

March 26, 1961

Our dear Hen,

Tucked away carefully and lovingly is a pile of books, all "mother and child". As you know I discovered it "out of print" at Harper's - and have been corresponding with Claribel Goodwin ever since then - Such gluttons we are to want this precious reserve of your book, but it is a warm feeling to have them and share them with those whom ~~when~~ we know care. I was tempted to write directly to you but decided that in these decisive months working on Bare Feet must not be interrupted until I had tried every alternative.

Such days I have now falling sweetly in my hands - so full, so flowing toward the goal. The whole world widens with me and with added space breathes freer and deeper than before. I passed through days when I couldn't accept solitude and seemed more to be a child than with child. Now I am at peace and the fullness within the swell of my body reflects a happy fullness in spirit. Not even music is necessary during quiet hours for I sing my own melodies.

What peace emanates from this child I hear! Each throbb of life draws me closer to Calm. It is a gentle ripple, a touch, a gurgle, and never a jarring kick — as I imagined the feeling to be.

Did I tell you that three of the precious pictures of us last summer, ^{one from our} first days of marriage are framed and greet us on the wall of our tiny upstairs bedroom. It is a sweet sanctuary of the happiest of memories. Those few hours are now in every hour, giving new beauty to the present. Soon I shall find another excuse to frame some more. Then the walls shall be covered with windows of our happy Valley Serena.

We are so happy - happy - happy - so inadequate is the word to say what it means. We are learning that the way of life we live and seek together is more beautiful and demanding in its beauty than the worlds of our friends here. It isn't another world that we have; it is a more simple, free and thoughtful one, without pretense and growing constantly.

3. What freedom there is ⁱⁿ ~~to~~ being aware
of the difference of worlds. this difference is
what you have given us, Nell, a sweet offshoot
of our blessed friendship. In this world
you have shown us the ugliness of artifice
in word + picture, in people, by being the
very opposite. You have given us courage.
For me, as woman, I owe my whole self to
you, Nell; that is the strongest phrase
I can find to express my feelings.

As my time draws closer to have a
child in my arms, I pray that this new "self"
takes on the great simplicity and wisdom
which you have so freely given me.

We send our warmest, roundest,
simplest thoughts in Love,
Margaretta