

2820 Winslow Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio

April 17, 1944

Dear Miss Van Dusseldorp,

A year and a half of Center life and the 7 months of work with the Welfare department has not and will never be erased from my mind.

I wish to express my appreciation for the send-off at the Gate when I left for Cincinnati. It was very nice of you to take time out of your busy schedule to see me off. Your hand clasp and the last lingering look in your eyes is forever printed on my mind.

As I write this letter your photograph which is on my desk seems to say, "How are you, Mrs. Sumida". It is already two weeks since I have been here, and at times it seems as though it were ages since I left the Center. Then again it seems as if it was just yesterday that I took leave of all of you.

The work here as housemother and cook is hard and trying at times because of my inexperience in this type of work, but as time goes on it will become easier. Whenever I feel a little unsteady or unsure of myself I think of you and what you are doing for others, and I think of how I, too, can try to make others happier. Then, I get the strength to go on. The time and place makes no difference as to what I want to do, for I am striving to do the best that is in me, and I work with that idea in mind. I am governed accordingly, and so I have hurdled each obstacle that confronts me.....doing as thorough a job that is possible.

Last night, Madame Curie was playing in the neighborhood theatre, and so Grace and I went to see it. The book, Madame Curie, was translated into Japanese, and my nephew obtained a copy and gave it to me some years ago, thinking I would gain something from it. The suffering we've endured, cannot be compared with the struggles of Madame Curie, and she clearly illustrates that one must strive unceasingly with perseverance if one wishes to attain one's goal in life.

My work is simple if it is just cooking and housework, but I feel that my job is not finished with just that. I am afraid as I see the people come and go that I will sometimes have to offer a little advice or make a few tactful suggestions, or think a few problems through with some of them. I have been thinking of a few informal get-togethers where we could exchange ideas, etc.

My thanks to you for the lovely and useful gifts is a little bit late, but I really appreciate them. The wallet especially is just what I needed, and it is the first one I received. Money and I never had anything in common, but from now on it looks as though I will have used for a wallet the rest of my life. I also wish to thank you for your nice letter. It will be one of my treasures also.

I feel that I will see you again someday, but I do not think for one moment that we are apart, as you are in my heart and on my mind always. I have lost three brothers and my father, but I never think of them as dead,

for they are still a part of me. My husband and I are separated physically, time and distance separates us, but it is not so spiritually. I have been fortunate to have many friends, and although I do not see them or hear from them regularly, they are as close to me as the times we were together. My feelings for you are of the same nature, and I hope you do understand what I am trying to say.

I think of the Welfare department often, I think of you, Miss Cargile, Mrs. Stearns, Mr. Kataoka, Mr. Yamamoto and the others, and when I think of the fine work you are doing for the Center folks, I am inspired..... you give me a goal to strive for in my daily living.

Grace will probably write to you, but she has just started working in a small firm, enjoying the work immensely....doing all of the work connected with an office, which in the long run may be more interesting than Civil service work.

I am unable to write in English, so as usual Grace translated my letter for me.

Please give my best regards to everyone.

Sincerely,

Masako Sumida