

January 27, 1972

Dearest Nell,

From this hermitage, I have been thinking a great deal about you in your hermitage, especially this morning when the forest is sheathed in sleet and I have spent a lot of time putting out food for the birds and struggling with them to keep fed and warmed - quail, cardinals, blue birds, titmice, wrens and many others that I cannot name are here in front of my window, like liminous things against the monochrome of the forest and the countryside. I arrived here a week ago today and will stay until Sunday - a perfect time, with not one single interruption, no unexpected visitors (of course one of the Fathers and one of the brothers comes every day to say Mass and to bring food and water, but that is never an interruption.)

Just talked to home and all is well there. Susan got your letter, and I do thank you for writing her. It means a great deal. So with everything fine there, I am doubly happy to enjoy this great silence and solitude, though after ten days I will be eager to get back to them.

All for the moment, then, Nell. Best, best love to you,

John

Warty -

PL 03 643.4314

Studio

603 646-2798

Peter

1202 To - 3 - 7286

Scorby

-1- 426- 5137

Sore Scorby
alex

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Symando

868 7 7244