

John Howard Griffin

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Dearest Nell,

What wonderful things are here from you. We opened only your presents after midnight Mass, but when we finally got the family down at 3 a.m., Gregory was in bed reading and studying the baby animals and their parents, so I did not get to see it until this morning; and now, before noon, Johnny has begun the Desert book. I will read the l'Heureux book with fascination and love during this week. Diaries of this sort always fascinate me. But I think most precious of all is the lovely Magdalena Bach notebook for Susan. She was so moved, and especially at the thought that it had been your own copy. Mandy is happy again, now that she has the ball (since her other one just got worn out) and she is in bed right now with her bottle and her ball. She works it endlessly, pulling the string and then putting the ball against her ear, or against mine. We will not get to play the tape until Thursday, since Piedy will go spend a couple of days with her mother, and I want us to hear it together. Piedy, who is cleaning up the tremendous debris of Christmas morning has just come in and asked me to thank you especially for her book and for the lovely Lauren Ford book for Mandy, which is too precious right now to put into her hands, but she can handle it soon. She hardly ever tears a page at all any more and loves her books, looks at them incessantly.

All for the moment. How can we ever tell you how much we love you and how much we are grateful for these lovely remembrances.

John

I hope my book got there!

John dear your book. I am alone with it ^{for the first time} this
special day, when a blizzard rages outside -
- when Chris is in bliss ^{at} the Ski-Tow -
when the birds are feeding at my new window
feeder that ~~Chris~~ ^{he} made ^{my} for Christmas.
(I can watch them (and they me) here from
my bed - or equally well as I lie
in my bath.) I have ~~retained~~ ^{focused} To This
The world is one whirling snow world
and the birds are grateful in their way
(which puts no burden on me.)

So here I am, I could not write you before -
I could not be still enough to ~~see~~ let come
what comes of it ^{from me}. Not words. I
must not seek for words. — ~~any more~~

~~It~~ I must only listen
only listen to something that is not audible -
like love I suppose. Yes, like love exactly.
Like being alive. Being alive in the coming
one with everyone who is alive or dead -
or good or evil - alive with everyone and
with everything - every stone. every tree. every bird