

Letter II: same addresses (also written by mother)  
postmark dated Apr 13, 1948 (special delivery)  
(18¢)

text:

Dear Sidney,

When your special delivery letter came yesterday I thought at first it was a sensitive message to allay any "escaped lunatics" notions that might have followed my unauthorized departure from Payne Whitney. (It is true that I had been afraid of just such a reaction--since I had only my great friend, William Mayer's opinion and my own judgment to set against the conclusion of the P.W. doctors.) I realized ~~that~~ a second after that you could not have had time to respond to my letter. The invitation delighted me and I accept with the warmest pleasure.

And to think that only two weeks ago I was was (cq) in flaming revolt against psychiatry as I saw it at that clinic. I find a childish and inexplicable sense of justification in the fact that you and your doctor friend have invited me to visit you at the psychiatric convention.

The lines you quote from "Does" letter are most interesting to me. They give me an intimation of an understanding quite different to the caliber of mind I was so opposed to at the clinic. It does seem to me that maturity results in the acknowledgement of the tragedy of human conditions, rather than the denial of suffering.

"How can you tell me you are not sick when there are tears in your eyes right now," one of the doctors said.

I will tell you only one more thing and then stop harping on the subject.

I said one of my poems to the doctor. Here is the poem:  
(next page)

When we are lost what image tells?  
Nothing resembles nothing. Yet nothing  
Is not blank. It is configured Hell:  
Of noticed clocks on winter afternoons, malignant stars,  
demanding furniture,  
All unrelated and with air between.

The terror--is it of Space, of Time.  
Or the joined trickery of both conceptions?  
To the lost--transfixed among the self-inflicted ruins  
All that is non-air--if this ~~is~~ indeed is not deception--  
Is agony immobilized. While Time, the endless idiot,  
Runs screaming round the World.

The comment at the hospital was: "Do you have moods like that often?"

Page Four: Carson McCullers letters to Sidney Isenberg  
(continuing letter postmarked Apr 13, 1948)

I am greatly looking forward to meeting you and your friend, Doc, in Washington. Is it all right if my mother comes with me? I am not quite husky yet, and Mother would be nervous if I went alone. Now that I have a ~~new~~ goal, a ~~new~~ set date to prepare for. I will try harder to be well. I will eat hugely and exercise every day. I try to stumble through little Schubert pieces and Back with my simple left hand part. The saddest part of this illness is that I can no longer play the piano, and ~~so~~ so am deprived of one of my chief pleasures. I hope it will come back--do you think so?

Dear Sidney, I want you to know that our correspondence has done so much to restore my faltering self-confidence, and has been a ~~new~~ source of strength and happiness for me. Thank you. This carries you affectionate greetings.

Yours,  
Carson