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11-26-1941

## Letter, Virginia Brainard to Dudley and Merl Brainard [November 26, 1941]

Virginia Brainard

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November 26, 1941

Dear Mother and Daddy,

I'm sorry to be so long ~~in~~ writing but I've had to reach my own decision.

Thank you for your letters helping me and giving me a way out. But I'm going to stay here in school and be just as good a journalist as I know how.

I could walk out on this problem and come home to a course that would be easy. I would be a big shot at home and never have any major problems. You would be there and could help me with everything. I could lean on your reputation as fine, outstanding people and everyone would ~~xx~~ assume that I was superior, too. The teachers there know me and "understand" me and would make allowances for my ~~xx~~ shortcomings. I would never have to fight to overcome bad habits.

I wouldn't have to fight anything. That isn't the kind of life I want--soft, easy. Life isn't like that. Life is serious, life in earnest and no truer words were ever spoken. If I can't meet these minor crises, how can I be ready for the big problems?

This is a challenge to me. If I can make it, I'll be a better person than I have been before. I'll be the kind of a person I like and I think that's what you want me to be.

I've grown up all of a sudden. Everything is clear to me. I know where I'm going. I know what I want out of life. I know what kind of a person I want to be. That's what you want for me, too.

You don't want me to come home. You don't want me to take the easiest way out. I wouldn't like myself very well if I did that. And would you?

John L. Holmes, assistant director of personnel, had a long talk with me the other day. He wants to get me into senior college at the end of this quarter. He said that that can be done ~~x~~ if one of my "D's" comes up to a "C." My grade in Costume Design is now up to a C. I think I am also raising my Chemistry grade.

~~xxxx~~ Holmes said, "Now, as soon as you get back after Christmas, I want you to come right in to see me."

"But Mr. Holmes," I said, "If I can't raise my Chemistry grade I won't be back here after Christmas."

He told me, "You'll be back after Christmas. I'm on the Scholarship ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ committee ~~xx~~ myself. Unless they fire me between now and Jan. 1."

Another thing that will help me is that I have been outstanding in journalism. And a high grade in journalism compared with consistent low grades in Chemistry is significant. He said I was definitely college material. I ~~xxxx~~ know ~~si~~ am.

It's often a long hard struggle toward senior college but once over that hurdle a student's future is safe.

I wouldn't think of coming home ~~xx~~ much as I miss your help. It has been too easy for me to lean on you. You have never failed me. But the time has come when I must stand on my own feet. This is the test of what I am now and what I am going to be. ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~

I wonder if you have given me the chance to take an easy way out to see how strong I am. Life just isn't smooth and beautiful and lovely. I've been ~~xxxxin~~ living in a story-book world. It's ~~an~~ battle against one problem after another. But there's a satisfaction in fighting a ~~garn~~ good fight and I'm not afraid any-more and never will be again. I am sure of myself. ~~xxxx~~

You have never failed me in anything. I must ~~xxxxx~~ learn never to fail myself.

Thank you so much for the Thanksgiving box and special letter. Helen and I moved into Roberts Hall yesterday for the duration of vacation. This noon I went out to Hazel's and Edward's for turkey dinner. Bill and Grace Biedermann and their children were also there and it was very nice. Tonight Howard and I tried to go bowling but the Union wasn't open so we danced instead. Now my vacation is over, however, and tomorrow I go to work on Chemistry and several other things.

I haven't paid my board as yet and I'm afraid I'm going to have to cash the check and use part of it as living expenses. None of the dining halls in the dorms are open so that means we have to buy our own meals downtown. I'll use about ~~xxx~~ \$3 maybe and pay the rest on my board as soon as vacation is over.

My last letter was especially blue because I was sick and nothing looked right to me.

Charles Uban practically insisted that I go home with me. He needn't have been so persistent. He's come over to the Student and wanted to take me home and asked for dates. He's very nice, though. However, I sent him home with a nice note for his mother. But even had I wanted to spend vacation with him it couldn't possibly have been done. He just couldn't understand that. Maybe because this is his first quarter here. Ha!

Call Conny to write me a long letter about Chicago and I'll really answer it. And El's nice letters, too. I love to get them ~~xxx~~ although it doesn't seem like it. I am going to write her before next week, just wait and see.

My last final exam is over Friday noon, Dec. 19, so I'll have to make my plans for coming home according to that. Do you want me to take the Rocket again? Let me know so I can make reservations. Phyllis and I will probably come home together. I haven't written Jeanne McCutchan so I don't know what her plans are.

Write soon and all my love to all of your