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Dear Margery & Harold:

In coming away last night I wondered whether I had been very
tactless in speaking of my original contact with the little
bookshop. — I didn't have any one in mind as a person or a
business— as I had no person in mind when I spoke of my
brothers or Elizabeth or Davidson. — I had presumed you both
understood that even if you couldn't follow all I felt— &
so inadequately put into form—

— I want you to feel I am interested in both of you— in
what you are trying to do & trying to express— but I can
help you only through my own experiences of life— by giving
you a series of pictures— all different yet seemingly not so
different. All related with a sense of direction—

— Both of us enjoyed the evening.— Yet there seemed a great
separation— five different people— together yet so far apart—
Queerly so at moments— The two wonderfully asleep downstairs—
I want to see them so day—

I don't know why I send you this— yet I feel it must go—
because I want you to have it before you start the day's work—

"291"

Jan. 6/ 1929
[Sept. 11, 1924 letter and 4 enclosed photographs]
From:
M. Content,
Pomona,
N.Y.

alfred Striglitz, Esq.
Lake George,
N.Y.
[Marjorie content house, 1924]
Content

Sept. 11th [1924]
Ossining, N.Y.

Sitting by the fire this frosty evening, I said for the 10th time—will I write anything tonight?—for the first time—I'm doing it—at least starting. Something always happens here (yes, my fountain pen just ran dry) to interrupt letter writing—or anything not relevant to getting the house finished. There are so many things that can happen—no more oil in the lamp—soup boiling over on the stove—drawing the maul for the windows—so that we know the measurements of the rafters to cut—splinters to be taken out—Even a daddy-long-legs may spoil one evening.
The house has been an unfeeling task master— a fearful drive to get it pretty well finished before October 1st when we are due in NY because of children's school and because of the impossibility of keeping sufficiently warm in this present shack. We have had a full summer but a one-track summer— with a few weeks and ridings along the way— just enough to prevent sickness. All work and play makes Jack——

Well we have had some play— bisterous Saturday evenings at times at a near friends house— where one released the four dogged members Puck of jir de vine—

Michael’s heart has remained original all summer— as all the children, says think he is Santa Claus. He went into the city for the first time last week & the
opening of Macbeth &c. play. —

I'm wondering what you are going to do next winter. Can I do anything to help? I'll be back in town in three weeks and can look up places for you to look at — or anything —

If you want to come in any stay in 9 1/2 St. anytime just come ahead. There is plenty of room and a lovely girl named Frieda Thunberg is living in the basement and will look after you if you need anything.

I've seen many strange things happen this summer and am trying them up to think about over the winter. Life is more interesting and more surprising
every day I live - your friend Mrs. Montgomery Clarke is still going along trying. They claim meedest to impress Father time, but all her efforts are but as the scratching of a very small hand. Do you remember in King St. - ? I didn't want them.

At first - I was frightened - it is rather frightening to be all alone.

But isn't it wonderful how being two together makes one more than doubly brave?

Well - Stigletty - here are some pictures of the house under way. I'm brave enough to send them to you.

My love to you both, and I hope you will find time to let me know where and when I may expect to see you.

Maggie
Dear Marcy:

Lake George
Sept. 27 - 1924

It was good to hear from you - to hear about you & the house. To see the evidence - to have the splendid photographs. If I have one wish it is that I possessed the ability to build a house of any kind with my own hands. So I'm glad to know you & your & the kids all building. And what a joy it's bound to be when you are ready to occupy & live in. Our summer was a peculiar one - different from others. But it was a good one taken all in all though it did start very badly. Georgia was far from well & had me greatly worried. But eventually she started picking up. The Davids were here & they gave her some very beneficial advice - I never seemed so useless and stupid as when I saw G. losing weight & not being able to eat - & didn't know what to do for her. Of course I came up pretty much a wreck myself. That infernal moving & uncertainty of the future & that kidney stone.

Well, we're hard at work. And the hill is peaceful & as wonderful as ever. Georgia has been painting large canvases & has done very successful gardening. The garden has been her chief source of inspiration. I have been sky-SCRAPING. And have a few prints that G. says go ahead of last year.

As for plans - we haven't any. It's awfully good of you to offer to help us. But just at present I don't see how any one can. Not even you, dear Marcy. Fate willing we'll be here at least another five weeks. It is just possible that when we reach town we'll land in a hotel for a few days while hunting quarters. You see I have a room at the Anderson - a sort of a Place of Contact & we'd like to live as near it as possible. But as I said we have no plans & we have no idea what will happen. Elizabeth would like us to live a while in Harriman. But I doubt the feasibility of that. I must be on the spot in town or not be in New York at all. If it weren't for the fact that I must preserve some sort of 'practical' contact we'd remain here until driven away by cold. So thanks Marcy - I'll accept your offer in case it works out that way. You are very kind to be so thoughtful of us. I know you like us. And you know we like you very much.

- Yes, I often think of that evening when I let loose about Mrs. M.-G. - What a brute I seemed. And yet - I was thinking of only one thing - you - the you which I felt Mrs. M.-G. was trying to kill if she could. And it was the you in an impersonal sense as it was not personally meant what I was saying about Mrs. M.-G. All I see & feel are forces. And their significance. I'm really sorry for Mrs. G.

- At present we're four up here. G. & I - Ida O'Keefe, the nurse, quite a remarkable person - very different from any one I know - & my mother's old maid - also a character. Each one of us.
is very busy & there is harmony—no wasted moments on empty
formalities—& no tension of any kind—a real peaceful spot
of Earth. Very alive.

Our love to you all—but most particularly to you.

Once more thanks.

Alfred Stieglitz

As soon as we reach town you'll hear from us.
Dear Alfred Sligh,

You wrote to me because of the chest. It was nice of you, and I really needed it. But really, you misunderstand me. I was hurt. But not at you. Why at you?

No. It was simply that our talk had the effect of enlarging the already cavernous gap between what I want the chest to be, and what, because of already established fact, it is.

You completely knocked the floor out of the things you were saying. I knew you were only going no further, but cannot a picture be an indictment?

You see, one goes along and is liable to hear only the encouraging things,
and being an extreme optimist, I put myself in the back — and say — "see what good work you are doing" — then comes a hurricane, and blows away the pleasant mist. — Very salutary but a bit hard to stand up under.

particularly as — because everything has come together the last few weeks to a point which has tried me out a bit, —  a vaguely the weakness.

Will you come to see us come Sunday when the folks are awake. — and at home? — you see! I'm not afraid of the hurricane.

my love to Ethel.

Imagine —

content.