

4. The little one a little longer. She is the dearest little baby I've ever seen - and the best.

I had a long letter from Arthur yesterday and was much gratified - it is really better than I had dared to hope - so much to talk over however before they take over.

But with that off my hands, with Bessy & baby well - with West Branch rented for summer - 1040 settled - Sweet House - well, John dearest, I shall be so light I shall be giddy! You'll have to watch your wife - she'll float off on the first cloud.

Keep well John darling - that is our first must. I am so proud of you. the way you have picked you cold - also so grateful to know dear Kay & Hunter are there with you. Give them my love. I shall soon be back among you - God bless you my John -

Ever thine
M.

Dearest one.

This winter is one of excesses. Texas has declared a state of emergency. The schools are closed - even the stores in Wapakachis, with the exception of drug stores, are closed. The gas, which is the chief source of heat for all homes, is almost off - and will be entirely so by morning - the temperature is 8° above zero with a thick, white wind - it is cold! It couldn't be any colder on Beech Hill, because there would be at least the great open fires. We are fortunate however for we do have one open fireplace where we burn logs - also three electric stoves which heat baby's room & bath. It's such a strange feeling to look out into such an icy world - streets almost a solid glass ice, everything ice -

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electric blankets and their bath-room is heated with an electric stove. I sleep on the couch in the living room - near the open fire. Mary, the colored maid, is not able to come of course - so I am head of staff. Dear Mayo comes in every few hours and takes care of the fire ect. He is so good and such a sense of humor in just the right places - an utter darling - and dear to me.

I have not said so - for it makes a shadow over everything - but I shall see if I can get accommodation home for next Thursday. By that time I am sure things will be well in hand and I would be staying only for the joy of seeing

2.

and then to hear the cardinals and mocking birds and even robins chirping so happily just outside the bed room window where we feed them every day. We put out sun flower seed and wild bird seed - also dust and have sometimes fifty birds feed at a time, yesterday a whole flock of birds which we couldn't identify came and feed. They looked more like the purple finch than any other bird. Mayo said he had never seen them before. It makes for a constantly changing and fascinating show to watch, with Barbey sitting nursing her baby before the fire. At last I do feel the tension less and that we have things under control - even with the gas cut off. Barbey, Mayo and Robbie all have