

and now, in this very moment of understanding, we must pack up our memories and leave. It seems so much like eating without having dessert - And yet, deep down, we are anxious to find ourselves again. Being in another language and "giving in" to a new and foreign way of life separates one from oneself in an inexplicable way. First one can say no more than "How is the weather?" and then little by little one expresses ideas, picking up the sleeping depths of one's personality until most of the pieces are in place. But as they fit together into a "Spanish" personality, one must toss them up and then move again. Someone wrote, and I can't recall just who, that with another language one acquires a new soul. Perhaps this has some truth. For me, it has taken very long to find just who I am in Spanish. (as I write this I realize why Mitchell has decided not to go on in a vague desire to enter the foreign service .. 2 years in a country and the 2 years in another ..)

And I remember, dear Nell, writing you in September that of all the castles and corners of the world, our favorite

May 5, 1960

Our dear Nell,

Every since we returned from our spring holiday in the Greek Isles I have been writing a letter to you - in my mind, and wondering how the time can go by so quickly. Our journey was like an island in time. We left Madrid on April 1st for Athens by plane and then all too briskly sailed the Aegean, fascinated and awestruck by the simplicity and beauty of the ancient cultures and resting in the natural magnificence of the settings of Roman and Greek temples and cities. The sea looked at times so much like a Japanese print, all glassy and deep blue and green with curling caps on the waves. In the Parthenon I felt as if I had arrived at the most sacred Temple of them all because I think it shall continue forever to symbolize a moment of perfection and of good taste for all men. We landed - as if dropped from the heavenly courts where we had met all the ancient masters in their temples - back in Madrid

3. can write you in a certain peace and say as I have wanted so much to say, that I have begun! I know now more than ever before that I want to be a photographer. By saying this to you I feel so much better. All winter I felt as though I had let you down and now I shall be able to bring my small offering to you which cannot say all I feel about Spain or Madrid but which will be a beginning. It is a joy to want to please someone. We are as one before you in this desire.

It is as you have so often said - that one must work and live and be with the subject of ones pictures and patient - patient. Nothing comes quickly that is from inside and that touches the heart. Our Spanish year has been both good and difficult for in it all has been fresh to the eye and to the ear. Even learning to talk and listen took so much time. And new friends and new places and curious customs - we find ourselves just now, in the shadow of the sweet blossoming spring, beginning to know the Spain <sup>of which</sup> we are a living part.

2. on the 18th of April. I am just beginning to sort the visions from the actual things we did and saw. We have had our cup filled to overflowing this long and wonderful year. I shall never cease to believe that our good fortune follows and stays by us because we were blessed by you in the beauty of the valley, and that above all of our memories of this year, Buen Retiro in early June will be our dearest .. always.

Your letter, so you and so true, arrived today and it was as though sun shined in our window .. as though you were here. I can't tell you (and anyway you know) how much your thoughts and words mean. More than any others. And I must say openly that I feel contrite that I have been so silent for so long. Perhaps I have felt you watching me during the late winter as I sat feeling unhappy because I had not taken pictures as I had hoped. But now, the perfect moment, after two weeks using the camera and waiting quietly for pictures and then at last in a wave of tremendous relief showing Mitchell the first satisfying ones - I

we that we have bought a wonderful antique table, worn and slightly bent by centuries of use but richly, deeply polished by age. We know you will like it.

There are many things we shall come home laden with - some of them in trunks and most of them in our hearts. On top and most joyful is the desire to see you.

I shall write soon again, and then sooner.

With love and great  
devotion -

Margaretta

5. is our heart's home in the valley. I see it in the late afternoon sun, the breeze softly cooling the air and the smell of the day's bread fresh from the oven. And we are there. It is as tho' it were yesterday. Or shall be tomorrow the same, and better with the adding of more memories.

We too want so much to add another memory in the time we have during the summer. How much we want to see you! We shall push and pull our plans to fit yours, trying to know soon what we shall be doing when we return. In July at the very end of the month we shall arrive by ship in New York and we shall have to drive west to California in early September. This is just the wrong set of plans to fit with yours but we too know that we can fix it because we want so much to see you.

What a lovely article about your show in Boston! How we would have loved to be there, proud as all of your children are of you. I received a note from John Brook, the young photographer in Boston, to whom I introduced your work last year.

7. for an exam next week. This month, our glorious May so arrayed in Spring's soft greenery is weighted heavily with exams. And only a month left of our year here. It seems so little and it has gone by so rapidly. We shall take advantage of the last month until July 19th to journey along the Mediterranean and through some of Italy, sailing on that date from Naples. How fortunate we are.

In looking backwards on our most wonderful and adventuresome year, I find that the best of it has been in sharing it; the friends, the tiny forgotten villages and the kind old monasteries, and reading and studying together. Being away from the pattern of "young American married life" (or at least looking at life in America from here, which seems to fall into a pattern) has been splendid and strangely peaceful. I shall welcome with open arms our own home, our own corner. It looks and feels like the Buen Retiro in my mind's eye! So eager for a home are

6. He wrote of your meeting with great admiration and a great measure of respect. I recall entering his home for the first time and exclaiming that I saw in his photographs at first glance a kinship with yours, in that he too finds beauty and fine dignity in life around him. In turning the pages of "Mother and Child" he reflected quietly that "here was more than photography" and with much more quiet praise he paused at every page. So content was he with the book that I gladly left ~~him~~ with ~~it~~ him.

"Mother and Child" is a part of my quiet moments here as it is my thoughts home at rest. I go there often.

Someday I shall ask if I may join Christopher in the Dark Room with you. That shall be a day when you wish it and only if you do. There is no other teacher I shall ever claim and we both know I refer to more than pictures.

Mitchell sits across our old make-shift table-desk, tapping away on his type-writer to you. He has just happily put aside his ponderous pile of literature which he is studying