

Dear Dad,

I wonder what you'd say now if you saw your daughter ride by in a tractor, brown and with hair full of blond shocks from the sun? I certainly don't look like the little lady you sent away last October. All the pictures you get are taken on hikes and I look like Miss Desert Rat of 1961, because I'm always half way up a mountain. I'm always my worst on hikes, but I really look healthy and Israeli. I have the sunburnt complexion of a sabra. When we went back to Jerusalem for the parade all the people who knew us there, shopkeepers, teachers, and friends, told us how wonderful we looked. We walked down the streets in the same clothes but people didn't stare like they used to because we had the burnt, healthy look of the Israeli. We're really veterans now.

By the way, dad, if I can drive a shift tractor, you'd better move over a seat on that puny plymouth or I'll take my tractor and crush you right into the asphalt.

You know what this period has taught me. It's taught me what a need it is of a person to own what is his and feel that he is providing for his family. The people here seem so more genuinely happy then kibbutz. They work hard, but they are proud  
[p.2]

of their work and what it buys. It seems that the people on kibbutz should feel more secure because the kibbutz looks after every single possible need of them and their family and these people, who depend on farming and weather and never know about hospital bills or unexpected things would feel insecure. But it isn't so. Man feels safest when  
[p. 3]

he depends on himself and his own power to provide. We learn so many interesting things. They say you can tell a farmer from the Galil from a farmer from the Negev. The latter's face is more intense and wrinkled because he is constantly worried about rain and poor soil. This country is one big sociological study. Take care of mommy. Love, elayne