

October 20, 1989

Dear May,

Today is Friday when I usually go after Butch in the afternoon. After I bring him home, I usually wash his hair and shave him. After he has supper (he enjoys rice!) then he usually works on a puzzle and watches Tv or tapes. This man, because he is no longer a boy, demands so little of life. He is very appreciative of anything that is done for him. If he were normal, he would have been a blessed head of some household by now. Our whole family would have been very different. The dynamics of having a retarded child in our family put great pressures on all of us. I had to make many decisions that don't follow the book and trust that they were the right ones. Some of our children suffered and others emerged stronger than normal. What can I say, May. No one said life is fair but as a parent I will always suffer feelings of guilt along with pride.

Wendy said she was glad I wasn't alone during the suspenseful period after the quake. It was a comfort to have him holding my hand. That day was so eventful because of the funeral in the morning at your church. Another weeping widow. But that's not the whole story at our age. Funerals are now a great place for little reunions, people one doesn't run into but always so nice to see because it's part of a diminishing world that we are familiar with. We greet each other with genuine warmth, an affirmation, a closing up of the ranks. Bill saw many friends he had know with Charles Nakata in the army days in Japan. During the service, men who had been in the army were asked to rise and salute Mr. Nakata and I was surprised at the number represented. That evening we had dinner at Butcher's because it's near my home. We discussed the novel FIRES ON THE PLAINS by Ooka. I can never argue with

with Bill because he has that logical type of mind that sifts out a line of reasoning. However I always come back with the argument that logic is not the only truth....my only defense is the truth that underlies emotion. I muddle through life in a flurry of emotion, many times not quite understanding what it's all about. Much later when the dust dies down, something like truth or reason emerges in my heart.

May, this is such a different type of relationship. It has to do with the beginnings which were initiated in our youth. Our attraction was tender, tentative, on the verge of sex. And now we come together with experience and compassion among the dying embers.

Yesterday, Kenny <sup>brought</sup> brought me smelts so I told him about Bill and he quipped, "What's wrong with that?" so that was that. I think he was trying to reassure me that he would support me no matter what. But he stood up immediately and left for Shig's. Today he is up in La Conner with Shig and Tad so I know that a lot of time will be spent discussing me. They are the ones who truly love and miss George and on this beautiful day they will fish and reminisce. Bless their hearts. Yesterday I went after Ruth because of a guild meeting in town. I cooked supper for her and I told her about visiting with Bill. Then we discussed her marriage and to this day she keeps in touch with JOhnnie's other woamn. The other woman understood and loved John. Ruth recognizes that their marriage was not a fulfilling one. So we talked, we old friends and life, a lot of it, comes to light. I listened and wondered, May. I love these people.

Thanks for everything.....

Love,  
Tom