

Lambert Island
Thursday night, September 10, 1925

Harry, dear,

My s'prise letter didn't come off very well. I had the letter all ready yesterday and Mr. George was here but he got away without my knowing it and I was so disappointed. I got it off today. That is, I sent it by Mr. George to Wilf who is going to town tomorrow but probably not in time for the train so the letter won't get off until Saturday, after all. Well, well, that's the way many of my good intentions turn out. I shall give this to Wilf when he brings the mail out tomorrow night. I don't know for sure that he will go in on Saturday. The season is really over, you know, and almost everybody is gone. The McKenzies went Monday and the Williams today. All the neighbors are gone, in fact.

Orv seems a good deal better today, growing better all day. Tonight he walked out to his room comfortably, though slowly. My carrying that stove out to his room did the business! He began to get better right away, though the stove had nothing to do with it. It has been almost hot today. I have never known it to be so warm in September—really fortunate for us. Orv will get well faster if it is not cold. If he continues to improve we'll be going home the last of next week or the beginning of the week after. Getting to Toronto isn't so simple after the "Flyer" quits running. It is running later this year, until next Monday. The Midland is still running but is almost empty every day. I do not see how it can afford to keep going. After the Flyer is off, the trains change time. The train comes from Toronto about half past twelve and goes back at three. Then it does not go through. We have to change at Allendale and get on a train that is always crowded. So we get into Toronto at eight or nine instead of five, as you did.

I was reading over that editorial on Babe Ruth again and decided that it must have been yours. I got the idea yours hadn't been published yet when you wrote. Well, it was awfully good anyway, "sensible"!—and interesting. I am so swamped with papers that accumulated while we were gone that I don't know what to do. I found Langdon Land's article on the Terrapin Derby and told the Williams I would send it to them. I also told them about the article on badminton but I haven't seen it yet. I suppose it will be in last Sunday's paper which I hope to get tomorrow. I didn't care to get the mail tomorrow. I'd rather wait till Saturday, to be sure of getting your letter but it was not sure any one would go in on Saturday.

Yes, dear, I do think you are of a very religious nature. You come by that honestly, don't you? It has seemed to me, probably I'm wrong, that you had gone off on a tangent, somewhat, but I don't know. I don't pretend to know anything!! I don't care for some of the things that infuriate you so much more than you do but I don't like your alternatives much better. Well, that will always be something to scrap about when all other subjects fail us!

I have been reading over all your letters that have come up here this summer and I am beginning to feel acquainted with your circle of friends. But I can't remember who Mr.

Nicolet is though I have heard you speak of him many times, and Mrs. Nicolet, too. The next letter will tell me about Henry's visit and Evalina's and what happened about Miss Farmer's refusal to come to dinner with Mrs. Lincoln. Oh, that is funny, dear. I'll bet dollars to doughnuts Mrs. Lincoln is hoping there was something "serious" in your visit to me. In fact, I'll venture to say everybody is hoping that a certain other person—not named—will get left! Everybody but the Fricks. Now I'm getting bolder than I was last Spring. Just who were all those friends of Miss Farmer's who told about her turning down all those desirable men? That isn't exactly the idea I've got. Ha! Ha! You see how bold I am now. I was much more timid and circumspect last Spring. The truth is I was scared to death for fear my suggestion of certain intentions might either offend you or else drive you into the very thing I was wishing I could prevent. It happens that way sometimes, you know, and I was awfully uneasy.

Unless Mrs. Hemingway is an awful fool, I think it is really too bad that there should be such gossip about her. Do you suppose she knows it? If she does and lets it go on, one needn't be concerned about her, of course. Certainly she laid herself open to some talk, I'd say, but, well, I feel sorry for her. I really do. You see, dear, it must mean a poverty-stricken life, to want to marry anyone who doesn't love you as—well, as you love me. I didn't want to be married. I didn't dear. I have to because I love you so much and you love me so much! And, in her case, she hasn't anything to go on. But maybe she does think an awful lot of you, even without much association. People do that sometimes. That is certainly the kindest way to look at it.

I wrote Doctor Dick a short letter today and asked him what this was about his threatening not to write to me until he got back from Nebraska. I said, "All right, don't, and you won't get to hear a word about our trip to Marshall Lake or any of the other dozen things that are popping around in my head." Or words to that effect. I didn't know about his Nebraska trip but I suppose it is a shooting trip. I really haven't written to him at all this summer. He has some ground for a grouch.

Now it's half past ten and I should be going to bed. These are busy days for me with everything to do. I can't write in the daytime so I'll close this up tonight and have it ready to send whenever Wilf comes tomorrow. It may be late tomorrow evening.

But I'm not going to bed without telling you Goodnight. No one can interfere with that, dear. This room seems full of you and if you were only in that chair, "in the flesh," I know what would happen. I would sit in the chair with you and love you and love you and see you shake your head at me when words failed you. And when I couldn't get out a word, I'd scrunch up my shoulders and get as close to you as I could. I would, dear, and I'd be so happy. I would be very silly for I want you very much. I'd get you to tell me again how much you love me, dear. We have to be a little silly, don't we dear, and it isn't so silly, anyway, because there is so much more than that between us, so much of an accumulation of all the best things a dear friendship has brought to us and so much of the love which is partly new and partly old, perhaps. I have been wondering what I did feel about you in the old days at Oberlin. I just don't know. I can't remember when I first learned you were engaged. I must have been told that in your Senior year, by Mattie

Miller, I think. I'm not sure. It is hazy now. But I'm sure I never had the least idea you were ever one bit interested in me, especially, and I was as free as could be from any such feeling about you, all these years. My interest in you grew and my feeling for you grew more and more sympathetic when I saw how devoted you were to Isabel and how you were both making such a brave fight. Now, dear, I hope you won't be "in the shadow" any more. You have always seemed happy to me, except for the illness and the strain of that. You laugh so easily and so naturally now and I hope you will be happy and full of peace and quiet joy that nothing can disturb. Let's be happy with each other, dear, and keep each other in every dear little way we can think of. Oh, my Harry! I want to be so much to you to make up for all the time that is gone, for all you have suffered that I couldn't help, for everything that has troubled you since you were a child. We'll finish up life with as near a perfect love as we can make it, won't we, dear? And we'll be so gentle with each other and so tender and loving. We have nothing behind us to be sorry for and such a chance for the future—all so full of promise because we understand so much more than most people can when they are married and we both realize the possibilities and want to do so much for each other. Maybe we are just a little gladder than people usually are to get together at least. The "home-coming" is such a dear thought and it is just the right word. I love you and trust you completely, dear. I always have trusted you completely, ever since I first knew you. But now I know on what I am placing my trust. Every thought of you is so sweet and so full of comfort and happiness. We are so happy, aren't we, dear and you love me just as I want to be loved. Goodnight, and the sweetest, longest kiss.

Your

Katharine

Lambert Island
Saturday evening, Sept. 12, 1925

I didn't write a line yesterday, dearest, and here it is almost eleven o'clock before I get at it tonight. I was feeling a little "off"—not sick, exactly, but a good deal as I did when I ate too many sardines. Tonight I thought I must write a letter to Mrs. McCormick. I ought to write to Mrs. Deeds but I haven't done it.

Orv is better and we can go home about when we planned, probably get home on Tuesday or Wednesday of week after next. Orv dreads going home and getting into the things that worry him. Tonight, I began thinking of that Ames and Taylor business and almost wished I could stay out of the world. I haven't thought of that thing but once or twice when you were here and tonight. It seems so useless to be fighting forever—but, of course, I'll fight, as long as I have a breath in my body! This is Saturday night and I suppose you have been to the office. It is ten by your time now and maybe you are home. This week-end won't be so busy as the last one, will it, and I certainly hope it won't be so hot. What a blast of heat the whole country has been having! Carrie and Anne McCormick write that it has been scorching at home and that everything is burned brown.

I am glad you had Henry home and that Evalina's visit was pleasant. I am sure I shall like her from all you have told me about her. What a week you had, with Martha Stout's wedding, your party on Thursday night, your dinner, with the new cook, on Saturday and Henry's visit on Sunday.

You see, dear, you didn't know, probably, what "the neighbors were saying." I remember your telling me there hadn't been any talk about Miss Farmer as there had been in some other cases. I wondered about it, at the time. I thought it was queer. But Mrs. Lincoln was just not quite so open about what she thought as I was. She said what she thought to some one else, it seems, whereas I said what I thought to you. Oh, Harry, dear! "Every woman" thinks just what I do about it.

But it certainly took some courage for me to do the saying. We've all seen that thing happen over and over again and it makes us all boil. You were so dear to me about it. You might easily have been offended and I couldn't have blamed you. It was Doctor Dick's visit that somehow brought the thing to a head with me. I hadn't intended to say a word, though I was so uneasy and unhappy about what I had been fearing. Just then I had a couple of letters from you from the East, in which you spoke of being so alone and lonely. I think Doctor Dick thought it was all settled between you and Miss Farmer or was likely to be soon. He didn't say so but he must have been a little upset to say what he did about not seeing why you didn't "camp on the trail"—meaning plainly enough my trail! I had been doing some thinking ever since your Christmas letter. I was thinking the other day about something I had somehow lost sight of. I remember now that I recalled your asking me if I could live twenty years more and I said "Yes, if I had a chance" and you said you didn't know about it for yourself. Well, when I was writing you those letters in May, I thought about that and it reassured me some. I felt sure if you were caring a great deal for some one you would be sure you wanted to live twenty years and more. But I did think you were considering the whole thing and I was so afraid of your loneliness. Well, I gave you a good deal of advice, didn't I? I'm getting cold and I must go to bed. It's nearly midnight. It has been raining for two days and everything is damp and chilly though it isn't really very cold. I'd like to get warm by sitting in the big chair with your arms around me. I do love you so, dear, so much more all the time. Oh, dear, dear Harry, you don't know what a time I had and what a time I still have thinking of Orv. But I love you now so surely and so irrevocably. Goodnight, dear, and God bless you.

Sunday night. I have turned out six letters and now I have earned the privilege of writing a little to you. It always does seem to bring you near when I am writing just as you say about me when you write. I am tired, though, dear. I have neglected letters shamefully this summer except to you. I had never written a word to George Jones. Annette Canby was evidently accepted. I don't quite see how George reconciled his conscience to that! I was thinking last night, when I was awake a long time, about how really good-for-nothing I am nowadays. I am well but I have no strength. I get tired so easily. I couldn't have gone through what you went through last week without being a wreck. I'm afraid you'll be disgusted with me, dear, when you see how little it takes to finish me up. I look as if I ought to have more stamina. Orv is much better and gets around almost as usual.

No one can imagine how desperate I felt when I saw him not able to walk when he got out of the canoe at the railroad. Who will take care of little brother if I don't? You see, dear, I'm a little "down" tonight, mostly because I've written so much I'm tired. I have been feeling very well today. But I am so worried about leaving Orv. Don't let me make you unhappy, dear. It is a great relief to tell you once in a while. You are so good to me about it. Nothing is different but when I see him so helpless and he looks at me so appealingly it breaks my heart. But we love each other, dear, so much. You and I. There must be some way out. I wish you could tell me now how much you love me. I want you with me, dear. That would comfort me. I do love you so much and I can't bear to leave you alone, either. I am ashamed to be such a baby. I want to be petted and comforted and I want to pet and love you, dear. If I could just have you both, not have to leave either one alone. I'll finish this up tomorrow. I don't seem to be getting along very well tonight. But I love you, my darling boy, I do.

Monday night. I had reached a low state, last night, as you can see. But today has been so lovely I couldn't be unhappy. I have worked all day long, cleaned our bedrooms, aired the bed-clothes, washed and ironed, "and everything." And tonight we went out in the boat for a beautiful ride, just at sunset, past Franceville, through the Freddy Channel, past Whalen's (which is closed) and back past McKenzie's, Williams and so on. I have never seen a sunset that I liked better. At first there was a lot of yellowish light and we thought there wasn't going to be much color but after a while, there was the most gorgeous red sunset I ever remember seeing. I can't describe it but I did wish you were with us all the time we were out. Then we came in about seven. It was almost dark, suddenly. After we had supper, Orv went out of the kitchen door for something and noticed what we had been hoping for, a glorious northern light. They come at just such times, when the weather is turning cold. It rained for three solid days but today has been one of the sparkling days. Orv is very much better and we won't need George France any more. Tomorrow we are expecting to go to Penetang. If we don't go, we will take our order to Wilf and send the mail in and have the mail brought out. So tomorrow night, I'll have a letter from you, dear, and I want it. We will order our sleeping car reservations tomorrow for Monday, the 21st arriving home on Tuesday, the 22nd. The trains change tomorrow. The summer train is discontinued as the Midland stopped running today. I saw her go down on her last trip this morning. It is something of a chore to get to Toronto after the Flyer stops. We have to change at Allendale and arrive in Toronto after eight o'clock. Maybe after nine. I forget. We leave for Detroit about eleven, or a little later. Orv is full of building plans for next year. As soon as he can get the bed-room shacks collected somewhere, we will have a bath-room. This morning he was on the roof of this house, mending leaks, and nothing would do but I must climb up the ladder, walk up the shingles and perch on the point of the roof, to see the view! Orv wants to make a little second-story "look-out" on this house, which can open out in all directions or be closed in any direction. I am not enthusiastic about it and he is trying to convert me to his opinion. The afternoon sun is so trying on the porch and in this living room, as you may remember, if you can manage to think of anything so disagreeable in connection with this place. We surely never had so agreeable a "visitor," pleased with everything and ecstatic over most things! Oh, Harry, dear you were so dear about everything. And I miss your help when I do the dishes. No one brushes up the crumbs at the dining room table unless I

do! I don't think you have much idea what these houses do look like nor much about the island. If you couldn't see how perfectly atrocious the houses were, your eyes were not seeing very straight! Or that "strange light that never was on land or sea" was coloring everything. The island is beautiful, no doubt about that, but you didn't see much of it, dear. We never could get very far in our explorations. Doesn't Henry think that "father" is very sympathetic? I am glad you could talk to him about Amey and that he told you about her. It does all sound good and I can imagine how concerned you are about him. Oh, that reminds me. I saw the editorial on Babe Ruth's artistic temperament in the Star of Sunday. I thought it couldn't be Henry's. I didn't quite understand but when I saw it was a "proof," I realized that it hadn't been published yet. I am glad Henry is doing well. I am sure he will. Goodnight, dear. Kiss me and hold me close for I love you so much.

Your

Katharine

I don't know about coming West this fall. Orv won't be able to do it, after hurting his back and I am afraid it would be nothing but tantalizing. I didn't think of "this." When I spoke of coming, you know, dear. We'll see. You have been having another wedding, haven't you. George Longan's daughter. I saw something in the Star about it.