

Sunday, Nov. 22

Dear Bill,

It was a dizzying flight back in time...overwhelming. Forgive me my display of emotion which was directed (in retrospect) perhaps more to the passage of time, the way it washes away everything and what remains of ourselves in the past lies in the memories of our friends. No regrets or anything, of course, for that is what old age does: we must keep our eyes on the steady parade of the present, trying not to lose our footing. Those were the times fraught with the turbulence of war, evacuation, the heat of youth. The ardor I felt when I woke up in the middle of the night, was it perhaps a reliving of an ancient time, a chasing of shadows. It was my first love and I loved you with a passion that present day girls do not know. We were so sheltered in those days. I was sort of an oddball, I am sure. I loved you with a pure white flame and you were worthy of it....so handsome, with the most beautiful clearest eyes, like an icy stream, and a presence. Sueko said you were brilliant (I never knew that part of you), the kind of person that people would follow, such promise. Ah, Youth! Whatever, it doesn't matter now as we straggle into the finish line and that stretch of time from youth to old age is an expanse of pure driven snow, not a single footprint to sully the view. Perhaps that is what made the meeting and visit so dramatic, so emotional for me. You were the face of my youth, Bill, and when I saw you looking old it brought age into focus for me.

There are so many roads to the past. Different things, people, places trigger the way. It is amazing what the heart and mind has gone through and we understand more and more about ourselves as events come into full circle.

So it's back to earth time again. I saw Sueko at the flower workshop yesterday and she came running over to talk to me about you and (how just like a woman) she felt her place was the messiest she had ever had it. I don't think so but it must have been her frame of mind and your presence. She thinks nothing of it when I go by myself. Anyways, after we left, she said she went in her yard and cleaned up the fallen flowers, messy bushes, everything in sight....in a frenzy. Seeing you had brought back a lot of memories of that time for her too and she was disappointed that I had sort of kept you to myself. Why didn't you do something, she asked me.

I haven't seen Sally but it will be interesting to hear her. As for George, what can I say? He looks good, everything in control. You can do that <sup>why?</sup> ~~is~~ you are detached from life. It's like going to the races and not placing a bet. Is

it the best way to understand it all. Can you be a truly human person? I often wonder as I look at the way I have muddled through.

As for Harry, he said he was stunned because he felt so shabby and we looked so dressed up. "Where was my mind," he said. I didn't even offer you coffee or tea." "I felt we saw you at your best," I told him, "your best natural warm self."

I had an invitation for the Husky-Cougar game but I had turned it down because of my flower arrangement workshop. Besides, football as you know.... I guess it is a long standing sort of feud game and I heard the Huskies won. At night I went to Nippon Kan. I love to go there. It's like basking in the presence of my mother. Nowadays, the ~~artists~~ <sup>was</sup> are more likely to be from Japan. Last ~~night~~ <sup>night's</sup> ~~night's~~ koto and shakuhachi ~~was~~ excellent. Shakuhachi, in particular, can be lifeless in the hands of a lesser player but at its best and in some pieces like the "Spring Sea", truly one feels the very solitary soul of Japan. It does go straight to the guts and the 1 1/2 hour flew by. I clapped and clapped but no encore. A reception afterwards but I skipped it and the crowd (over 2/3 Caucasian) and came home still under the spell of the music.

During lunch break at the workshop, I dashed over to a craft fair at the Buddhist Church and ran into Lilly Uyeno. She had just returned from a trip to Japan and 1 week in China. Also I ran into my sister Mich and I told her about your visit. She remembered you, "Of course, I remember him, and did he ever marry Donna?" She drinks beer I swear about 3 or 4 cans a day but doesn't look bloated at all. I wonder if it is because she plays tennis twice a week, sometimes thrice.

I went for my walk this morning with a couple G really loved. They took such good care of him. He used to stop at their home almost everyday for a beer after work. When I see those little liquor bottles <sup>at</sup> the cemetery, I know Shig's been out there. We went to the Seward Park peninsula (3 miles) and afterwards I had breakfast at their home. After coffee laced with Bailey's Irish Cream, I had to skip the morning workshop. Oh well, I can't do everything. But Sueko will be there. Shig claims the air by the lake is much better than the Beacon median. And it's lovely with the trees still golden and the snow geese and ducks.

The night you left, Kip came racing in after work to ask me how it was seeing you. We went to the Chinese restaurant on Beacon Hill and had a pleasant chat. That night about 11:30 Wendy called and we had a 1/2 hour conversation. I also

had to give an accounting to Tomi (she was impressed by Smithsonian exhibit and was looking forward to the O'keefe exhibit), my friend from Mt. Vernon and Flo of course. Next day, Marilyn called and she wanted an honest account. Did he make it to first base? That's her style. She discussed it with her friends and told me if any problems, just call because she's seen everything.

What was in my mind inviting you to dinner for smelt. I had originally planned on making choppina ( a seafood dish) but when you talked about watching salt, I dropped the idea but I was so intimidated by the idea of impressing you with a nice dinner, I think I went into reverse. It's kind of funny when I think I had the fire <sup>plow</sup> ready to go etc. I should have gone to Bush or Izumi for sushi. Tonight I'm going to see the movie I was telling you about. The Fujitas are picking me up.

The soap was in the white dish by the sink. The Ninna Ricci cover may have fooled you. Yes, I would love a guest towel. Thanks for coming.

*Toni*