

356 West 22 -
N. Y. C.
March 14th
1939

Laurie Darling:

Let galley proofs go hang, sez I!
I take time off from typing out captions (Plate
1, — photograph by Laura Gilpin) etc. to write
to Laurie her blessed self. And high
time, too.

Aw gee — you poor kid. You have been
having a grim time of it! It just isn't
fair, when you work so unceasingly & try
so darned hard. But thank the Lord you're
not sick. Your letters at least relieved my
anxiety on that score. Why you aren't is a
mystery to me. But it's amazing what we
can stand when we have to, isn't it? I've
been driven (& worried, too) almost beyond
endurance ~~these~~ past winter, but somehow
the old machine, though creaky, still keeps
on chugging.

Listen, old dear. About the theft of the turks,
& dogs breaking in. Isn't there some way
a break-proof fence could be installed? Or
would the cost be absolutely prohibitive?
Have you good watch-dogs of your own, at least?

I imagine you must have, but of course the range must be an extensive one. I do so wish it could be made safe. Won't you at least let me contribute this enclosed (how I wish it were more!) toward alleviating some of the farm troubles, or toward settling up those nagging debts, or toward our possible reunion next summer? Please, Laurie. I just got my first payment on the S+ Cloud relief, and am really quite flush, + don't need it.

And the news of Fran! Well-a-well-a. I do hope she is as nice as you said she sounded over the 'phone. But no matter how nice, I can see that henceforth, (+ possibly for some time past?!) your brother will not be able to help in any way towards your house or towards his father's support. Dear me - what problems.

I doubt if there'll be any chance of Shirley + G. dropping in on you, for a letter today (from Santa Barbara) tells us that Desmond has come down with mumps! He's already late for the ranch-school where he is to be deposited for the remainder of the season (in Arizona, I think), & once he's over his disaster & ~~has~~ dumped there, Shirley will have to beat it straight back to Washington, where she's long overdue. They apparently had a gorgeous

time in Hawaii, & Eliot painted til his fingers
most dropped off. Am keen to see the results.

Me, I'm in a welter of proof for the Book, just
now. Batches pouring in every day. And I
don't know what I'd do without Mr Hervey.
Bless him, who's already given days of his
time helping me with them, & insists that
he's going to see it through. We've weathered
the worst of it (Chapter V Human Anatomy), thank
goodness, and the later chapters (16 in all) won't
be so agonizing. The publishers still hope
to get the thing out in April, but if so I bet
it will be April 30th - if that.

Meantime, a plot on the part of the Library
of Congress staff. Dad's 40th anniversary, (and
presumably his actual retirement) falls on April
5th. And the staff have put their heads to-
gether & decided to honor him, not by a personal
gift, which they know would displease & embarrass
him, but by presenting to the Library a cast
of my head of him - complete with marble
pedestal! I dug the old bronze out of storage,
& just couldn't stand it. The front view was
definitely bad, as you'll remember. If only I
could have asked him to come up & sit for
me again - but this is to be a surprise, so couldn't.

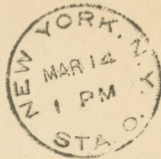
So on the surface of the bronze I've been re-modelling (in plasteline) the whole mask. Also doing the eye-balls round instead of incised. And if I do say it myself, it is now good - and good in any kind of light. But I've had to work so fast - & had so little time for it! ~~It~~ Basly made a glue mold & a plaster replica which I worked over yesterday, & now it's gone to the founder. But he'll have to rush, too, to get the thing out in time. If only people wouldn't wait until the eleventh hour to decide what they want! But, to be fair to this bunch, they didn't know, of course, that I'd have to do it all over again!

By the way, you may be interested to hear that Mrs Turner & Hermine, who had a pretty hard time here making a go of photography, are now in Florida (St. Augustine) where they've opened a bookshop which is actually flourishing. Isn't that nice?

Time's up, Laurie, I must lay my big nose on the grindstone again. And listen: I don't expect long letters from you! All I ask is an occasional postcard, just telling me you're alive. Here are one or two to start with. Try & mail me one every six weeks, or when you pay your monthly bill, or something like that. Stick 'em in your check-book so they'll remind you when the 1st o' the month

comes around!

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