

October 13

Dear Jochen,

I have been sitting here for a long time trying to sort and arrange the characters and events of this evening's meeting of the parents & teachers of class XII. Miss Vaillant wore a black scarf and a rose that began to droop as Mr. Storges plodded through the details of Glee Club programs, the impossibility of getting rights to "The Three-Penny Opera", and the wonderful excitement of teaching this marvelous class. Mrs. McCann talked about the question of just how much you could "cram into" the students in one year and described "The Scarlet Letter", assigned as collateral reading in history, as an attack on Puritanism. You might as well discuss Hamlet's Oedipus complex. I did not talk well, but I was not foolish and I mentioned a few of the things about which I really care with that groping fervor that always finds a response in ^{some} the children and parents. ~~It~~

I do not think the Berrages understood me. They are too full of their own troubles. Mrs. Berrage has recently discovered from Pat Graham who I am. I admitted being Alex's sister but put the fact aside pleasantly as an interesting coincidence but not particularly relevant to Wannie's life in the school or ^{her} relationship to me. Mrs. Berrage seemed relieved.

A clever little Jewish lawyer talked to me about his daughter's "introvertedness" her wish to avoid a "corny" style and her resulting interesting but "off-beat" phrases.

But it is too late to wander through the evening in this style. I am working hard, only occasionally sinking into those trances in which I hunt for a composition topic, but never find it, and waste a whole evening trying to correct one paper. Every day I look at your ~~framing~~ photograph and try to plan my work systematically, and I succeed fairly well. I miss you and need you, but I am grateful that you can be with your parents when they need you. ~~It~~

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Tomorrow I will send your suit to Philadelphia and telephone Dr. Dunphy's secretary. Sunday or Monday night I will call Mother & Papa. Perhaps you will be there too. My weekend will be spent correcting the XI's medieval history topics, reading Chaucer, and studying Roman history. I am also thinking about some geography exercises which may be just silly, but I will have to find out by myself since you are not here to advise me. What a good thing it is to have so much work and to find it so hard.

Dene,

Margaret

You should see Mr. Messinger trying to teach me how to work the storm windows. He finally gave up and called the company for instructions.