

Drim

Milltown

Sunday 3:30

1936

My dearest Ones

Here I am Sunday all on my own with Mother taking a nap in the 'O'Dearest' & Tom farming my thoughts wander over the sea & I've begun to take refuge by writing you all that I so wish I could say.

Well first of all I am wondering if you have arrived in New York by now. We are anxiously awaiting news in tomorrow's paper. The weather has been so foggy here all week we have thought all kinds of things & have often said ye would be complete wrecks by the time ye got to land if it were as bad on sea. We are just living now for news from ye even tho' it is only a week since ye left here, it seems like six months to us. There isn't a night since ye left that I haven't dreamed about ye. I dreamt one night that Eileen got so fat you hardly knew her ___ & later than last night I was having a row with you over wanting to buy another 'O'Dearest'. Well by the time you get this letter I hope you will both be quite settled down at home again & that everything will be as well as if you never left home. We have offered the Rosary every night since you left for that intention & will continue to do so until we get news from ye. So let you take it easy for a while as ye will be dead out after all the rough & tumble here etc. so now Bess be sensible & don't go fussing about the minute you land, take it easy for a while & remember Mary's idea 'where there is muck there is luck'. We were so happy to get your card from Cobh. I'm sure ye were fed up there trying to kill time until 4:30. It was nice ye met that chap. Imagine the train not to get in there until 9:15. Ye must be dead out & I suppose ye slept very little that night worrying about the morn. Oh! won't ye be glad to get home to your own little cot once more.

Well now to begin all the news since ye left:- the weather was lovely since ye left and we were every day saying how well we hadn't weather like this while ye were home until Thursday came & we had an awful downpour & ever since it is drizzling more or less each day. So ye haven't missed much as far as the weather is concerned. Tom was very lucky he got all the oats in & the hay down from Killerneen before Thursday so now he has only the turf & potatoes to think about & they will be got some time no matter how bad the weather comes. Julia & Brendan ran down from school for a couple hours on Friday eve like ourselves they thought they should see ye some where about the house. They found everything all right after going home that Friday morn. Kids etc asleep. Mary & me got home ok also. We had a letter from Nora yesterday & really we are highly amused ever since we read it. She said how killed they were & when they arrived in Dromore Nell, Peg & herself went to bed in Peg's & slept until morning & then Joe left them home. Peg was so killed she wasn't able to go to school Monday. Now wouldn't that make you scream laughing. I feel like throwing out my chest & saying I'm not a bad soldier at all considering I was able to stick it out myself without bed until 9:30 & I'm sure they were in bed early enough during the previous week. Mother said it was surprising they didn't put up in some house on the way for a sleep considering they were as bad as all that. I must tell them that too when I'm writing. If you were here for 3 more weeks you would have everyone of them laid out.

Well Mother is thoroughly "at home" in the O'Dearest. She thought it funny for the first few nights but no later than this morning she said feathers were only in the 2nd place near it & that she wouldn't go back to a feather bed again for all the world. All she is regretting now is that she won't live long enough to have all the satisfaction she wants out of it. All I'm worrying about is that maybe she'll get "too frisky" & begin to look for some other partner besides me. Her last prayer every night going to

bed is "God be with ye & spare ye the health it is ye left me the comfortable bed." The other night I dicked out the bed with Bessie's pillow slips, quilt & filled the hot bottle Kate sent & one of her night dresses & hung the bag Patt sent her on the head of the bed. Well you should see her face when she went into the room & saw the whole display. First thing she wanted to know was it the priest I was bringing her. Well, if I died I couldn't get her to go into the grandeur as she says. I got as far as making her don the nightie but the quilt & pillow slips had to come off for "fear she'd spoil them & not knowing who might come the way & she not to have a decent stitch to pull out." "Faith", she said "if ye think I'm going that quick ye are making a great mistake I'm hoping to live myself until I see those that gave them to me once more." So now old dolls cheer up we are all going to keep well until we meet again.

___ Mother is beginning to cheer up again these days. She missed you such a lot at first, however, we keep putting the bright side out for her sake and it's wonderful how it helps. John Scan never forgot how you kept up at the last minute. You were so brave I'll never forget it, had you broken down it would break her heart to see you. I really don't know how you did it. Of course, I know well how full up you were & that when you were left to yourself the tears must have flown. I know we all must have made it so hard for you it is only since I realize it but honestly, I couldn't help it as I felt if the tears didn't come I'd just burst & just now as I'm writing I wonder how did I ever say goodbye. Up to a month ago I never knew I had such a wonderful brother & now to think after all these years we had you only for 3 weeks & here you are gone again. It is a cruel, cruel world. Mother says she will die happy now that she has seen you & I believe myself she will as she has lived these years for that day & thank God she has seen it. It is only since you left we hear all your praises being sung. Everyone says you looked no more than 26 years old never mind being 26 years gone and that you were the best- looking Yanks seen about here in a long time even your dress was so different to other Yanks & the "derby" just stood out on its own. Bessie was so sensible & none of the silly clothes you usually see on Yanks. Now, I don't want ye to get swelled heads or think I am flattering I'm really saying what everyone says & what I think myself also as I must admit I never even thought I had such a fine-looking brother. Now don't think I am beginning to get foolish when I write these things I mean everything I say & I don't believe in paying compliments when one is dead. If I could forget the past few weeks I might settle down but every day since ye left seems as if it's never going to end. I never thought I could miss ye so much. I missed Della an awful lot too but of course when Kate & Patt were home I was too young to realize the loss. If there was any of the girls home even to talk to about ye it would not feel so bad but with Mother I try to avoid talking about ye as I know how it upsets her so I have got to sing grief alone & when I feel too full indoors go out in the garden & get the load off my chest. I have the kitchen to myself while I am writing you this & believe me I have let the tears drop. However, I suppose it's useless feeling like this & we must only all cheer up & hope for the past three weeks back again in the near future. You are very lucky, John you aren't a divorced man after the couple nights we were in Galway. Do you remember the fellow you told he was the best-looking man you met since you left America? Well he is almost clean over the top about Bessie. He is talking foolish about her since in Greaney's. So now Bess any day you get rid of him don't feel you have to bother about anyone there make straight for Galway harbour & you'll find he'll greet you with open arms. I know John will get jealous when he hears this but it is really true the poor lad isn't sleeping since.

I have been racking my brains wondering how I can send you some of the heath for Tom Kelly so that it won't be dutiable so I have decided to enclose a bit in a newspaper. I hope it will reach you O.K. I know you were disappointed when you hadn't so it will be a surprise when you get it.

Now I could keep writing for days all I wish to say but where is the good. Don't forget to send a line & say how you all are as we are living for a letter. I am feeling fine, T God since you left & none the worse of my outings, late hours etc. Give my love to all the family also Kate & Patt & don't forget to keep lots & lots for yourselves.

From your loving sister Fred, Mother & To

xxx

Transcribed from the original by Margaret Marlow with some punctuation added 7 April 2021.