

April 2, 1928

Friday.

Dear Dad:

I had intended writing you privately ever since I got your inquiry as to whether I needed any money or not. We don't. I've about \$1,000 which, considering everything, is remarkable. I don't expect to get into any pinch that will require the funds you have. Only wish I might have helped materially but you know that this is not a paying business and that is especially true if you keep moving in an effort to gain wider experience. In a city it also means heavy money in order to make the proper sort of acquaintances. Many sorry writers get by on entertaining literary people.

As to the vacation, I feel precisely as you do. ~~My~~ But in view of my long lay-off last year and low earnings in recent months it would be a strain to make the trip if everything were settled otherwise. The principal stumbling block is the fact that even by late summer I shall be entitled to only one week's vacation, on a six-month term of service. The staff is small and I doubt if I can arrange for two weeks--which is short enough. One week is impossible.

I have always felt, as you do, ~~that~~ that life is pretty short and that it doesn't seem worthwhile to be separated from your family all of the latter years of their lives. If existence ~~where~~ ~~like~~ were a happy one and a more profitable one for me ~~it might be defensible~~ it might be defensible from my standpoint but as I am now, and have never been, satisfied in New York I can't approve even that angle. ~~not~~

Some people are constituted to stand the strain of a great city and others are not. Mamie has no nerves and yet a day in town wears her to a frazzle. I think people should be bred to crowds and cities to be able to do their best in such surroundings. Its effect on me is simply one of confusion.

I wish, and so does Mamie, that it were possible for me to enter some work in the South---Birmingham, Nashville, Huntsville or that vicinity--that would enable me to make some real money or to build some enterprise for myself. I know that both you and Mother have always held out against my returning to the South but it also true that both of you thought well of V.M.I. I can realize what your ambitions for me are but I am unwilling to admit that they are any greater than my own. I am also convinced that were I unsuited to living and working in that section I would not be afraid to pull up, stake and take another crack at New York where I have fairly good connections.

I don't know whether it would be possible for me to line up anything down there or not. I certainly do not want to work for any of the papers there for they pay nothing and work you to death. The idea of a New Yorker magazine in Birmingham or purchase of a paper like the Huntsville Community Builder are the only things that occur to me now. The latter appeals to me because I am still of the opinion that a chain of papers through the Valley will eventually make someone rich.

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It is difficult to write you of these thoughts because there are so many contributing ideas and impressions that clutter up the mind like the "side-bands" on radio transmission. But what I should like to put over is this: Don't get the idea that because I am employed steadily and occasionally sell a magazine article that I am satisfied or happy, or that I am by way of becoming a great writer, or a popular one. I may get my fill of this place at any time and toss it out the window. In that case I should like to go where I might have the best prospects--and that doesn't mean Philly or Baltimore or Boston. However, I can do very little without your acquiescence in the idea and your active help. So, if after thinking it over and considering it in the light of this letter and your own, you believe it sensible, let me know. Mamie and I have been over the ground so much that it doesn't make sense to us any more.

I trust you won't take the attitude of an unwilling adviser and pass the matter back ~~at~~ to me. Because I don't know best and would appreciate counsel.

Devotedly,

Wm