Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

My dearest,

3 October 1935.

No man could ask for a lovelier letter! which I found last night on returning from John's - Oxford is nearer than Campden. And you know probably that after such an occasion as Sunday evening, or those very few minutes of it in the windy garden, I have to write to you immediately, and I need then your confirmation, which I await with tremulousness, to surrender my memory to its perfection. As for relative values of letters - I feel that even the same words written now - were they quite the same words - have somehow more value and deeper meaning than if written a year ago even. They gain always richness and depth from our accumulating experience together. Just as I have an intoxicating pleasure in using the pronoun "we" instead of "you and I". I have stored away in envelopes the various flowers you have given me at Campden for buttonholes, because of their meaning for "me"; but I shall treasure still more this bit of austere yew, because it is a part of what you picked for "us".

As for whether you are humble or not, I am not going to argue that with you: but of course if you yourself thought you were humble, it wouldn't be real humility! But I am not going to say that you are altogether wrong either, because you see from inside and I see from outside, and both aspects may be perfectly right. Only I cannot help thinking that I am more right. And I am glad indeed to have a "companion on that journey". As for its being a pity that I do not "know others who really have a lovely spirit", that is neither here nor there. I will, if you will, from time to time speak (or write which is easier) of earlier memories, even though they still gnaw like acid - I have hardly mentioned them for four years: I remember very well the apricot dress because it was a favourite of mine too, it had fur edging and was very graceful. How hopelessly remote from me you seemed then. I pray that the place I may have in your life in the future will be a good and useful one, only.

Do you realise that your birthday falls on a Sunday this year, so that our resources in the way of places of entertainment will be limited? I must try to find a Sunday evening concert of something; because I should like to have a few moments alone with you on that occasion, even if we cannot have such a suitable surrounding ~~xxxx~~ as that wild and windy rain in the garden. A bracelet is more difficult to choose than a ring, but I will see what I can do: though a bracelet to wear with any costume is more difficult still. Of

course the number of dresses that a star-sapphire will go with is limited, and I wanted you (I still want you) to have enough variety of rings to have one suitable for every costume. But let it be a bracelet for a change.

I saw the performance as well as I could from the wings. The setting was effective, the masks better than last year, but the production substantially the same, with the same actors. What I thought of it then I think now, and they play it much too slowly for my liking, to make it last as long as possible. Enclosed two cuttings which you may not have seen. Auden came to dinner with John last night; I think he was pleased for his part. He is a loveable fellow: at the moment full of the details of his new cinema work; I am to go with him tomorrow week to see a performance of some of their Post Office films. Meanwhile I hear from Ashley Dukes this morning that he has got Bobby Speaight and Martin Browne and Elsie Fogerty, and proposes to do the Murder at his Mercury Theatre, so with those people I shall let him. He wants to put it on October 29th, which means very intensive work for the chorus.

I had to my astonishment a very cheerful letter from Mrs.Hale, which reached me before yours, speaking well of Oxford and of the lodgings and even of the beds! So I hope that yourperiod with her will not have been too tiring. You MUST try to get away later. I wish that my memories of Oxford were not covered with a pall of gloom, for otherwise I might love the place dearly; as it is, I feel happier, or rather less oppressed, in Cambridge.

It was lovely to see how many friends you had made in Campden, and how beloved you had made yourself.

The war has come finally, and no one knows what it will lead to; in itself it is horrible enough.

I enclose a letter from Roger Hinks, which please give Dr.Perkins. I will give him the line of introduction whenever he wants to have a word with Hinks. Haig badly reviewed in the Times and the T.L.S., I understand by Liddell Hart, who wanted the commission to write the book himself, and didnt get it. But I hear that Winston Churchill has praised it highly in the Daily Mail. I shall be satisfied if the firm loses nothing by it - they will have to sell about 10,000 copies of each volume to make anything. But it has made a good start.

Your grateful

Loving

Tom

Your typewriter will be ready.

Did I tell you I found Jean's birthday letter on my return - & a very nice one.

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

14 October 1935.

Dear,

First, I must enclose this letter from Tom Trouncer which will sadden you as it did me. I enclose it to ask for your advice. I can't think why she should want to see me, at such a time: but I can't very well go to see her without admitting to her that he wrote to me; because I didn't see any notice in the paper, and if there was I don't suppose that it mentioned the address of her nursing home. Does he merely say "please on no account answer this letter" merely out of modesty? I have only met him twice, once for a moment in a tube lift, when his wife introduced us, and when I went to dinner, when he spoke hardly a word. Of course if it really would please her I would go, but I am a very slight acquaintance. Please think this over and tell me in the evening what I should do. Would it not be better if I sent her some flowers and if you perhaps called at the nursing home? I think he may be a little distraught, so don't know where to take him literally and where not. It is very sad for them after having waited so long, and having moved to another house in expectation. Perhaps she overdid herself. I pray that they may have another in due time.

I was going to write this evening in any case - and even had you not mentioned correspondence last night I should have done so - but this letter arrived this morning, and so I put it first. I enclose also a note from the Vicar, which may amuse you.

As for my day: I went to the Mercury this morning, and watched the rehearsal. I was greeted cordially by Speaight and Browne, and lunched with them afterwards. The rehearsing is in its first stages. Browne asked after you and expressed regret that you had not come, but hoped that you would come to a rehearsal soon. I shall probably go again on the morning of Tuesday week, and should be delighted if you could come them. It is too early to tell, but I think that the production may be better than at Canterbury. The chorus, Browne thinks, will be better, because Elsie won't be directing the chorus personally, but Gwyneth Thurburn her assistant, who is easier to deal with, and they will have a longer period rehearsing in the theatre with the rest. And the fact that Miss Thurburn has had the previous experience with the same choruses helps a great deal. There will be four of the original

Canterbury girls and six new ones. According to Speaight the broadcast performance also is almost a certainty, towards the end of November. I am pleased with the prospects: and Ashley Dukes sppears enthusiastic.

This afternoon was wholly taken up by the committee that should have sat in the morning; so I have accomplished little else. To-night I must re-type my Tennyson introduction and get it off; and think a little more about my address to the Lincoln Diocesan Conference.

I like to write in between when I am seeing you frequently: because there is always a great deal to say when one wants to talk, and partly I think because writing is, for me, not merely a substitute for speech, but a different medium, for saying either the same or other things. Perhaps this is merely because I have had so much more exercise in writing to you than in talking to you - and I dare say I do it better! There is this difference too, that when I have failed to say a thing I feel that I have lost an opportunity which will not return, and when I have failed to write anything I can always send a postscript. Last night was a strange and dizzy experience. If half of what you said about the success of the reading was true, I feel that the success was due to your presence: ~~when~~ which made it more difficult - at first - but infinitely more stimulating, and made me want to do my best, both in reading and in talking in the room afterwards - it was all very queer, because I was so much more aware of your presence than of that of the young people I was talking to. It was living on two planes at once. And I am always - and think I always shall be - quite puzzled and dumbfounded to think why you should be so good and kind to me. Wherever you are, you become surrounded by people who draw sustenance from you and depend upon you more than you depend upon them: and of the four people most dependent upon you in the present circumstances, I feel that I draw the most vitality from you, and give but little in return - perhaps nothing. And as I study ~~xxxx~~ and memorise more exactly every contour of your face and shade of expression, so it appears to me more and more and more beautiful.

This is a Note. Until just after six tomorrow.

Your Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

17 October 1935.

Dearest Lady,

This is to thank you for your dear note on my departure and to inform you of my safe return. I arrived yesterday just in time to dress hastily, dine, and be taken off by the chaplain to hear a concert by Jelly D'Aranyi - the Kreutzer Sonata among other things - still as good a woman violinist as there is, I should suppose. I was not very early getting to bed, because I wanted to talk to the Bishop about the next day, and he had a visitor on business after the concert, so afterwards we sat talking till nearly midnight. I find that the Bishop is Hicks, formerly Bishop of Gibraltar, and the author of a work of dogmatic theology which is highly spoken of: he is a good deal of a scholar, I imagine. I found his views sympathetic, but he warned me that the audience would be very mixed, both in views and in degrees of education and intelligence. The Palace is the most modernised I have ever stayed in, water h. & c. in the bedroom, hot water hot but not inexhaustible. I think there must be several bathrooms too; there seemed to be no one else in the wing in which I was put. An officious manservant who insisted on putting the links into my shirt for me etc. - when I went to bed I found that he had turned out all my pockets and put letter marked "to be opened some free moment from a Bishop or a Conference" on top of the pile. Breakfast at nine. The conference is held in a circular chapter house, with a loud speaker. I was billed for 12, but went in at 11.15 to get the atmosphere. People seemed to wander in and out while the proceedings were going on: old Mr.Welby-Everard was reading out some interminable sheet - afterwards several clergy rushed up to the microphone to ask questions. Then a great deal of time was spent in praising the virtues and drawing up a vote of thanks to a Revd. Mr.Jackson who had just retired from the post of Chief Inspector of Church Schools of the diocese - so I did not come on till 12.15 and spoke my piece which took a half hour, after which we adjourned for lunch. I think it pleased them well enough on the whole - some were pleased at being addressed as "Reverend Fathers" which they were not used to thereabouts. I was told that one of my remarks would not please the Dean, but I had a few words with him afterwards, and suggested that he should try Mr.Bemis again, because now the east end of the minster is going to pieces and they need £20,000 more. After lunch Mr.Welby-Everard read some more figures, and the "discussion" on Sunday Observance took place. Except for one old gentleman who had thought that I said something I

didn't say the remarks had very little relation to my speech, so I had little difficulty in summing up after the Bishop had spoken. The Bishop left for London and I was given tea and taken to evensong and shown about by the Chancellor, who was a very amiable and hospitable little man - though I should have preferred the opportunity of wandering about by myself. The cathedral is very fine and must look very grand from a distance, standing on that height, but it left me rather cold - there is not very much of the Norman work left. And then I caught the six-twenty train back to London. Satisfactory, I think.

I dare say I shall not see you tomorrow either, when I call: so I am to come to Rosary Gardens at about 9.20 on Saturday morning, am I not? All the rest of my time must go to preparing my lecture for Monday night - I shan't ask you to come, because it is out in a remote southern suburb, and I have to have supper with the vicar first, but if you did care to attend the Kelham meeting on Wednesday night I should be happy. And will you choose a theatre you would care to go to on Thursday or Friday evening, or something else we might do? And will you come to Ottoline's to tea on Thursday? And have you any suggestions for that Saturday? And I shalll try to find a concert for Sunday evening.

Of course, to have you repeat "how much I give you" is something that I cannot hear too often - but it cannot affect my own deep feeling, which I shall repeat from time to time - and I am sure that I am much more dependent upon you than you on me! - and I think that you bring out the best side of me - so. Until Saturday - I wish I did not have this lecture on Monday.

Je t'embrasse les mains -

Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

22 October 1935.

Dearest Lady,

I must drop you a line tonight, after writing to Maritain about his lecture next week and to Madame Maritain to thank her for her book of poems, and before outlining my short speech for to-morrow: first because I have not written for some time, and because unless I were seeing you for some time every day, quietly and alone, I should always feel the need to write as well. The times in your company as this morning and afternoon, are also very dear, and count very much in the accumulation of common experience of years, but they have not the intimacy of writing. What I get out of an occasion like this morning, is a delightful feeling of your collaborating with me in production - even though I do not feel qualified to take much part, and you are too modest to do so. I hope that this afternoon gave pleasure; because I much enjoyed having them. I thought that the incursion of Morley, even if I laid a sort of ambuscade for him, would be amusing; and I know that he can always carry off such occasions very well.

I thought that if there is nothing to be done about Sunday evening, we might, if you cared, go to a theatre on Friday evening, as a birthday occasion: we should probably feel too tired after tramping about Hampstead Heath and Ken Wood on Saturday, to want to go that night. If you feel like it, and there is anything you would care to see, speak of it on Thursday morning, when I shall call for you, as to-day, to go to the Albert Hall. Alternatively, there is a rehearsal with chorus on Friday night, but it will not be complete, as Speaight can't be there.

Would you care to ask the Brownes to tea one day?

And now this is just to wish you good night, as if I were alone in the room with you, saying goodnight and goodbye until the next day.

ton Dévoué

Tom

I thought you looked very lovely this afternoon.

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

30 October 1935.

Dearest,

I am writing this note partly before and partly after dinner, before going to the rehearsal at 8.30. First, we are to dress as last night, and I will call for you at 6.30. Second, to thank you again for coming to the lecture, and still more for coming to dinner - and I hope that you have not been feeling very tired to-day. Even if you have, may I say that it was worth it, so to speak, to me: because I wanted you to meet the people whom Jeanie had met and liked, and because I wanted you to meet a man for whom I have so much admiration and affection, and because it was a great help to me to have you there. During dinner and afterwards, I felt dropping with fatigue; but now it is over, I am very happy that it was done, and pleased with the way it went. (Also, pleased and supported by your ability to deal with any situation with dignity, grace and charm - and by your fluency and apparent ease of manner!) I have a note from Maritain this morning, expressing their enjoyment of the evening, and enclosing the manifeste. So I hope that you will not regard it as an evening wasted.

I should have liked to enquire why you were so tired, and (I thought) sad: but I thought that that would only have meant making you more tired still, to speak of it.

I have a letter from the most difficult case of the young men, which I should have liked to show you before answering, but he wants an answer by Friday, so I must write to him first.

I will explain about those "manifestoes" later.

I hope you will be resting to-day and tomorrow. About Sunday evening, I only want now to say one thing: and that is, that for me it marked again a new stage. I have had ever since, a feeling that I surrendered myself more completely than ever before - though I should not have thought it possible - that I gave up some right over myself that I had retained (and it rather took my breath away, but I would not have it back!) - that henceforth I was responsible to you for everything I do and think, and exposed and humble and dependent as never before. And I don't mean a feeling of the moment, but the experience of a change which is permanent and can never be undone. It is like a feeling I have had before, but of much deeper significance. I feel less free that four days ago, and I like it, and it is as if I was

"possessed" by you.

Till half past six.

Your Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

14 November.

My dear Mocking-Bird,

I enclose a note from Virginia. Thursday the 21st is not a very good day, unfortunately, because we have to go to Timon in the evening, only Virginia is not always easy to arrange with - she has many engagements, and may always fall ill at any moment. If you want to go on that day, we can arrange to go to the theatre in day dress, and I will let you off going to hear the Russian cantors the evening before, especially as I don't know whether they are worth hearing or not. But if you prefer not, I will try to fix a day for tea ~~with~~ the week after. It doesn't matter to me, only I should like you to have met them some time. But if we don't go this next week (the 21st) I ought to let her know. I wonder if you could ring up some time tomorrow, before you leave for Campden. I shall be working at home (Western 1670) most of the morning, and lunching at the club, and at the office after that: I have to go to tea with J.G.Lockhart at his office to discuss the case of Prebendary Harris whom some people would like to remove from being secretary of the book committee of the C.L.A. because he has been ill for so long and I know that would break his heart.

Pick a spring of yew for yourself and another bit for me, though I still have my first bit, and think of me thinking of the garden with you in it. What shall I say of last evening, and the unexpected gift of an hour at the end alone in your company? For one thing, it gives me a kind of happiness to make your troubles my own, and I want you to realise how I love to share them; and I should like you to like to think of me suffering from them as if they were mine, because they ARE mine, in a way more mine than my own are. Even when I am not being of any active use, that means ever so much to me. And each occasion of being alone with you, and putting my arm round you, and having you put your head on my shoulder, is as wonderful and surprising as the first; indeed it only becomes more wonderful in becoming more the natural and inevitable thing to do. Every occasion is the occasion, and always will be. I hope you will have a peaceful and happy visit, and I long to see you on Sunday and lunch with you alone and domestically, which is somehow much more thrilling than in a restaurant.

Your Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

Friday November 22nd.

Dearest Love,

Now the day is over, and I have just time between making out the order for the December Criterion and dining with the Hinks to write you a letter. May I be so daring as to say, not only that you will not be surprised, but that you will be expecting it? If you will reflect upon that question, you will realise its full presumptiousness. Well, my darling, it is a very long time since I have written you a letter - either I have been seeing you or I have been prevented from seeing you by engagements which prevented me from writing; and now that I am writing again, it seems more like a fresh beginning, than beginning where I left off. Though it seems a long time since I have written, it seems only a very short time since I was able to keep the number of times I had kissed you, chalked up on a slate in my mind, or rather as a small set of tastefully framed pictures on my mental wall. And yet it isnt very many, after all. I feel a queer shyness now, in writing to you, a shyness which merely marks a change from one phase to another, and will pass off. I have so long had such a very definite picture of the place I occupied in your affections, that I find it difficult to change it for another. I may have had a few premonitions: there was not only the moment when you said that the day before you had been so distressed (about your aunt and Jeanie) that you had thought of coming up to town to talk to me about it; but another moment on the station platform at Gloucester Road, when you said that perhaps we should become more and more alike. But these moments passed. Last evening, when you said that you didn't care whether anyone thought you beautiful but myself, and I said that I didn't care, for myself, whether you were beautiful or not (though I wouldn't have said it unless I knew that ~~xxxxxx~~ you knew that I knew how beautiful you are), that is something that remains, and the others come back. It is very strange, now, to be writing to you. Because I have always felt, in writing to you, simply that I was satisfying my own need to write to you; and it makes everything quite different to feel that you have a need for me to write to you. Oh dear, indeed, even in writing that, I feel an impulse to begin to make excuses ~~xxxxxx~~ and say, Excuse me for having this fancy, you don't need to tell me that I am wrong and that I am being presumptuous etc. But I am NOT saying all that, I am going to take the full risk of the wound to my vanity of the reply that I might get - or rather the absence of reply that I might get. If I am not wrong, then I have got to <u>practise</u> in the new way. I wonder how much my letters will change. Will

I leave out all the gossip and information of day to day small events and personalities that I have always provided, I think, as a way to compel you to share my life with me when apart: so that I would, but for time and being boring, have even put in every event or every day from the alarum clock to turning out the light? I suppose that I shall come back to these t hings, in a new way; but at the moment I don't feel like talking about anything in the least outside of ourselves or self. I am not going to make any comments on Ernest Milton, or the Murdocks, though I should if I was with you. I only wish for you a happy and peaceful and inwardly serene weekend, and I hope the lump on your heel, the size of a ~~hummingbird~~ humming bird's egg, will decrease, and I long to see you again on Tuesday. But what a wretched week, as I shall hardly see you again after that until Sunday (concert). And then one more week, and then a few sad days, and then I shall have to discipline myself to the winter. But now, until Tuesday.

Your Tom

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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

My darling, Emilie,

25 November 1935.

Spoken words can only be answered by spoken words, and a letter should be answered with a letter - even though rather rushed; and though I hope to speak to you at least on the telephone later in the day, I must write too. Well, I shall count November 25th as a memorable day too, to get such a letter upon. I didn't exactly expect it: that is to say I had thought how wonderful it would be if I did get such a letter this morning, and had made up my mind that I should not, and when I came back from church I found it on my table. It was an exciting moment, my dear, my dear, I can't think of enough right words yet to thank you with, such a sudden expansion of life makes me rather giddy. It's of course a mixture of agony and delight, and being morekeenly alive both to pleasure and pain.

It was stupid to make the engagement this evening: but I am stupid still: hoping to have all tomorrow with you I did not think I shou d be wanted this evening - isnt that stupid! - and also I was thinking that if I did not go to see him this week I should have to next, and I want to keep that clear, except for that Tuesday and Friday. But I might be able to get away early and drop in to discuss tomorrow; I dont know when I shall be able to escape on Wednesday. I have to to to tea alone with Ottoline to discuss business: money for George Barker.

Your wholly belonging

Tom

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24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

5 December 1935.

Dear Love, dearest Emily.

I am writing this little note just before leaving for Liverpool Street, and wonder whether it will be anything of a surprise or not. I hope not, because you might expect to be greeted on your return to London, even if I am not at home on the previous evening. Yesterday was a very happy day for me, and will be one of those most clearly remembered even to the back room of the Fuller's shop in Walbrook, and the cart-horse in Queen Victoria Street. However much I want to change my position, I wouldn't change it with anyone else. No one but me has ever had or ever will have that yesterday, and however wretched I may feel, I shall always feel very very proud. And I want you to know that my admiration of you grows all the time and also my gratitude, because I know that no other woman in the world could have done for me what you have, even if there had ever been any other who had wanted to. Till the morning, and I shall have been thinking of you at the end of the evening, as if it was yesterday evening; and tomorrow morning when I wake, as always, before I think of anything else.

Your Tom

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future.
Time future is contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present,
All time is unredeemable.
What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden. My words echo
Thus, in your mind.

But to what purpose
Disturbing the dust on a bowl of rose-leaves
I do not know.

467

S. KENSINGTON
1 15PM
11 DEC
1935
S.W.7

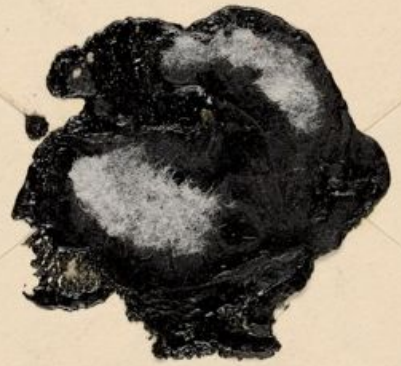
POST EARLY
FOR
CHRISTMAS

Miss Emily Hale,

Adelphi Hotel,

LIVERPOOL.

from
T.S.Eliot,
24, Russell Square,
LONDON W.C.1.



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LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
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To Emily in whom Tom lives: Wednesday Evening.

How shall I speak to My Love? or of Her? or how celebrate Her? I cannot tonight write a letter, I can only think of last evening and this morning. And having learnt (so recently) release for my pent-up tenderness by holding Her in my arms, on my lap, and pressing my face to Hers to intoxicate myself with the air she breathed out, how can I discipline myself again to the use of mere words? How wonderful when you left me, and then rushed back and said "When I'm gone I'm here", and then I looked out and followed you down the street. When I talk to people they seem faint and ghostlike; when I look at myself I see no longer quite the same face. We are both in two places at once, and I am in Liverpool and you are here. I feel stifled in ordinary air, when I can no longer turn to breathe in the air that you breathe out. But I have kissed your blessed foot, your beautiful foot, I have blossomed in your heart, and I am dazzled and humbled and trying to understand the thought that you love me, which is a kind of Grace, for why should you? I am afraid even by speaking that I may lose one moment that we have had, one word that you have spoken; and I am still struggling to take in properly something that seems so much too great for me. You have touched me, and I become a new person, so completely yours, that I do not know how to behave as my new self yet, the new self that is more you than me, completely possessed by you; and I cannot arrange words to make sense. If we could be together now the little things would help so, I could brush your hair and make ready your things for you; but now I am left alone with only the big things, and a love so great between us that it seems too much greater than I am. I cannot write more now, I feel that I am going through an agony of being born, of becoming another person with, in You; but I will write tomorrow too and to the boat.

the new
Emily—Tom.

Dear, my Dear, I wanted to write this much, as I have done, before opening the letter which I found in my room with the ~~xxxxxxx~~ violets soon after you left. And now I have read your Letter, dear: so we are both bewildered, and you will know that I am as overwhelmed as you can be: you see, what we have entered upon is just as new for me as for you, and all the more bewildering, I believe, because of

what I have felt before. I am filled with wretchedness and rejoicing, and when I go to bed I shall imagine you kissing me; and when you take off your stocking you must imagine me kssing your dear dear feet and striving to approach your beautiful saintly soul.

Your Tom.

POST EARLY
FOR
CHRISTMAS

Miss Emily Hale,

Adelphi Hotel,

LIVERPOOL.

468

from
T.S.Eliot,
24, Russell Square,
London W.C.1.

FABER & FABER
Limited
PUBLISHERS

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

12 December 1935.

Dear my Dear,

One more little note to the Adelphi Hotel, before I start to go to Mrs. Janes's funeral. I shall not, therefore, be wearing the carnation this morning, but shall again tomorrow. Then after lunch I have to go to see Dr. Harris in his nursing home, and after that have appointments to see two people; and I shall write my letter to the boat after that and before dining with Jan Culpin. I don't think that I have really grasped the fact that you have gone yet; mercifully that takes time. And my rooms are so full of your presence that I can hardly believe that you may not come in at any moment, and we shall sit down on the sofa together and talk about ourselves and I shall listen to your lovely voice. I had a long night, and still feel exhausted. This weekend I go to the Tandy's, to immerse myself in other people's domestic life and play with other people's children; and after that next week is clear and I shall rest quietly and stay at home in the evenings. I still resent, and think that now I always shall, all the things that take my mind and prevent me from thinking constantly about you and going over one occasion after another when we have been together. I shan't be going to the theatre much, or to concerts at all, I expect, now; and if I do I shall prefer to go alone, for who is there whom I would not resent being with in such places after being with you? To enjoy ~~the~~ a play, or a concert, or a painting, or a place, in the company of the person you love is so intense a delight that the same occupations are unbearable with anyone else.

Now I must go, my dearest, my darling; and I am impatient until the end of the afternoon when I shall be writing to you again. I try to imagine you in Liverpool, without me, but I can't very well.

Dear Emily, I am Your Tom.

POST EARLY
CHRISTMAS

C 53

Miss Emily Hale,

Tourist Passenger S/S "Samaria",

Cunard Lines,

LIVERPOOL.

Sailing ~~early~~ 1a.m. ~~Saturday~~ morning.

from
T.S.Eliot,
24 Russell Square,
LONDON W.C.1.

FABER & FABER
Limited
PUBLISHERS

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

Dear Emilie Raspberry North, 12 December 1935.

When I went into a florist's to-day to order flowers to be sent to Liverpool for you, I found myself asking whether it was possible to get sweet peas at this season (which as you see was not possible). You know that all these years I could hardly bear to look at, much less to smell, sweet peas; and the fact that I now want them again does indicate some very great change, doesn't it? I shall try later in the winter, when Boston florists have forced sweet peas, to get some to you - if you will be as glad to have them as I to send them. Now I am writing to the "Samaria" and tomorrow I shall write to Brimmer Street, in the hope of having it there for you within a day or two of your arrival, or one mail after. I did write last night to Ada, and I shall expect her to receive you with open arms. She is naturally a very reticent person, who does not express her feelings very readily, but they are there nevertheless, and you will not find her at all a forbidding person. I shall have to write to her again tomorrow too, as there is so much more to say - I only dealt with fundamental facts in the first letter!

I begin to feel already, and it is better that I should admit it, the oncoming of the period of depression and disorientation which I knew to be inevitable. And as I said and am sure, it is worse for you than for me. As you said, our being together did make your other troubles a bit easier to bear; and I myself, now that I know what the touch, the physical contact with a beloved can mean, how it can flood one with a bliss and peace of being alone with the other person in a world from which the world is all shut out, know that there is no substitute for it, and that the vexations of the world and the imperfections of one's relations with other people will weary us more when we cannot put our arms about each other. For that there is no cure; but as for our love itself, and the agony of being apart, of course the agony is inextricable from the glory and the beauty. You know that in a way I did not want you to love me, but now that you do, I can't possibly wish that you should love me less in order that you should suffer less; and the suffering, while it lasts, is something that we ought to try to bear proudly. But <u>you</u> can make me happier by keeping going some of the effecfs of the glory in greater self-confidence and assurance, just as shall try to let you see, in my letters, the pride and assurance that you have given to me. To be loved by the only woman in the world whose love is a real prize is a proud thing indeed!

On the boat you will have no privacy, and that distresses me. When I go in to my bedroom tonight I shall shut the world out, and think of myself as alone there with you, and will make your presence real, tonight and every night. But you are sharing with other women, I fear; when you do get to a room of your own think of me in the same way when you go to bed. And think now of us going through the same misery of separation together, and we must get through it together in spirit. Always, now, the claims of business and society will find me a little distrait, but only in writing poetry can I find any relief, and shall be alone with you when I am doing that. Now what can I say to make you happy, or happier, except that my love for you comes over me in waves from which I emerge momentarily to do the things of the day? "More" is not the word to use for it; but it has become so much more <u>real</u> than anything else lately, it becomes so all-claiming, as I realise more and more fully all your spiritual loveliness and height (tall girl). Good night: can you not feel my kiss on your lips and my breath on your cheek, soft smooth lovely cheek? Good night in the Mersey, good night till good morrow.

The proudest way I can think of myself is as Emily's Tom.

FABER & FABER
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DIRECTORS:
G.C.FABER (CHAIRMAN)
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F.V.MORLEY (U.S.A.)
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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

13 December 1935.

Sweet Love, Emily,

You will have finished dinner on the boat, and I wonder how you will occupy yourself between now and 1 o'clock. You will have had my second letter to the hotel, and I hope my letter and my flowers and my telegram on the boat, and there will be nothing more until you are in Boston; and it is hard for me to think that you will not be reading this letter at breakfast tomorrow. When you read it, you will be back in Boston and in Brimmer Street; and I wonder very much how Boston and Brimmer Street will affect you after so long an absence. Your letter arrived for breakfast this morning. O glory. My dear, I cannot write a better letter that this that I have from you; it should make any man proud and happy to get such a letter. That we can expand so fully and fearlessly with each other, that we can want each other so much and express our want so freely, that we are finally so completely at ease in each other's presence and each other's thoughts, seems to me so wonderful and holy a thing that I can hardly yet grasp it. In my three letters to Liverpool, I was eager to express my feelings concentrated in the moment of parting, as well as I could, without looking backward or forward. Now that you are further separated physically by being on a boat in the Mersey, though not yet under weigh, I think back and see a little of the past three weeks. I begin to recall, bit by bit, the various lovely moments, not isolated from each other, but all fitting in their place. The last evening that revealed so much more fully our understanding of each other's feelings, our complete faith in and acceptance of each other, and the last morning. I watched you go down the street, turning and waving, and I waved too, but my handkerchief was blue and I fear you did not see it wave. You disappeared behind the branches of a tree, then crossed diagonally at the corner of Aban Court, and I saw you till you disappeared behind another tree: then I put on my coat and left as quickly as I could so as not to be left behind in the room long after you had left it. I was, and am, so thankful to you for running back again into the room after you had started down stairs.

Now, I agree that I must have someone here to let you know of any sudden accident to me, preventing me from writing, and I think Morley is the most suitable, being about as trustworthy as anyone, and in a position to know if anything is wrong with me. I have had no opportunity to see him alone to-day, but I will arrange with him on Monday. And you must do the same - with someone who will really know when to wire to me to come to you. If either of us should fall very ill, then we must be together.

Your letter made me tremble with ecstasy, in the realisation of spiritual union. Years ago, I told you of my delight in feeling that I belonged to you: but I did not know then how much more recreative is the feeling of belonging to another person, when that person belongs to one also. It is both the thought that I am responsible to you for all my actions, and the thought that you are in me here and I am in you at the foot of Beacon Hill. A queer feeling of being in two places at once!

O my love, the next time we're in England together, we shall meet at a dock, whether Liverpool or Southampton, and will journey up to town together holding each other's hands, at least, whether the compartment is full of tourists or not. I could not bear to see you off at a seaport, but the delight of meeting you there! And when I come to Boston, where shall we meet? Will you come to my boat or train, or had we rather not face each other first in public? I wonder just at what spot we shall meet, next autumn or sooner.

I am so glad of all the days we spent together, each intensified in joy. Each seemed perfect in itself, yet when I compare that early journey to Whipsnade, with the smoky afternoon in the City, and that again with Dulwich, and that finally with Finchampton, the closest together of all, I see a developing pattern. So with each evening, beginning on that summer star-evening under the yew-tree, and then my birthday evening when we were very shy and you suggested that I should give you a birthday kiss, and then your birthday, and then the evenings ending in the last evening - how it developed and blossomed.

I am thinking of you now on the boat, and shall each day, imagining the voyage - I am annoyed with myself for not having asked you to send me a very short deferred cable on arrival, so that I might know that you are safe, but I shall cable to you: and it is strange to think that you will read this sitting at Brimmer Street. I think of your birthday night, at the moment when I first kissed you on the neck, and you curved your head over me as if you wanted me to kiss you there, and it seemed to me for that moment as if my kiss meant more to you than any of my few kisses had ever meant to you before; and then I think of the later evenings when I knew you liked me to kiss you; and of that delicious moment when I held you in my lap and we both fell asleep for a moment and I waked myself up so as not to lose the enjoyment of our sleeping.

I love the thought of your writing a few lines each day to me, while you are on the boat. Now your head is on my shoulder and I am watching the beautiful closing and unclosing of your eyes (candid eyes). I can't yet write about common things and everyday events and practical matters. This must end for tonight. I shall have written two or three times more before you are on land. I have asked Cheetham to include you among those for whom on Sunday he asks for prayers, as one "travelling by sea". Good night my own, my own

true love, my dear my darling.

O my beautiful ring, how proud I am to have it round my finger, and never to take it off between now and my Emilie.

Your letter is so lovely, I have to read it again and again and I shall not wholly grasp it for days yet.

I shall kiss the elephant; and when you seal your letters, please kiss the seal.

Je t'embrasse 6 s pieds.

ton Tom.

FABER & FABER
Limited
PUBLISHERS

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

16 December 1935.

Dear my darling, dearest Emilie

On Friday evening, on returning from posting my first letter to you to Boston, Elizabeth handed me two letters from you: one from Liverpool (which I expected) and one from Rosary Gardens, mostly in pencil (which was the surprise). I suppose that you left it with Ellen to post, as it was dated the 11th and posted the 13th: you said it was meant to be a surprise and it was a surprise - unlike the Haydn symphony. And on returning this morning from the Tandys I found the letter which I expected, dated the 13th in the Mersey, before you had read my letter (but you don't say whether you received the flowers and the telegram) and postmarked "Belfast". As your letter to follow has not reached me yet, I am wondering whether it missed the Belfast post, and may have to cross the Atlantic to reach me. But perhaps I shall find it at Russell Square tomorrow morning.

It is intoxicating to me to have you write as you do, and to have you use towards me so many little terms of endearment that I have tapped out and written many times, but never expected to get back. And re-reading your letters, your recent letters, I think in wonder, can I really be her dearest, her darling, her love, as she says? There it is in writing and signed with your name in your writing. After the last three weeks, I feel still so physically near to you, and when I read you writing and when I write to you, I am so overpowered by the loveliness of love that I don't want to write about things, in the ordinary way, because nothing that happens in your absence seems worth mention. I only want to write of our feelings, and now and then to recall some moment, as when we walked on the river bank at Greenwich and met the two dogs and went through the turnstile and looked at the barges and the barques and the steamer, and the moments between stations in the train going back, and in the other trains. I am not "lonely": I am full of a loneliness I have never felt before, but also I am freed from the loneliness I have always felt before. I do not want to go to the theatre or to concerts, without you, and when I walk the street I miss holding your arm as I love to and feeling your shoulder as we walk side by side; indeed I don't want to look at anything without you looking too. It is still dazzlingly wonderful to be able to give myself completely to someone, and be completely received and completely understood, to know that what I say and do will be taken as I meant it, and to know that you know that what you give will be taken as you mean it, and received and understood, ans to feel that even when apart we are always alone together, and our arms are about each other, and our kiss is better speech than any words.

The Sunday Times says that "Murder" is to be produced in New York

in the spring. At any rate, Dukes is going to New York in a couple of weeks to try to arrange it; if he does, I may come in the spring! But if not, in the autumn. Do you know that my long desire to write plays is chiefly your doing, because I wanted your applause? I want to write a play with a role which I should imagine for you: yet I could not bear to have you play it, unless I took the opposite part - and if I did, I should feel too much to be able to act well.

When my letters are unsatisfactory, remember that I shall be writing again in a day or two.

I only stop to catch the post.

Try to sleep in my arms

Your Tom

Your letters have been very lovely.

TELEGRAMS:
"c/o GOWNSMEN, PICCY, LONDON."
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 6942.

Friday Dec. 20.
1935

OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W. I.

My own dear Emilie:

I have just sent you a cable to greet your arrival, to the boat, but I have been exasperated, my darling. By having to dine out every night, and I do not know whether this note will catch a boat tomorrow. But I am looking forward to the weekend when I shall have time to write at length as I please.

(Tuesday night the Huxleys.

Wednesday Alida. Thursday Rochester, & tonight I am waiting for Cheltham. I think necessarily of your anxiety. I did get your last dear letter posted from a French boat. When I am alone, I am alone with you, as we have sat alone together the back of your head reflected. I shall write tomorrow Sunday, & this will just kiss you good night. Emily. Emily.

Your Tom.

FABER & FABER
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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

My dear dear Love, 22 December 1935.

It is a quarter to seven here, and you are just finishing your lunch, I suppose, whether on the boat or at Miss Ware's. I have had plenty of time to think about you during the last two days, Saturday and Sunday, for I have been in bed with a cold. A much lighter one than when my dear Lady came to visit me, with no temperature. The Underhills are very kind people, but Rochester has a filthy climate, and a deanery is an impossible kind of building to hear; and though I had a comfortable enough bed with a hump in the middle I was given no hot water bottle, and I shivered and shivered. And I had had a busy week, and was busy all day Friday, ending with having Cheetham to dinner (he spoke most appreciatively of you, and found that you had an unusual personality). I think it was mostly that I was very very tired, physically, and perhaps exhausted emotionally, and needed a rest: I have slept a great deal of the time. So now I do beg and hope that you will be able to take things a little quietly at first, trying to relax, and at least feel for the moment free of responsibility now that you are in different surroundings. I hope that Miss Ware will be nice to you, and leave you alone too. I worry about my girl being so thin, and not having good warm clothes for the unaccustomed Boston winter (I have decided to stop trying to wear silk underwear all the winter, it is too clammy; I have gone into cotton ones - I clung to the silk because they don't irritate my skin. I wish you would let me know frankly how you get on with Miss Ware. I didn't feel that I hit it off with her at all, but perhaps it is simply that she dislikes the English.

Now that I have to think of you actually in Boston, I begin to feel that I must put more or less news into letters; though news no longer seems of any interest when I write to you, and I want to make my letters a make-believe of being together. I am always thankful for all the days we had together, days of increasing significance and nearness together, wherever and however they were spent: the best were the last - Greenwich and then the Exhibition and the City, and Dulwich for which I shall always have an especial affection because it wrapped us up in fog; and finally Finchampstead the most intimate of all. But even Finchampstead had its moments of light relief, in the "Queen's Head" (no, that is not the name); and letters should do so too. I was grateful for your exact description of your fellow passengers who shared your table, and hope that you had pleasant, and no unpleasant company throughout. Well, there was anexpensive lunch at the Ivy for Ashley Dukes at the expense of Faber & Faber, with Faber and Morley present: oysters (which I should prefer not

to eat except in your company) very good ones; Pouilly followed by Romanée 1919 with a tournedos, coffee and brandy and cigars, very swell. It was amusing to see how Faber and Dukes got on together - Faber had expected not to, not knowing any theatrical folk, and had prepared an engagement at 2.30, but he stayed well after that. What Faber wanted (Enid's idea) was to have a performance of "Murder" at the end of the run, a Sunday performance with seats sent out with compliments of Faber & Faber, as an advertisement. Dukes's plan is to run the play until Shrove Tuesday at the Mercury (making 100 performances) and then have a few performances at some larger place to end off with - one of which Faber & Faber can take. Then they fell to discussing Dukes's large ideas for building a larger theatre and forming a larger company; and in these regions of high finance Geoffrey was very happy. Dukes sails for New York about the fifteenth of January, to be there about a week or ten days, during which he hopes to arrange for a run of the London company at some theatre there. It seems so unlikely to me; but then the present run would have seemed to me fantastic - therefore it is not unimaginable. It would be fun to have it start in New York early in the spring! I think that having the original company do it would perhaps make all the difference between success and failure: it would be so difficult to get a good chorus there, and I don't believe Speaight could be bettered. So as I said, I <u>might</u> come in the spring, and you would have to come to New York for the first night (unless Penelope's mysterious occupation prevents). Dukes asked for your address, thinking that you would be a useful person to consult in connexion with it; I have promised to send it to him; but he was assuming that you would be in New York, and he is hardly likely to get to Boston.

The Morleys (both of them) leave for New York on the 19th or 20th. They will come to Boston; but, as the last time he was over, he may only have time for one night there, to interview the local publishers. He expressed doubt whether, if he was so rushed as that, he would have time to see both you and Ada, so I said that I would ask Ada to ask you to come there when they came, if there was not time for them to see both of you separately. They will have to go to Baltimore, of course, to see his parents; so their time will be very full. He has your address; and except when in America will make himself responsible for letting you know, by letter or cable as the occasion requires, of any mishap to me, and keeping you in touch - he will also of course answer enquiries or do anything you want done. He seemed to be indicated as the obvious person: both because of trustworthiness in every respect, and because of being in as good a position to know about me as anyone.

Of Mrs.Janes's funeral (I have to dine with Janes and her sister Mrs.Webster on Christmas), of my weekend at the Tandys', of dinner at the Huxleys' (Gerald Heard and Aldous's younger brother present), dinner at Alida Monro's (Ethel Colburn Mayne and Air-Commodore Charlton) there is no need to say much. I am going to stop now before my dinner comes up, and then re-read your letters, and then begin again.

One bit to surprise you with, first: I wrote to Miss Galitzi several days ago. I shall get round to Miss Eyre before long! But Penelope comes first, and my family.

Your last letter (December 14th, Saturday, about 3 p.m.) was almost a surprise; because you said you would post from Belfast, and the previous one was posted Belfast: so I feared that you would have no further chance. This one is posted "Paquebot...something"; and a charming note from Mrs. Perkins accompanied it. I did not know that lilies-of-the-valley had such an association for you - if I had known, I should probably not have dared to choose them - but as it is, I am very happy to have done so. (So you are only beginning to use the Roget & Gallet! but I don't want you to smell of violets for me, remember, only of yourself, which is sweeter). And why should you have such a dream as that - but it only expresses the pain of separation - and I will kiss it away when next we are together. I am glad you had a cabin to yourself - you did say that you probably would, and as I re-read your words it is difficult to believe that that part of our long journey is over, and that you are no longer at sea but in Boston. I wait impatiently to hear of Penelope's idea - I am glad you got the letter from the Scripps girl - it is nice to learn of another of your devoted admirers there - and I hope the blue-grey scarf will be of some use in Boston also, to remind you of Dulwich. Archie Macdonnell is an acquaintance of Morley's, I don't think I have ever met him. The advertisement of the Pollicle Dogs was written by Faber.

Now I have re-read all the other letters of that set - beginning with the one you wrote to Pike's Farm - I shall keep them particularly together: and I feel full of thankfulness and gratitude. It is a hideous change to be separated from you, certainly; but I console myself somewhat by thinking that this is not a great and final change like the immense change that has come over us together, and which means that whatever happens, we are inseparably bound together for the rest of our lives. And it does not seem to me wrong to pray that we may be united in place as well as in spirit, and I feel that this must some day happen. When I lie down in bed, I picture you leaning over me, and stroking me with your cool hands as you did when I was ill; but when I turn out the light and settle, I imagine myself with one arm over you holding you closely, a precious rare soul in the most beautiful body. And now I stoop down and kiss your foot.

to Emilie
from Your Tom.

I mean never
to take your ring
off until I see you next -
and not then, unless
you kiss it & put it
on my finger again.

FABER & FABER
Limited
PUBLISHERS

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

27 December 1935.

Dearest Love,

I was thankful to get your first cable, presumably in answer to mine to meet you at the boat, and still more pleased to get the dear one which arrived on Christmas afternoon - so it must have crossed mine which I hope you received on the same day. I have wondered how every day has passed since your arrival, in this first (I imagine) most difficult week, and have thought much of your mother too. I wonder where you were on Christmas Day, and whom you have seen. I hope towards the end of next week to get my first letter from you, and then the gap will be closed as well as it can be under the present conditions. Your ~~xxxxxxx~~ violets lasted, growing more and more fragrant as they faded, over Christmas Day! They are still in the glass on the window sill, with a little touch of colour left, but they smell no longer. It will take me a little time yet to accustom myself to these conditions, and my thoughts turn impatiently towards a visit to Boston, though Boston can never be so satisfactory a meeting-place as London, can it?

I saved all my parcels up and laid them out on my table to open before breakfast on Christmas morning. Your handkerchiefs are lovely, and must have been very expensive, they are so large (the right size for a nose like mine. I have not made any noises with them yet, because I do not want to begin to sport them until more in public. You know that I like bright handkerchiefs, and ninepenny cotton ones cannot be draped from the pocket with anything like the effect of these opulent silk ones. They are the most splendid I have ever had, and again I compliment you on your taste. And I liked the post card of Donne, and still more the card with the so appropriate words on the front, and the four moving words in your writing on the back.

I was also touched by having such a fine pair of gloves from the Perkins's - much better than I should buy for myself. They do fit, and my only question is whether being so light they will not get dirty very quickly, though I am loth to change them for a darker pair. I will write to Mrs.Perkins before the week is out. This Friday morning I write to you in the hope of catching a mail.

The Christmas ceremonies have passed off very beautifully and with a very strong feeling of corporate devotion. Midnight Mass, of course, Christmas Eve: after I had counted and sorted the money I got to bed a little before three, and up again at nine for the 11 a.m. Then to Janes's to dinner, with him and his sister-in-law who cooked it, Mrs.Webster. I think it cheered him up a bit,

as I tried to get him talking about his boyhood and youth, to take his mind off the present; and towards the end he was moved to sing a couple of old songs which had been favourites of his father, who was a wheelwright near High Wycombe. Mrs.Webster managed to get in two or three monologues, one extolling the merits of her departed sister, "pore soul", and one of course on the vicissitudes of her own life, and how she had been left £13,000 by her husband who died when she was 24, and how it all went to a brother, gradually, who had expensive tastes and no scruples about borrowing, and about her wealthy relatives the Jacobs's the market gardeners of Covent Garden, and mother she was from Somerset and apparently she gave away things to a rascal because he came from Somerset too, etc. etc. I wish that I did not have such an imaginative stomach, I cannot really enjoy eating with the poor, and I don't like their pickles and horseradish soaked in vinegar, but I managed to clear my plate. I feel ashamed of being so dainty. I told Janes we should have another dinner on the 21st of February, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of his retirement from the police force. (Not that I trust Janes's memory for dates, he has already got it fixed that he has been with me for 15 years, adding I think four years onto the number). Then back for evensong, and then a late tea at the club, and late supper at home. Yesterday I did a good deal of dozing, for which I feel the better, and was glad of a whole day without society - I enjoy a good go of wasting time, and have read three books, "The League of Frightened Men" by Rex Stout, "The Garden Murder Case" by S.S.Van Dine, and "The Luck of the Bodkins" by P.G.Wodehouse. Tonight I dine with John Hayward (who gave me a pepper mill for Christmas; I gave him a small jar of caviare and a bottle of dry Sherry). I have asked Ada to look at your overcoat, and let me know if she thinks you are warmly enough dressed, but I forgot to put that into my first letter. As luck would have it, I had no sooner written to Miss Galitzi than I got another letter from her, so I am always in arrears.

I hope you do not get impatient when I write light and rambling letters like this; for there are times when the deep things are too poignant to speak of, and I must relieve myself by chattering. I only hope that you are not unaware of the undertones that are always there. On the other hand, I keep having moments when the beauty and wonder of it all comes over me in a fresh flood and makes me tremble with ecstasy that such a thing should come to me. Surely no man was ever better equipped by life for appreciating what you give me than I am! I would have you remember that I am constantly visited by such thoughts, as well as by feelings of deprivation (when I walk along the street I suddenly miss the feeling of your arm tucked under mine, and your shoulder touching me); and that your image, the image of the real you, is always with me, as is the new and strange feeling (still new and strange) of no longer being the same person that I was only such a few brief weeks ago.

My girl, my Emilia, my self,

I kiss your ring.

Your Tom

I am a very jealous person, by the way; and I grudge ~~you to~~ all the people you see. Not that I don't ~~want you~~ to be happy with them!

FABER & FABER
Limited
PUBLISHERS

DIRECTORS:
G.C.FABER (CHAIRMAN)
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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE
LONDON, W.C.1

31 December 1935.

My true Love,

This is New Year's Eve of 1936, and I am thinking of New Years Eve of 1933 at Miss Eyre's house in College Avenue, Claremont, and of how much has happened since then, in three years. The chief pleasure I have at present is to come home in good time before dinner (so as to have plenty of time to think of it beforehand) and light the fire, and think that I have the whole evening to myself alone, and can write to my Emily. It is the next best thing to coming back to dress to go out to dinner with you (I shall never enjoy oysters except in your company!) or to having you walk in and sit down with me in the arm chair which I should put in front of the fire. And when I write "my Emily" like that it is still something self-conscious and new, and I feel a little thrill in putting it down, and it is as if I put my arms round you and put my cheek against yours.

A few bits of news first. The rehearsals for the BBC. "Murder" on Sunday are going forward, and I went to one this morning. It must be very difficult for Browne and the others who are doing the Mercury production to turn to do this at the same time, because the Miss Burnham who is directing has rather different ideas and makes them do it in another way. On Friday I shall hear the chorus rehearse, which will be interesting. I wish that you could come with me: I am very conscious of your absence. The caste is not quite the same; they have got Abraham Sofaer for one of the tempters: he is a very good actor and has, especially considering that he is a Jew, a lovely voice and an attractive personality. I should like to have him in a play properly. On Thursday I dine with the Browne's to meet St.Denis (of the Compagnie des Quinze) who, I understand from Browne, will want me to write a play to be produced by the English company he is getting up. Browne speaks of St.Denis as a producer of "genius", but warns me to stipulate that if I do a play for him, St.Denis himself must agree to produce it.

The New York prospects have met with a possible disaster. I asked Donald Brace to deal with production rights in America, because it never occurred to me that there would be any professional production, only various amateur societies. Brace doesn't know anything about the theatre, and before I had appointed Dukes my agent, he had given his provisional permission to Elmer Rice to produce the play with his unemployed professionals - this seems to be some sort of Roosevelt administration relief philanthropy. Brace didnt

understand that this would count as a professional production. I tried to get him to postpone agreement at least until Dukes had been to New York; but meanwhile Rice cabled to Dukes, who lets me know that - things having gone so far - he has given permission for Rice's lot to do it for two weeks in February. As this is philanthropy, I only get fifty dollars a week for the fortnight; and the question is, whether this production by out-of-work actors is going to make it impracticable to take the English company over. That can't be settled until Dukes has been to New York and surveyed the situation: but it is annoying. Of course I should never have asked Brace to look after production rights for me, if I had guessed that they would ever amount to more than amateur societies, church groups, and schools. It is hard on everybody. I still hope that Dukes may find that it is possible to have a proper production: otherwise I shan't feel able to come over until the autumn.

I lunched yesterday with Murdock at the Athenaeum, with an academic acquaintance of his, Professor Pinto of Southampton. Not very interesting. Murdock strikes me as a sort of cross between a dull dog and a rough diamond. In the evening, I found myself obliged to dine at Notting Hill with an odd crew: a Miss Barclay Carter, who was born in California, brought up in Wales, and appears to have spent most of her life in Italy - she talks the language very fluently - a R.C. convert. She houses Don Luigi Sturzo, an Italian priest who was the head of the principal political party opposed to Mussolini, and is now an exile - and lives with a queer old lady named Miss Marshall, also half-Italianate, who is an anthroposophist - a disciple of one Rudolf Steiner. Most of the company were Papists, so Miss Marshall's conversation was all the queerer: e.g. when there was some talk of the fear of death, and its different manifestations in different ages, Miss Marshall suddenly remarked, that the fear of death was something very modern, that the Chaldaeans were much more interested in their previous incarnation than in their next. There was a very queer dog and a rather queer cat, and the cook had left suddenly during the afternoon, and there was a queer young man named Sir John Pope-Hennessey, and there was talk about Psychic Experiences, and Miss Marshall related an experience on a river in Somerset when she rowed under a bridge that wasn't there; and I was very glad to get home a little after eleven. Besides, the conversation dropped from time to time into Italian, which everyone seemed to speak fluently except myself and one or two others. And dinner consisted of rabbit, full of small bones, with mushrooms.

The weather has been foul. First cold and foggy, then and now wet and gusty - impossible to keep an umbrella up. But tonight it is at least warm and soft, and I think of you shivering in thin clothing in a climate to which you are unaccostomed.

There has been a slight breeze between Ada and Henry, all along of the Cobden-Sandersons. It appears that Mrs.& Mrs. C.-S. went to

New York, met Henry somewhere, and represented themselves as loving friends of mine. Whereupon Henry took them to his heart, and according to his manner gave them introductions to other relatives elsewhere. The Cobden-Sandersons (who are not at all close friends and whom I had not seen for many months; I did not even know that they were going to America), were accordingly rung up by Barbara on arrival in Boston, sent for with a large car (which contained Eleanor) taken out to dinner, and introduced to some friends of the Wolcotts who took the rest of their time in Boston. Ada, under the impression that the Cobden-Sandersons were close friends of mine, was rather aggrieved that they had ignored her, and blamed Henry. Henry very apologetic towards Ada, and imputes everything to the pushingness of the Wolcotts and Hinkleys. I write to pour oil, and tell Ada that even I had known that the Cobden-Sandersons were coming to Boston, I should not have bothered her with people whom she would not have found interesting - and I shall write to Henry to remind him gently that when any real friends of mine come to New York, he is likely to hear from me about them in advance. The Cobden-Sandersons are harmless enough, of course! Ada mollified towards Henry. Henry rather acid about the Hinkleys. I wonder if the Hinkleys will say anything to you about my dear friends the Cobden-Sandersons.

This again is not a very serious letter! I am waiting for my first letter from you - the one with the daily jottings on the boat. My dear, I did not tell you - it is the sort of thing that one does not say at the right moment - that several weeks beforehand, I thought how perfect it would be if you would give me a ring to wear, a seal ring - but though I did not say it at the obvious moment, you must believe that I did think of it - for what other present could mean so much? A ring is more to a man than to a woman - for if one wears a ring at all it is always, one does not have to consider appropriateness to costumes and to other rings, because one has only one ring and wears that always - this ring means to me all that a wedding ring can mean; and I love to wake up and feel it binding my finger, and know that it will always bind that finger.

except a wedding ring

To my Emilie

from her Tom.