

Dearest ma,

Well, I think I've neglected you long enough and so I will try to entertain you with a nice letter.

I wrote Stu and told him to buy my tickets to come home on Thanksgiving, but I haven't heard from him yet and it's beginning to worry me because that mail system at Zulane is terrible and he might not have received my letter, so I guess I'll write him again.

The weather is getting colder and colder up here — that same kind of lamed cold that New Orleans has it chills to the bone. But I know with each passing day that I'll be home that much sooner. Bay! I can't wait. Philadelphia is a big city and one that I don't think I'll ever get used to. I put up with it but that's about all I can say. Fort Worth is my town and will always remain so though. Natchez and N.O. rank pretty close.

Work at the academy is getting duller and duller — the same old grind every day. At home I've been trying to paint canvases of my own, but as I have no models to pose, they're pretty bad. I can't wait until I get good enough to paint entirely from memory but I'm afraid that's a long way off. The still lifes we have at school are terrible. So I don't paint them. I find junk around here at home to paint that doesn't look so "set up" — the effects are much better I think. Bed enough of shop talk.

A couple of days ago I took a ride on the subway and I was literally taking my life in my own hands. The train stops at a stop for about six seconds, people rush on and off in the greatest of confusion, it's amazing they don't all get killed — but then I guess they're used to it up here. Any way I don't care if I have to walk twenty miles I ain't never gettin' on

one of them things again!

That you'd be surprised at how much reading I have done! I've been reading Shakespeare's plays and books on art prodigious! also poetry. My idle hours have borne some fruit - that is I've written quite a bit of poetry. I've rather withdrawn from society because of all the frauds that are in it. So I spend my time in higher realms of enjoyment - poetry and painting. Incidentally I've done some abstracts for my own pleasure. It's good everyone in a while to let your fancy play freely. It's good therapy after you've drawn so much realism as I have. I would like to be able to enjoy music but that must wait till I get home, although it's killing me slowly. (That's why I read so much. It's a substitute.)

Mr Blackburn, our painting instructor is by far one of the finest persons I've ever met. I've never seen a teacher so devoted to his work. He shares every little technique he knows and I've learned a great deal about painting from him - especially Rembrandt's technique. Today he is taking our whole class to the museum to look at paintings. There he is going to tell us how each one was painted - everything. Not many painters would do that, you know, because they don't want to give away trade secrets. But Mr Blackburn is a quaker and a very honest and good person and what's more he wants to teach. I hope to bring home some stuff for you to see what I'm doing. I can't wait to paint any. Why I never did I don't know.

Mr Blackburn teaches and paints out at Jaws every summer and he said that if we (the Texas boys and I)