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FC, Cortella 2, 39

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dear mariarosa:

hi. i hope you are all right. i've been writing you letters for months in my head, just as i've travelled to italy many many times in mind. but there are these material limitations which make life very hard. anyway, i have been ready to make the trip for months, so much so that sometimes i could hardly accept time and space, which is a little mad maybe. only yesterday did i finally get definite travel arrangements. i'll be coming on a charter flight to brussels. i'll leave new york the evening of the 28th and arrive in brussels on the morning of the 29th. from there i'll get the train to milan and from milan to padova, arriving in padova the morning of the 30th. depending on what time the flight actually arrives in brussels--and charter flights are very unpredictable, i could arrive in padova as early as 5 a.m. or as late as 11 a.m. i imagine you'd prefer 11! i'll do the best i can to make the time reasonable. i'll call you from the train station in padova so you can rescue me from any other hassles. my ticket is open, so we can take the time we need and can afford.

the money situation has been pretty difficult. i won a \$100. prize for some poetry i wrote, got my income tax refund from the government, gave a talk for \$25., and am borrowing some money from my mother. that's enough for the trip over and back and subsistence. but because while i'm away i won't be getting my unemployment checks, when i get back to the states i'll really be pressed for money. so whatever i can make while i'm in italy will be greatly needed.

i am best prepared to talk about the black family and sterilization. i have some key ideas on sexuality, but i'm not satisfied that i've developed that area enough yet to make a coherent presentation. of course, too, it's much more difficult to talk about sexuality in public, especially for a black woman in europe, which is what the talk would be about anyway, trying to come to grips with why this is the reality. as time allows i'll be able to develop the sexuality paper further while i'm in italy. the article on sterilization is already written, so translation shouldn't be too much of a burden. i'll bring a full outline on the family and a rough outline on sexuality with me.

we've all been very busy getting ready for the welfare conference. the response from black women has been enthusiastic in several instances, but how far this enthusiasm will move right now still remains to be seen. margaret and i are hopeful that a black women's wages for housework group will develop through the conference. i'll bring some stuff from the conference with me when i come.

i am really looking forward to mayday in italy, that is to my first feminist first of may. i had hoped to be in italy by the 26th, but the late date for the conference made this

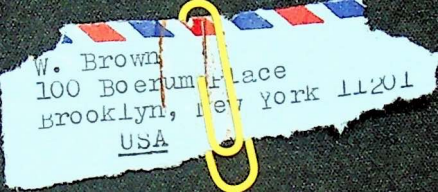


impossible. i am anxious to see Venice and to get to the sea. i'm very much looking forward to going south as well.

i don't know if you like black music. i do remember that you bought a record in new orleans. i like music very much and i'm bringing my favorite tapes with me. over the past few months music has been my primary way of "keeping it together," which is black english for creating some peace and pleasure in this life. maybe you will want to learn some of our idioms as i'm trying to learn some italian.

i could go on and on with the possibilities, but all i'm really trying to tell you is that i'm looking forward to seeing you very soon and very soon i'll be in italy, and that makes me feel good. so wait for my call next friday and be well.

much love,  
wilmette



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