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# F. Scott Fitzgerald to His 11-Year-Old Daughter in Camp

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DEAR PIE:

I feel very strongly about you doing duty. Would you give me a little more documentation about your reading in French? I am glad you are happy-- but I never believe much in happiness. I never believe in misery either. Those are things you see on the stage or the screen or the printed page, they never really happen to you in life.

All I believe in in life is the rewards for virtue (according to your talents) and the *punishments* for not fulfilling your duties, which are doubly costly. If there is such a volume in the camp library, will you ask Mrs. Tyson to let you look up a sonnet of Shakespeare's in which the line occurs *Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds....*

I think of you, and always pleasantly, but I am going to take the White Cat out and beat his bottom *hard, six times for every time you are impertinent*. Do you react to that?...

Half-wit, I will conclude. Things to worry about:

Worry about courage

Worry about cleanliness

Worry about efficiency

Worry about horsemanship...

Things not to worry about:

Don't worry about popular opinion

Don't worry about dolls

Don't worry about the past

Don't worry about the future  
Don't worry about growing up  
Don't worry about anybody getting ahead of you  
Don't worry about triumph  
Don't worry about failure unless it comes through your own fault  
Don't worry about mosquitoes  
Don't worry about flies  
Don't worry about insects in general  
Don't worry about parents  
Don't worry about boys  
Don't worry about disappointments  
Don't worry about pleasures  
Don't worry about satisfactions  
Things to think about:  
What am I really aiming at?  
How good am I really in comparison to my contemporaries in regard to:  
(a) Scholarship  
(b) Do I really understand about people and am I able to get along with them?  
(c) Am I trying to make my body a useful instrument or am I neglecting it?

With dearest love,

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