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Dear Mom and Dad,

Hi, how are you?

Well, I am finally getting around to writing to you. It was good to visit with you both and makes for a more exciting visit when it is not so often as it was in Berkeley. [Absence makes the heart grow fonder—the old cliché.]

Well I have had my first week in the Burn Unit and I have learned quite a bit. There is quite an art to dressing and taking care of burns. [Mother— you will be glad to know this.] As far as I am concerned—any artistic fulfillment that I could get would be fulfilled in this area of nursing.

The way that the wounds are cleaned is with scalpels and there is a way to do it as if doing sculpture so as not to hurt the patient.

It takes much careful work and the more carefully artistic the person is—the less you hurt the patient. Some of the nurses are careless and hurt the patients purposely.

Then

depending on which stage of healing the wound is in, different dressings (which are sometimes like paper mache) are applied.

When the wound is almost ready to grow new skin (it is then totally raw and extremely painful if touched) real live pig skin has to be cut to fit and specially molded around each part, especially the fingers. Working in here is like learning to build new bodies. Faces and fingers are most difficult. I am glad that I can work in the burn unit because I can at least be assured that someone is giving the patients the proper care that they need. Some of the nurses refuse to give their patients pain shots and some of them deliberately make the patients hurt by cutting and pulling the skin when it is not necessary and also by making them feel bad if they have bled through their dressing. I fail to see how you could blame someone for bleeding through their dressing but there is one nurse in particular who does this.

I'm glad I don't have to work with her. I'm afraid

we would end up in

blows if I did work

with her. Other than
the sick nurses I like
learning about the burns and
how to take care of them. I will start
working nights on December 20th. I know I
will be better at burn care than any of them
because they are very calloused about it and sadistic.
I think a lot of them think they don't have to
treat the patients decently because they are county
hospital patients.

I heard some excellent speakers in church a week ago. One was from Chile who had been tortured and castrated. He talked about what was going on in Chile and never mentioned how he had been tortured and his entire family also, who were ^{white man} killed. Also there was a 21 year old ^{white man} from South Africa who talked about the oppression of blacks there plus torturing too and how the U.S. Government has been supporting the apartheid. He was drafted into the South African army and was horrified by all that went on. If he goes back to South Africa he will

unquestionably be
killed and convicted for
treason. I hope he is not
killed in this country for what he is
saying, but I would not be surprised
if he is. I was glad I had the opportunity
to hear both of these speakers because I
always learn new things from them.

Well, everyone sends you their love.
Kino is learning to use the potty with Mel's
as an incentive for learning. I'll write again
soon.

Love -

Annie

P.S. Sorry I took so long to write. I have
been taking some special classes along
with working and have been studying
a lot.