

Clare

The Cottage,
Seven Ponds Lane,
Watermill,
Southampton, L. I.
July 15

Judgie Dear:

Any reflections you may have been making on the forgetfulness of woman (to the accompaniment of tinkling camel-bells) are wrong. Since I left Reno there has not been a day that my thoughts have not turned to you (believe it or not) with what affection and pleasure you will never know. When I think of you out there, like some God of the Mountains, dispensing Justice in a Bigger and Better way to us Muddled Mortals, and being, the while, marvelously human yourself, I am very much aware of loving you and missing you. Do you mind my missing you? I have missed so few people in my life!

Monte, the Dynamiter, has written to me from time to time. But I glean very little actual information from her letters. She did tell me (I hope it is true!) that you are going away somewhere to write a book. Perhaps the dreadful prospect of having your life, character and purposes put into print by Neilly Vanderbilts has at last made you realize the literary value of your own personality, and what the human worth would be of a book written by you on the Reno Question. Oh, please write that book!

Judgie it is two months since I left Nevada with a divorce decree in my hand, and in my heart a conviction that events have not born out (you could have told me this!) that the decree would settle all my problems, all the major ones, at least. Alas! I find that a decree is very much like a peace-treaty which ends a state of war, but leaves the countries in an infinitely more precarious and delicate position of reconstruction and readjustment. At first you are wildly glad that it is over, and you are inflated with a feeling of victory and power, but then, as you

survey the little ruins and desolation around you, you are overwhelmed with remorse that it ever had to be. Then you resolutely turn your face to the future, resolving all sorts of intelligent things, and start in painfully, a little wearily to reconstruct your life anew.. This post-war similie, I think is a good one, but I won't enlarge on it. You know...

More particularly what I have been doing is hunting around for some quiet place to pass the summer, and at last have found this small cottage. It is a rambling, shingled house, with low ceilinged oak beamed rooms, tacked one on to the other at queer angles. Its chiefest charm is its cobwebby attic. As a child I longed to live in a house with an attic, and although I have found no chest full of grandmother's clothes, and quaint treasures in this one, I did find a spinning wheel. I get a vicarious thrill when I see the wonder in my little girl's face as I spin tales of colonial days for her about the attic and the house. It stands by a tiny pond, and there are pear trees, and crab-apple trees scattered about the lawn. I want it to sound picturesque, so I shan't dwell on the ~~the~~ facts there ~~the~~ no closet spaces, a most unamerican dearth of bathtubs, and that oil-lamps are a confounded annoyance.

For the rest, I have been quarreling with my Ex about money-matters, making short unsatisfactory visits to my family, and gadding around with beaux-gallants, not one of whom I really care for. Such gadding is a waste of time, but the vanity of the female heart finds that any man seems better than none. I have not given up hope that one day my bright particular star will shine upon me- that rare man who will be the proper combination of John Gilbert, D'Artagnan, and you, (Yes!) and that he will set my heart to thumping and aching according to this Sorry Scheme of Things.

The younger of the Capels Boys came to New York a month ago. He and I went to Coney Island, and there we had the enclosed picture taken to send to you, showing the pair of us, as usual, completely at sea, and deriving a dubious pleasure in being there together. I learned that his father got a divorce (which you did not give him) and am impatiently waiting the last installment of the serial. Will he or will he not marry the Red-headed Lady of the Hot-Springs?

Do you see anything of my little friend Louise Hiscoe? She is spending the rest of the summer in Reno, she tells me. How very wise! And why didn't Marise Hamilton get a divorce? Is Teddy behaving himself, or is he still clamoring for a red-red apple? And... tell me it all, if ever you are in the mood to write. Thinking of Reno makes me home-sick. I have heard of people who considered Paris their spiritual Home. How odd that I should consider Reno as mine!

I was not being carried away with sentiment, or riding the wings of a most natural 'reaction' when I used to say to you that I was happy there. I knew it then, and I know it now. You would have to see very deep into the past scheme of my life to realize just what those three months meant to me and what they did for me. It was the first holiday I had ever had from immediate responsibilities, and the first time I had ever met people who were simple, because they were being, if only temporarily themselves. I am, you know, a rather friendless person, and not by nature, a very happy one. But out there I enjoyed the illusion of making friends, of being close in thought and person to a few people who interested and pleased me. It was a delicious feeling. Then, too, we all had something in common, and a very real and vital thing it was, - that passionate desire to rectify at any cost our pathetic errors. But once again I find myself drifting, with little or no purpose in life, not even the necessity of earning my own living, which helps most people to console themselves with the thought that their lives are empty and dull because the daily-bread-getting leaves them no time to make anything else of their lives. I came back from the west with a heart full of enthusiasm, and into my eager outthrust hands were crammed (metaphorically) a sheaf of polite invitations to well-bred dinner-parties... and it is all dry as dust again. Now by this time you are certainly saying

to yourself that what I really need is a man to love, and a few more children, and- you are right. Nevertheless, I am sure that that trip to China would have tided me gloriously over this dusty interim..

By the way, I am sending you a few books which I hope you will enjoy. One of them is the ^{among} most beautiful, powerful books I have ever read.... All Quiet on the Western Front. Won't you read it and tell me what you think of it?

Goodbye Judgie, for a little while. I shall write you again wether you answer or not.

Love,

Celare

P.S. What would a woman's letter be without a P.S? — I shall be in Reno in the fall, I think, on Business — That's, I hope I shall —

Forgive the typewriter. But my handwriting is so abominable.