(2)

It has been a hard job Bets darling - but it seems the best way - the only way eventually - I will be grateful to have it over - but Lordy it hurts to think of.

We are in Dunedin - a sleepy, hilly Gulf Town with citrus groves and Southern accents - grits for breakfast and all the rest of it. And what moon-light - I had forgotten how white and luminous and haunting the tropic moonlight is. It does not make me homesick however. I think of my wood-fires - my kitchen, my frosty mornings - the fallen leaves - the sleeping gardens - the quiet earth - the coming snows - and I would

My darling Bets:

This is the longest night ever spent. The moon-light is so white that it is almost like day - I keep thinking it must be day time - I don't know what time it is. Mummy surely is a trump - never saw anything like it — I am pretty good too when I am with her — but oh Lordy it hurts me.

There isn't much to say except I wanted to write you just to comfort myself - to feel your young strong heart — so understanding and so helpful when I need it. I don't think any mother was ever blessed more than I am — with my girls — so blessed — so blessed —

3. not change ever for this. It is so soft - I feel smothered by it - or do it my own self that feels that way - I don't know. I feel so alone. Thats why it is a comfort to write - weakly - letting you know my fears.

I wished so often in this last week that I could talk to Mayo. What a comfort he is. Yet I know he could not advise long distance and that it was useless to ask. The Doctor is very fine - is head of the eye, ear, & throat at the Government Hospital besides - and mother loves and trusts him implicitly. She has had plenty of Doctors - they all told her the same - that there was no cure and that eventually this would come. So it is nothing new that he says. The tension is 80-20 - which is too much to be safe - and she lives in constant pain and fear from the thing. He assures me she will be like another person once it is out & and she is adjusted to the new one. We went to see a man he operated on 3 weeks ago for the same thing and he was jubilant that gave me heart - he really is free and his other eye improved - oh I pray it is true

drops she keeps putting in -

This is a very nice Hospital - about 20 Rooms - quiet - old fashioned grounds - but a modern clean hospital - nice nurses too - much more efficient - seeming - than the one in Venice - altho' not so much like the Miami Biltmore. Well I guess I'll leave this now until it is over - then finish and send to you - you are a great joy to me Bet darling - never forget that.

Well, Beto darling - morning is really coming - the nurse came in to give Mother the first drops - she joked and fiddled like the good sport she is - never a whimper from her - she is wonderful.

I just talked with the Doctor - he certainly gets here early - has a cataract operation before mothers - more waiting - it seems an eternity.

Mother is sleeping now - I think the eye is pretty well anesthesized by the

(3)

Wee I am no good until it is over - it is a comfort to be writing - better than thinking. She is in the operating room now - and in God's hands - I can do nothing. It is awful to wonder if you have done the right thing. All I can say is that it seemed not only right but the only thing we could do —

It is such an ugly thing to even think about - I just can't quite face it.

Later

Well it is over - she is back - sleeping - and all is well - accidentally a very good thing we did it when we did - from the looks of things now - it might have been a bad mess — well, I can breathe again perhaps sleep even — I have missed you Betsy dear, you keep up my morale when it bends or breaks or gets bogged down. Give my love to Nannie Lee her heart - I feel her love too - and to Mary Ellis she is such a strong right arm and I am so everlastingly grateful to her - but most - this is just for you - my own Betsy darling

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