The Sabbath, 27 June ’20.

I wake up just as early on Sundays as on other days but I lie in bed till eight o’clock just to enjoy the feeling of not having to get up. It’s so restful to stretch and wriggle and watch the clock’s hands, knowing that on one day in the week they do not control my life. Then I get up and do the week’s washing before breakfast so as to have it all over early. In that way I can forget it because I like to make believe that I don’t work any on Sunday, that I just play and rest. I pretend that my Sundays just begin at breakfast time. I prepare my meal and set it all out on my cunning little table by the open window, then I make believe that I’ve just gotten up and come to the table and I’m so surprised to see breakfast all served. I always take an hour and a half for breakfast on Sunday. The maid serves a double portion of coffee so as that I can have enough to last while I read the Sunday paper.

There is always a great deal to engage my attention – matters for which I do not have time on other days. You see in the summer I take a small house in the country and have a little vegetable garden and keep chickens. It’s all just across the way. I call it my garden. I’m sure the real owner wouldn’t mind because I’m only pretending. If it were truly mine I’d build a little picket fence around it and paint it white – that is the fence not the garden. The peas and lettuce and beans are up. While the corn is nearly two feel high. I think we’ll have some by August.

But best of all is the hennery. There’s a new crop of fluffy, cuddlesome chicks watched over by a solicitous old hen. Not long ago one of the hens hatched out, along with some perfectly good chicks, three ducklings – a snowy white one and two black ones. She was surprised at having her setting efforts produce such results but her astonishment doesn’t begin to compare with that which is daily experienced by her offspring. They don’t know exactly what ails their environment but they don’t like it. The beautiful white duck is continually being pecked by the whole flock of hens who don’t approve of his presence. But then it never is any fun to be a cute little duckling in the midst of a lot of old hens! The two black ducks have been making noble efforts to swim. They take a little run to get up speed and then send their feet out backwards letting their bodies come down in a gliding motion as though they were shooting the chutts [chutes] and every time they land hard on their chests on the unyielding ground. When they try to walk they fall over forward like badly balanced wooden toys. But that isn’t the worst of the situation. Just imagine how it must feel to be a duck and try to take a bath in a small wash basin! They don’t get into the basin but they line up around the edge, fill their bills with water and then sprinkle it on themselves, preening their feathers vigorously. If I owned them otherwise than in my imagination, I’d buy a second-hand bath tub for them, sink it in the ground till the edge was level with the surface and fill it with water. Wouldn’t they enjoy themselves!

Beyond my garden and two or three others, while on the right is a great open field, grown wild with grass and bushes. Then come some fine old trees producing altogether a most attractive and restful scene. And it’s so deliciously cool here. Four of my windows face the east and receive the breezes right from Long Island Sound, two face west, one north. There is seldom a night in summer that I don’t have to have a blanket.

We have had no uncomfortably hot weather yet. Each day is a perfect glistening jewel, one succeeding another like the matched pearls of a necklace.

Little Boy will you come back with a private harem all your own? Are you happy in the land of multiple wives and sweethearts? I’ve always wondered that any men remained in the Western Hemisphere when they could so much more easily satisfy their polygamous tendencies in the East. Would you like it not to have to see the same wife more than once in two or three weeks? It has seemed to me that the harem puts marriage on the lowest basis; it recognizes only the sexual relation. A woman is chosen for her physical charms only; there is no thought of companionship, of partnership between the sexes.

I think that we in America have the right idea about marriage theoretically, but I wonder why the relation turns out wrong so often. I have an idea that more often than not it’s the woman’s fault. In the office where I am, one of the women is married. She and her husband live with her mother who keeps house for them. The woman is in her thirties, works hard all day and takes night courses at Columbia towards a Ph.D. With great frequency she telephones home that they needn’t expect her for dinner. One time I judged from her end of the conversation that her husband was begging her to go somewhere with him but she said she was too busy and told him to take some other girl. Wouldn’t she be angry if he did! But I wouldn’t blame him if he did and in time I suppose he will. She knows nothing about domestic matters – can’t even cook a meal and is proud of it. What does a man get out of a marriage like that? Not a real home, not children, not companionship, not even the joy of providing for the woman he loves, for her salary is $2500 a year.

Another young woman at the office, a beautiful, charming woman, a couple of years older than I, said she thought I was silly to care so much for my home. She thinks that brains are the only thing that count, that a woman does the bigger, finer thing to associate herself with some cause, some movement for the benefit of mankind than to marry and have children. Even if she does marry this woman thinks that she ought to care for other people’s children even if she neglects her own. I contended that it was better for the world at large for a highly intellectual woman in perfect health to raise a family of three or four children who presumably would have great potentialities than for the same woman to engage in caring for a host of immigrant imbeciles, but she didn’t agree with me.

Pal I always find myself at variance with the professional women I meet whether in science or social work. I don’t approve of their ideals or ambitions and they for their part do not hesitate to laugh at me in a good-natured way as a harmless freak. I think that the women who do marry are growing very selfish. There are so many opportunities to make large salaries in business that they are loath to sacrifice anything when they marry. They aren’t satisfied to live on a little less for a few years while their husbands are getting a start. I know of a school teacher who married and got a two years’ leave of absence on the expectation that she might have a baby. She had the baby and it is now nearly a year old. Her husband provided her with a good home and is earning a comfortable salary but she is now going back to teaching, turning over the entire care of the baby to a colored woman who is also to keep house for them. And the first five years are the most important in a child’s life! Yet the mother goes off to train other people’s children leaving her own child to an ignorant colored woman.

Pal it seems as though nearly every woman I know who is married thinks more of her own selfish ambitions than she does of her husband and of her children if she has any. And the men are so meek and humble about it as a rule. They are actually grateful for being consulted once in a while, for being shown an occasional kindness.

Little Boy Blue you are probably sweltering under a blazing sun and in no mood for a long harangue on marriage. Are you thinking of all the ice cream you ever ate, of all the cold showers you ever had? Would you like an iceberg to come sailing down upon you? I suppose even a cool remark uttered with a chilly air would be refreshing. Don’t you begin to feel shivers down your spine?

When you come back I shall ask you a million questions about everything you’ve seen. You must make the land of the sphinxes real to me, letting me see it through your eyes since I shall probably never see it through my own. I hope you are taking lots of pictures. Do you know you ought to have an album for each expedition, you wanderer. You’ve been almost all over the world now, except in Asia.

Some day you must introduce me to the Vice President of the Rosario Petroleum Co. of Cuba. Do you suppose I could call him Pal or is he too dignified and impressive and important for anyone to dare to call him pet names. Will Boy Blue and the monkey keeper and the dear Sphinx vanish amidst all this glory and fame and fortune? Wealth and prosperity most always change folks a great deal. Please promise just to be your old dear self, won’t you Little Boy Blue?