

Thursday - PM 26

The Red House -
Contoocook - New Hampshire

My dear John -

Here am I, in a "snowed-in" world with white mountain caps shining in the sun. The big snowplow has just gone through, so that means the road out to the world is open once more. It has been snowing for two days and nights - it began the very day I arrived! The shining Buick is all safely reposing in the Buick garage in Concord so I have no fear of getting out - Tom's station wagon, with its chains always on, is accustomed to the roads. As for me I am content to stay for a few days and feel the snow-bound quiet - to feed the nut-hatches and blue jays at the window, to bake some more Christmas cookies - to nurse a new baby by the fire. The house

2. Stiff has far to go to be finished but
Tom keeps it as warm as toast. They
have "the Ashley" - and a large "Black
Maria" in the great kitchen - which
is all plastered and has double windows
and wainscoting. It has a feeling
that only an old horse can give -
and is fulfilling all the hopes - and
love - and work - and
money that it has cost to make it live
again. Their nice young neighbor's wife is
in the Hospital so Tasha has her two little
girls here also - one of eight - one
of twelve - so you see "we are seven" -
a house full (not counting cats and a
dog). It is primitive in the nice healthy
way I love - even the freezing sanitary
department - The casualness in some ways
but the popping corn and stringing it around
the evening fire. Shilb I read Tanglewood Tales aloud.

3.

Then into the high curtained bed, with a lamp beside me — the stars out of my window. The silence of the house and the world. The first night was a total eclipse of the moon — a miracle to watch. In it all — I feel ~~very~~ you very close, you have a part of the protecting arms — far more protecting and open than the masculine arms of the house — altho' for Sasha hers are right. If I compare others with you they seem very small and uninteresting — they cannot even command my respect as I respect your mind — let alone my heart as it loves. When you are the measure how could a young Tom hope to measure up. However I am content to have it so. I go into my own Heaven — and dream of your new home — with the West Branch dancing always before our eyes — singing in our ears — and the Beautiful Field lying quietly between us and the world.

The trip up was without incident but long — I stopped the night at Win's and asked to do something that I could not do. So we must have trust and pray it will work out.

No need for your heart to ache so I shall
 not send you the details which twist a
 mother's heart - yet will pass I'm sure. We
 left the next afternoon for Bet's, which is
 a lovely drive up along the frozen Merrimack,
 with the snow-covered farms - the smell of
 wood-smoke in the air - the Curriers. The
 winter scene unrolling before your eyes.
 Yes, I do love it. Then to feel that extra ^{knowing} glow,
 that I have children and grandchildren,
 God-children ^{here} - and a home - ~~here~~. It makes
 one more than an "outside".

Bet's home was a little Heaven
 to come in to - a pink and white little
 laughing girl chieft on the floor on a
 blanket in front of the fire - a cup
 of tea and fresh scones and honey - with
 Christmas branches and the smell of Christmas
 in the house. I could have cried for joy (I think
 I did). What is the exquisiteness of a girl baby?
 So flower-like - and inexplicable. She is a
 beauty - little Cathy! I spent the night and

5. revelled in the joy of it - even though I did have to sleep in a Hotel room finally - I had the whole next day there, while Bert went to Concord to do some shopping - and did we have a lovely day, ^{just} ~~not~~ Two!

I left there around four - with a real winter sun low in the sky and traveled the familiar road to Hopkinton, then the little road, over the covered bridges, the rivers - past the woods and farms until at last, Here I am!

The new Little Jon Kitten is sweet to hold and there is the same "out of this world" quality here as always - yet even more primitive than ever. Before they had the lovely old furniture of Rosamonds to add a kind of beauty over the primitiveness - sometimes here it is quite bare and stark and almost shockingly crude - yet then is quickly covered with the spirit - the dream - the fact.

I have had no news from you of course since I left home - but once they start I should hear from you here regularly.

6. This may reach you about Christmas Day. It does not seem like Christmas without you - I shall be longing for your shoulder on that Holy Eve. It is the night of home fires and sacred light o'ers all the oceans, forgetting everything except the shine of the candles and the warmth of love. Where will you be I wonder - with Peggy or Gertrude?

Wherever you are your heart will turn toward me for I feel the pull on mine - it is too strong to be otherwise. For a little while we will be separated - but only a little while more - and oh, the joy of reunion!

Do your job well, so that you can rest in that thought - don't begrudge it or hate it - but love it, for in loving it is the answer to its many problems.

God love you my dearest one and bring you back to my arms - make his Love to shine upon you this Christmas wherever you are - my heart will not be far from yours - Ever, A.