

14 November

[1953]

Dearest Forrest,

Yes, what a worrywart I am (and I know the Williams' cartoons), but after all, I don't get married often and lack experience at it, so I have to get things settled in my mind. Besides, I don't even mind being a worrywart as long as you can settle my worries so easily. There -- doesn't that give you a masterful feeling?

I was stunned to hear of Mary Frances' break-down. I hope she gets over it soon. Be sure to let me know when you hear more news of her. The last time I saw her, at Tommy's graduation, I noticed she looked rather thin and too white, and wondered if she weren't working too hard, but of course never dreamed she'd get so ill. In college she always seemed to me to be a rather intense person, underneath her controlled and somewhat distant (at first) manner. Am I right? Anyway, I liked her so very much and I hate to hear such bad news about her. One of the many (many, many) good points about marrying you, my sweet, was that I'd have Mary Frances for a sister-in-law -- just in case you get arrogant and think it was all your fascinating personality and beautiful brown eyes that swept me off my feet.

What with signs everywhere admonishing me to get overseas mail off by Nov. 15, I mailed your Christmas present Thursday, but I had never a thought about any duty you might have to pay. You won't, will you, on anything that's wrapped as a Christmas gift? And you're not to open it till Christmas, you hear! Not that it's anything to make your heart sing for joy, for I had no idea what you'd most like to have, and flew blind, so to speak. You are a darling to think of getting me a Swiss watch, but of course you mustn't send it or anything that would best you out of customs duty on it. I have a serviceable Elgin that I got at a pawn shop. It's very accurate for a woman's watch, but not the most decorative thing in the world, though it's not bad looking. I'll love anything you give me because it'll be from you. If you see a good Rouault book, with good color reproductions of his paintings (I like them better than his lithographs), I'd love that. If you get a reproduction suitable for framing, get something you like too, so we could use it in our apartment. As for china you see there, if you think it's really beautiful, if they'll pack it for you, and if it's not too expensive, I think it might be a good idea to get some. The best china in stores here is imported, but it's fearfully expensive.

Your two cards, from Coburg and Wuerzburg, came during the week, and I enjoyed them as well as the clippings and your letter. I kind of like your sassy letters better than any kind you write, even the interesting ones telling about some place you've been. When you're writing about what you've seen, I wish I could be seeing it too, but when you dash off a real pert and sassy note, like your last one, I always wish harder you were here right then -- that kind of letter is more personal, I guess.

If you come back by ship, buy in a good supply of dramamine (I've no idea how it's spelled.) I think it really prevents seasickness.

Honey, if you ever think I'm inclined to forget I'm a middle-aged woman, you should see me now. What's happened? Nothing, except the week has been the kind I refused to love, several years ago -- going some place every night, and I'm bushed as a result. Nothing exciting, just movies, a concert, an open house at school, Great Books club, etc., but it all added up to late hours and I can't take it when I'm working any more. People have been inviting me out because Mrs. Cox is still away, and I've spent a night or two away from home, which is worse. Anyway, I'm going to bed right now. Lots and lots of love,

Christine