

17/5. Sunday.

Dearest Roger,

Following your phone call last Monday (you were doing difficult night shooting - just about to go to bed - around 2 a.m.), I did not continue to letter & feel then started.

Now Francesca is back from her whistle-stop visit with a BBC team, & she managed a 24-hour visit to Box 85, & so there is firsthand news of my dear R. B. & his family. I didn't know Parker had died - tho' clearly he was near his full years. Poor Roger, - that dog has been more than an animal companion, - a vital link with the past - a member of his original family. Also he was - as I'm sure you know - in close touch with Cayl, and his heart must be torn by his loss too. It's good that you were able to take care of his medical needs, just very very sad for everyone. James told me about meeting her family and friends & it is good that he was there.

I do HOPE, as I write, that Holly & Lily (ex-tho faithful Ruth) are up with you for a brief weekend. Very necessary for each of you. No one knows, till they experience it, just how distressing these separations are, difficult for Holly to cope with on several levels; and you miss out on these most heart-warming early months of Miss Lil's world; &

above all, the busy warmth of Holly & Harry your mind & hours very occupied by the film work is probably the only real help. Of course this includes the financial security. I don't know why I write about such matters, which must be all too evident to you. It's probably because there is so little contact among us all for the small change of life. It would be so good to have time for real talk. Not the rushed airport, 3-day orbits, & worried scrambles, we often seem to experience. But I did enjoy last Christmas with you two when there were a number of nice just moments, & Holly was quite relaxed in spite of the bad result of working & about with a germ.

Francesca looked well & invigorated when she got back from Washington. She had really enjoyed the visit to Roger B., & I believe the work part went off well. Now it is all shelved while we go through the pantomime of a General Election. Four weeks of sheer Stage Terms in exorbitantly bad taste, with a foregone conclusion of another spell of Thatcherism, & a mere divided nation since the times of O. Cromwell. The 40% of the population

Johns - will give her a majority will represent far less than 40% of the electorate, as most people not on that bandwagon are too discouraged even to cast a vote - Re low standard of living, & workless days, seep the spirits.

- If this seems an untidy second, - I am writing in bed as I wake up early. It is a sunny but cold (about 40°) morning, & I will get up now & finish when I've had some juice.

11 a.m. To bring you up to date (as far as I know) on the Sala scene. Nigel had a hospital visit ~~tests~~ to discover if they can reverse the colonomy. I have heard results. He himself sounded reasonably together on the phone, & more sanguine than Jane even does. She is as strung up & disturbed as ever, & really very difficult to bear.

Am just off to pick up Angus for a brief visit here. He says he will bring his school homework. (Shades of Orley Farm/Harrow/Westminster)! I'll be no help at all.

Discard both batch of pix taken over Eastin @ Sala, B'sea, or here at 74. Don't let them clutter up your over filled boxes, - they are expendable. Just a reminder you. Nigel looks so much happier in the new home. He stresses that he loves it. The old love of & more love to Holly & Miss L.