Tel: 636-8410

3 Wimpole Street.
London. W.1.

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Darlings both -

It just goes to show, you never know what is round the corner! There I was rejoicing that I only had a week to get through before joining you in Paris and wham, head first into a frightful nightmare which seems already to have lasted years!

It was lovely to talk to you and to feel your thoughts and support last weekend. My mother continues to improve and I am thankful that after several stand-up fights with hospital administration etc. I was able to ensure from the beginning that she should have the best neuro-surgeon in London. He warned us both separately that she had a 90% chance of coming round from the operation paralysed, without power of speech etc. and a 50% chance of not surviving the operation at all! Anyway, hopefully it is all over - so far without complications, thank God, but it was quite an ordeal and my mother was incredibly brave.

Now my days and nights are divided between the hospital and keeping things going at home. My poor Grandmother, who was always the saucest member of the family, is terribly confused and forgetful at 87. Actually it is quite a good thing for her in the circumstances but not easy to cope with at all! As for my father and brothers - half baked and totally incompetant. I had better be careful, my letter is beginning to look like Mildred Knopf's and will soon have you rolling about with laughter!!

I simply adored being with you both in Marbella. It now seems a terribly long time ago, but I don't forget any of it and am missing you so very very much. I hate not knowing the last words of the Maestro's book and I miss our sessions listening to music. Every meal time - what feasts! I get frightfully hungry just thinking about it. Never in my whole life have I had such food nor such a lovely summer holiday.

As I told you, I started to loose a lot of weight during the first days here. However I discovered a Jewish restaurant near the hospital and they make me salt beef sandwiches r quite good chopped

liver (not a patch on yours) so all that is fattening and then I cook hearty suppers for the family in the evenings.

I hope soon to be able to escape from this nightmare and join you as planned. If all goes according to plan and no further operation is necessary, my mother should leave hospital in about 10 days. I am now trying to find a solution after that for my mother and the rest of the family as she will not be allowed to do a thing for at least 2 months. Although it is difficult at present to let you know a definite date, I should be with you by the end of September at the latest. I shall go all out on the book as soon as I arrive and make sure it does not suffer because of this delay. I do hope that will be all right with you both?? I am sure I shall be able to square it with Ricardo to be allowed to stay as long as you need me (I hope ages and ages!!)

Please give my special love to Lali next time you write and talk to her. Seeing so much hospital life lately I think of her a lot and envy her that she is doing something so very worthwhile – it must be so satisfying. Still, I neither

have the brains nor the capacity for so much intense study.

I wonder how the couple is working out with you in Paris and whether the masseur has resumed his daily visits. I am sorry to have missed the little Jaszynska and hope I will just catch Janina - with any luck.

As soon as I have any definite, positive news I will telephone and check that my plans fit in well with you.

Meanwhile, and longing to see you again I send you lots of hugs and kisses

Annabelle.

P.S. I look forward to making my brilliant and triumphant scrabble come-back soon!! BEWARE!!