

Precious Pilgrim,

It's been a wonderful day. I had a good morning visit with Mama, went to the wedding brunch, and then Winton and I played. I had to go to two parties alone this weekend. Uck! I do not like that. It was important that the family was represented, so I went, but ah, it was good to have my man back at my side this afternoon. I'm trying to learn to look at my cup being half full instead of half empty when Winton is gone. He has a lot of different responsibilities pulling on him. Often I say, "It's your choice," and he agrees. He, by nature, is a "do-er" and I am a "be-er." Opposites attract. I try not to be a drag on him when I need and want him by my side, but he can't be. I'm trying to learn to celebrate when he is around. He gives to more causes and people than anyone else I know. He's fun, cute, and attractive, and I like him a lot besides loving him.

He's sleeping now next to me. I hope I can quietly write and not disturb him. One of the highlights of the day was going to see a sculptor named Cordray Parker and to see some of his works. We're in the market for a piece which will be the focal point for the back garden of our house. I can't believe it was just a week ago that we were in Palm Beach and saw the Rodin sculptures. The one piece in that exhibition that remains strongly in my memory is the one called "Cathedral," which is a pair of praying hands. Of course, many of Rodin's works are moving. They are so strong, and made even more so

by the figures' seemingly frozen movements in time and often intentional missing parts.

For me, many of them lack peace, and the agitated energy is incredible, but somewhat disturbing. I guess any real art form is an extension of its creator, and at its best, a reflection of the Creator. I think after yesterday's visit, I could live with a Parker piece more comfortably than a Rodin. I know Winton will be relieved to hear that news, but I won't wake him up. I'll tell him tomorrow.

Going to Cordray's was an adventure in itself. I love how I can mention an idea, and if it catches Winton's fancy, he will grab it and run with it. Fortunately, today's, "Why don't we go see Cordray Parker someday" took. We had four hours to spare between the luncheon and the wedding. Winton got on the car phone and asked Cordray if we could come visit him. "When?" "Right now." Cordray was nice enough to say yes, and gave us the directions to his house.

It's very far out in the country and over a mountain. Thank the dear Lord we were in my husband's Ford Expedition instead of my Mustang or we would never have made it. The road was a steep, tiny, wooded lane. I think I would have been more comfortable if we had taken a mule train down. I was driving so Winton could eat his lunch. I would have loved to have relinquished the wheel, but Winton's always good at encouraging me when I'm doing something that really isn't in my comfort zone, and this drive qualified.

Finally, the steep mountain slowly gave way to a gentler hill. I could relax a little and notice cultivated areas where hellebores and daffodils seemed to be flourishing tucked in these woods; we'd also come across occasional pieces of sculpture or an old bathtub turned into a birdbath. Everything seemed to somehow work in harmony. We came to the end of the road and were met by this twinkly-eyed, bearded, elderly, young, middle-aged man, Cordray Parker. He was nice enough to take me with his hand, a wonderfully rough one, and help me down stone paths that led to his "old studio." He was working on a gorgeous drawing, which was to represent the arm motions of a dancer. He was going to make the figures out of bronze in bas-relief and mount each one on Plexiglas and stack them a few inches apart so that seen from afar, you would have a three-dimensional effect of a dancer's arms in motion.

It's hard to picture the piece from these words, but it was incredibly exciting to look into the artist's eyes as he enthusiastically tried to explain his vision.

Then he led us down more rock steps and paths to his home. Picture this, please. I am in a flowing, sheer navy blue print number with bronze heels. Hello? How appropriate is this outfit for a mountain wilderness adventure? Winton never allows for a clothes change. When he's ready to go, you go. Cordray could not have been more hospitable and never hesitated guiding me like he daily had heeled damsels come

calling.

He and his wife built their house. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs couldn't have done a better job. They built it right over two streams. After we entered, his wife came to greet us. I was thrilled to find that she also was a twinkly-eyed, elderly, young, middle-aged artist. They'd built this magical house thirty years ago and there they raised their family.

His wife apologized for the cobwebs that were on some of their sculptures. Her husband, my husband, and I had just been admiring them when she came in and started tearing them down and brushing them off. We stopped her.

Cordray said they'd been concentrating mainly on outside gardening recently because the weather had been so pleasant. Bless them. These webs looked wonderfully old, not recently made ones, but I didn't say a word.

It seemed like the house was rocks and earth and glass. It was somehow hanging over the streams and there was a cantilevered wooden spiral staircase that went to who knows where. I felt inside and outside and a part of my surroundings. It was like walking through an actual sculpture. The creators had finished and moved on to other works, even though they still lived there.

We walked back up the path to his "new studio." On the way, we passed an ancient log cabin. Cordray said he'd been given this quaint structure years ago. He had moved it to its present location and it had been used as a playhouse by his

children.

As to the "new" studio, I couldn't tell much difference between it and the older one. There just seemed to be more parts and pieces and piles in it than the other. Occasionally, he'd get a little twinkle in his eye and start to try and tell us what we were looking at. I think he could imagine the finished piece, whereas Winton and I could only see the actual parts before us. We were not the creator, so we couldn't envision what was to become.

Hmm. Interesting. I wonder if it's the same for our Creator God? That He doesn't ever give up on us individually because He knows what the finished work is meant to be? We are "works in progress." Cordray Parker, although a perfect host, would not have allowed me to go into his workshop and start welding away. If I had, I think he would have disassembled my mess and set about recreating his art object. It is my prayer and belief that our Father God will also have the last word when it comes to the "Lucy creation." I might be constantly making myself a mess, but I'm counting on His love and His mercy and His grace to set all things back to where they belong and how he envisioned them. Christ crucified made and makes this righting of wrong possible.

My man still sleeps. I must also. The wedding was lovely. Dinner with good friends was comfortably congenial. It has been a blessed day.

We had the privilege of visiting an artist's world. It's not

*surprising that it was a completely harmonious one, where
God's natural works and man's handmade ones were tranquil,
at peace. Sometimes it was hard to tell where one left off and
the other began, like the sculpture a la spider web.*

Peace.

Your sister in Christ,

Lucy