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Letter from Linda Grace Hoyer to John Updike, February 2, 1951

Linda Grace Hoyer

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February 2, 1951

Dear John:

The sun shines bright on the groungoh (grounhog, if you like), a string of Daddy's shirts , and the forty-first page of Dear Juan. It is the first we've seen of the sun in five days and both Chipper and I are happy. He and I had been going to Weaver's three or four times daily to get Jolson who couldn't be persuaded that not only Mr. Weaver but practically everything else was against him. Now, at last, both of them are comparatively at ease in the house.

The enclosed bank balance is good. How do you do it? It covers your college bills for the rest of the year and when, if ever, we pay back the money we've borrowed from it you will be able to buy a necktie or something. We had trouble of all kinds in connection with buying handkerchiefs for you. But today (for sure) ,addy is going to get them.

Did you like the job I did on your scholarship? It hurt my pride a good deal to get so specific about our financial short comings . But you have never jibbed at the hurdles and I must try to be equally realistic. Daddy thinks that he is doing Harvard a service by sending his son to it. And while I don't feel quite as strongly as that, I don't much enjoy proving my poverty. The fact that I have admitted it and received two of Aunt Bess's kimonos is just about as far as I care to pursue the subject in any one year. At least it increases my determination to write a decent novel and thumb my nose at all this New England frugality. So, I hope the statement I made was sufficiently convincing.

By now the examinations are finished and we are eagerly awaiting news of them and other things. Barry Nelson and Mary Ann Schmehl send greetings. Grandpa gets up at the service on Sunday to make a public confession of her Lutheranism. (That makes me feel a little peculiar too.) I never have been able to feel whether it was better to have her join the church at her age or go on as before.

"Elsie" is due with the mail. So long. Eight weeks to be exact.

mother

P. S. Are you and Kit going to be the proof readers on Dear Juan? The typing promises to be pretty bad.