me aching to go there. Especially for the Mestrovic Memorial (where is it? I forget.) his masterpiece. She says it is the most marvelous thing she ever saw.

That no architecture or sculpture or combination of both has ever given her the extraordinary exaltation that filled her when she saw this.

It must be a supreme & unique achievement. And the whole country & the peasants & all she says are quite fascinating.

We could come back through Switzerland & perhaps to Paris & Chartres & sail home together from Cherbourg. How's that for a pipe dream? If only I can sell another bronze this winter (say the Pigeon Girl), I could pay all the steamer fares, & you'd find it quite cheap living once you were over here. And there'd be a wealth of material for your camera.

I was so interested in hearing of all the different places you've been exhibiting in recently. Splendid!

But it was funny about the frosted tree, wasn't it? What were they thinking of? I do hope you managed to get all the Fisher's work done while you were in Denver, & that the sun came out & the leaves stayed on the trees long enough for your purpose. Pity you couldn't have had the glorious weather we've been having here, lately. There's an autumn crispness to the air, but the sun is glorious, & the sky a marvelous blue over the red-tiled roofs. One hates to be in doors such weather, but both Veil & I work hard in the studio for half the day, anyway, & sometimes all day. She is a charming person, & I'm glad she is going to stay on for a month or two longer. They had intended to go back to England as soon as she finished her summer's work (a group for the Royal Academy Gold Medal Competition). But her father has developed rather a nasty cough recently, and the doctor says he ought not to go back to an English winter. So about December, I think they'll probably go to some cheap place on the Riviera (if they can find one), and meantime I'm only too glad to have her share my studio and models. Did I write you about the adorable baby who is posing for us now? A dirty little slum

child, 18 months, with a splendid little body, that one
longs to bathe & dress properly. His Granny brings
him out, & we build a roaring fire in the pig stove,
& he plays about quite happily while we agonize
over trying to catch his changing postures. I'm
doing a very simple standing figure, with decorative
fruit masses banked about his feet & building
up to a sort of pyramid shape. If I can only keep
it simple enough, I believe it will be worth doing,
but it's awfully hard to keep myself from the slick
& tricky modelling that is so easy - & so fatal.

This coming week I begin work at the Istituto
d'Arte under Andreotti. It will be a strange
experience. Will write you about it, and if Andrei
gives me some of those priceless crumbs of wisdom
he let fall to Eva, I'll pass them on to you.

He is a magnificent artist. I only wish there were
not the barrier of language between us. It is so
hard to express the subtleties in either French
or Italian! In a day or two I'm going to send
you a little booklet that has come out, on him
& his work. I'd like to know what you think of
it. Unfortunately, it doesn't include any of his
reliefs, which to my mind are among his finest
creations. Nor has it, of course, the great Resurrection

figure he's just finished. Maybe I can get a separate photograph of that. If so, will send it, too.

So I really didn't tell you where I was this summer? Let me recapitulate, so that if you have a map you can trace our route. Mother & I went from Geneva to Lyon & thence to Bourges. Then Yverdon & Blois, & side trips to one or two Chateaux. Then up to Caen for about ten days. Then Paris for a day, & on up to Brussels. Two days there, then a week in adorable Bruges, with the Belfry & wonderful churches. Then Antwerp, from which she sailed for home on August 13th. Then back to Brussels for a couple of days & to Paris again, where I met the Herveys. Then "we-all" went to Evreux, Verneuil, Dreux, and Chartres. Then I returned to Paris for a few days before coming back to Florence via Geneva where I stopped off to see my aunts - Edith, Ruth & Amy. There's the itinerary. All I accomplished in those two months was about 30 pencil drawings, mostly architectural. Doesn't sound like much, does it, yet I seemed to be working for hours every day.

Darling, I'd so love to keep right on scribbling

to you, but I just must write some other letter tonight. With all my dearests far from me, I never seem to get caught up with letters. I feel so far away, in spite of them — and farthest from you, my dearest. But it won't be so long now, will it? Even if a European dream doesn't materialize, I shall be coming home early in the summer. And who knows? if I can just land one steady job that I don't have to do in New York, maybe I can come out to Colorado and do it! What would you think of that? I shall certainly see you, anyway. And nine or ten months won't seem so long with that bright certainty ahead.

Dearie, I do hope poor Beto is all well now, her mother well, her little niece well. All O.K. She has had a hard time of it! I am so very sorry. Give her my best, please, won't you.

Now here's to the renting of your big house — the finding of a home- & -studio for you dear self. You are never long out of my mind, & never out of my heart.

Bless you, my plucky Laurie!

A heartfelt of love —

Brendie