

From Laura Goodman Salverson.
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My Dear, dear friend:

Your letter just arrived + it was so
replete with gracious sweetness that I must
reply at once. I had just learned of the "event"
and wondered if I might dare to write about it.
We women are such odd beings it is not always
easy to know. But since we always were
honest with each other you will let me say
that I quite understand the state of mind
you must have endured. We all, I think, who
love innocence + goodness have our moments
when we dream of little children + what
frightens us is the dingy second best
we must offer them.

But in your case my dear you at least
will not have to fear any short comings
in the things that most matter to a child.
Both you + your husband are exceptionally
good to the little ones — + I know they

will think only of that in the years to come.

To small souls that may mean nothing -
to great ones everything! The longer I live
the more I incline to believe that nothing
matters except to leave behind one a
sort of antenatal warmth -

And then too, our vision is so obscured -
When my dear mother passed through what you
are now facing (she was nearly fifty) it
seemed the "last show" so to speak. And
now the only comfort she has is that bailey

my brother Albert grown tall. who does
everything for her. gave her her first fine
clothes; her first fine house - all the
nice little foolish things women adore
in their hearts & which she never had.

I often think of that now & it makes me
realize that life is perhaps in the keeping
of a Wisdom wiser than we. all of which
does not alter our pains & work and

Worry but does give us peace now & again.

Yes my dear - you are perhaps "domesticated" more than I - but it is a good thing for the world that there are few 'I's'.

Life is cruel to me because I cannot be reconciled to the homely existence I yet see to be rich & beautiful . . . I know it - I feel it but for all that it is a foreign field in which I grow increasingly discontent. And because I have the old Norse, Anglo-Saxon, sense of duty I suffer the more because I don't bettering & do it".

I envy those rare souls who live in the world of simple faith - even in the senses - and take joy in the busyness of living. You know what I mean - all this I experience like an actor on the boards & joy for the moment - suffer with the sufferers etc - and come to myself

just a bit grim + inclined to cry foul!
In my secret heart I find none of it worth
the effort.

A frightful thing surely. For the only vision
worth while is the true vision pictured
so grandly in your poem. All men must
know it instinctively. Smart intellectual
cleverness is not Wisdom - Sophistry is
an all-smelling thing - the perfume of
deceitful innocence if one may so foolishly
put it - stench would be truer except
that as we say in the North "sweet is
the selfish of the sinner to himself!"

My dear you are a brave sweet woman
+ long after we are both gone to the dust
your sweetness will endure through your
children. It is perhaps the one immortality.
I shall think of you - clear good thoughts -
and write you from time to time. I live
in a spiritual wilderness here but am
working on my new book. I have a story
coming out in Feb. of Chatterbox - a story told
of plain folk. I think you will like it +
see in it what I mean. That I do feel

or rather react to life with a terrible
sensitiveness. I loose almost flesh
over a long piece of work, it eats me
up + is a very real travail, and I
cannot say I get any great thrill
out of it.

But it is my life. And as I said
once in Calgary. Here is my honest
creed: If I had the choice - prairie
Soil I have not - to live my own
life full-filling what to me is the
best + for the privilege had to give
up all my domestic existence. I'd
say yes - + do it no matter what
the tears of the moment.

You see how it is - I work + slave
for a home + let it go without
a single tear - it really means
nothing and yet I love it - a
 queer complex state of things.

one week of nothing but honest
husband drives me into the
blackest gloom. All the silly
social things bore me - nothing
gives me the least satisfaction
of any lasting account except
abstract ideas at which I in
turn laugh!

Such is the stuff, very much
'badly mixed' as the poet said of
which I am made. But one thing
I have, a hot & I think deathless
love of the perverse & ugly
even in myself. And I do not
believe my way of looking at
life as it presents to myself is at
all good or noble!

I am working a difficult book.
a story of an odd character who
lived in the 17th Century - difficult
because in this age of suspecting her
selfless labor will seem only
silly. I know it was grand.

So perhaps it will make no great
str - go begging maybe. As much
of clean stuff does there hang.
Also I am getting a reputation
for too much strength. The magazines
here pay me the highest price now
but are scared of my stuff.
Well I cant abide sickly
sentiment. And here is the reason.
Just I may cheer ourselves with

what seems "sickly stuff" & be
rich & free. It is not sickly but
heroic in our case. You see? To be
able to see the outlines of ultimate
things over the wash tub is not
sentimentality but power! To a
Mrs. Wägen it might seem so - and
by the same token that is why tragic
things handled by the lucky &
well protected of mankind are just
a sickly jumble of black words!

Now I must away. The Soul of
all high hearts keep for my
dear & for remember, I know,
what the Greeks used to say of
expectant mothers, "She walks
with God" So walk proudly!

Sanna S. Palmerson.
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