

Thursday

November 1964

Dear Stu,

I'm sorry I haven't written you before now but I've been working so hard that I'm usually too tired to write but tonight I make an exception.

By now Ma has probably talked to you and told you the good news.

Like you wanted me to, I went to the doctor and sure enough I have a hernia. Dr. Swell said that it wasn't serious and that I can postpone the operation indefinitely so long as I take care of myself.

He told me the Army wouldn't take me with it and he's taking care of all that red tape. So I'm free at last and can begin to plan a real future. And that future looks pretty good. N.D. Ma and I went to the opening of Mr. Vogel's ~~to~~ show and it was a real success. Stu, if you get the chance, go over there ~~for the~~ while you're home for Thanksgiving and see my things. I've never seen paintings more beautifully lighted or arranged, not only mine but the whole show. They (mine) looked first rate and everyone else there thought so too. They hardly looked at any of the other work.

Not only that but I sold the church and Mr. Vogel has taken down payment options on the bird cage and the apples. He said "People are crawling the walls for your work" and indeed it was true. I told him to sell the paintings for ~~the~~ cash — that if so many people wanted them, to sell to the ones who would pay the whole price.

I had to talk to all sorts of people - all of whom were very sincere in their praise. Mr. Vogel treated me like I was visiting royalty and later on that night told me that I could do more for him than he could for me, so I have very little doubt that he's going to treat me all right.

Then he called me that morning and told me that the Dallas museum offered me 5000⁰⁰ for Eddie. I knocked me off my feet. Of course I refused. That picture is going to a very special person who really deserves it and to a place where it will always receive the best of care and attention, and it makes me feel good to know it is the best present I can give anyone.

But Stu you and I know what the real Eddie is like and what Clemmy is like and I ain't got 'em yet. They're waiting though and now that I have real freedom I'm going to take advantage of those great subjects. Never put too much stock in something you've done before because it can always be improved upon. Clemmy would be great for the show. Don't you think?

Right now I'm working on a still life of my violin on one of Mrs. M's old chairs with a needle point cushion ~~on~~ on it. The drawing is good on it but today I got off to a bad start with the painting. Things were looking up when I quit this evening and I hope that tomorrow I'll be on the right track. If all goes well it could be a real beauty. Also I want to start on Mrs. McCord's portrait. I want to wait until the violin thing is going alright first though.

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I'm going to play up the "Birthday" theme that her portrait originally was going to depict. I hope I'll have enough time to do it ~~the~~ before Christmas.

So Stuey things look pretty good right now and I think they'll be even better before the year is out. I haven't much news to tell you other than the show and hernia etc. So I'll sign off now. Please write soon and if you get time do go over to Valley House it is well worth seeing how beautifully done an exhibition can be.

Scott