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Dear Nell Dorr,

What strange things happen. I must tell you that a couple of days ago a young San Francisco photographer, Dick Stark, came into this area on a photographic assignment for a book. He looked me up and borrowed my darkroom. A splendid young man with a great love of Bach. So the evening before last, instead of darkroom work we had a festival, playing the Bach Well Tempered Clavier and the Two and Three Part Inventions and also the Goldberg Variations; taking turns at the piano.

Then, because we did not get the darkroom work done, he came yesterday again to do it and within a moment after his arrival, the postman came with the package of Bach Brandenburg Concerti from Washington, Connecticut. Although there was no card, we knew it was from you, and there was a double tie-in with photography and music. The young man was very thrilled. We brought the photograph into the darkroom and played the Bach while we processed his negatives. And then, although he knows your work well, we sat down together and went through The Bare Feet and Mother and Child, with this glorious music going on and on in the background. So, it was as though you had joined us and brought along Bach. How we cherish this marvelous gift. I did not have a complete recording of the Brandenburgs on LP and the only one I had was the older (and great) Busch-Serkin performance on 78s. It was fascinating to see how, after a period of almost thirty years, Serkin has refined and deepened his interpretation of #5. It is much freer and more exciting now.

All this is skirting the direct thank you I want to send you, because merely thank you seems too little to express the feelings of joy and gratitude this thoughtfulness on your part has brought us. You sent my very favorite of all music - a music of such health of soul and art that it was like a healing to me. These are weeks I shall probably not remember very well, weeks of great haze due to the sedation and the antibiotics, weeks of struggling not to succumb to this relentless pain. But I will always remember that marvelous moment when I opened the package yesterday, the rush of indescribable communication that came from you to me when I saw what was in the package. I am pre-medicated now because I go back for surgery tomorrow; and it is a new thing. For the first time in my life I am going through premedication to the glorious accomplishment of the Brandenburg Concerti which I play over and over again.

Our great love to you,

John