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Dear Nell,

Your letter came today right after I had mailed mine to you, so I want to acknowledge it before I get any blearier on the premedication before surgery tomorrow.

What a wonderful letter. You understand ~~some~~ so well the secret of handling pain - which is to find something to concentrate on that is more compelling than the pain. With me it is photographs, music and especially letters from friends, letters like yours this afternoon, telling me of that beautiful early autumn there in Connecticut. In the same mailing I received a request to be on a seminar in Bridgeport, Conn. (is that close to you?) for some hospital or nurses conference in 1967. I tentatively accepted, explaining that it would depend on what progress I made, but that perhaps if I could make any, enough to get sufficiently out from under the sedation, I would come even in a wheel chair. I accepted tentatively in the hope that Bridgeport might be sufficiently close to Washington for us to meet, and perhaps I can see some more of your work.

Also in the same mail I received a letter from Sign, a national Catholic Magazine asking me what three books I had most enjoyed this year. I listed The Bare Feet as one of them.

We are thinking about the arrival here of Jacques Maritain, who is coming ahead of schedule and will get here October 3rd. We are not telling anyone locally that he is coming, since he said he wants only to "cook and rest and talk." This will be his last trip to America. We were supposed to go together, with Penn Jones, to Gethsemani to have a reunion with Thomas Merton, but now it seems unlikely I can go since the foot is getting worse instead of better. This is a heartbreak if I can't because Father Abbot has given me permission to photograph this reunion of two great men. Father Abbot has a wheel chair for me, and if I can possibly manage I will go in any case.

It is a dark, cool, rainy day here, the sort I love, the sort that is kind to the eyes and makes one content to stay in. Such weather always reminds me of my school days in France before and after World War II.

When I come out of the surgery I will write you again. In the meantime, thank you again for the wonderful Bach. How wonderful to know that you love this music as I do, that you hear in it the same thing I do.

Yours devotedly,

