

Rural Route 2, Box 225

I turned ~~the~~ ^{the} postcard over, face down, ^{seeing} ~~watching~~ ^{the writing} black as sin ~~black~~ ^{in the morning} sun: 1986

Ha, Sugar,

Five A.M. in New York, the Big Apple, and I just got off from work. Boy, am I tired but having a great time! Wish you was here. Write when you get the chance & let me know how things are going in old Fargo. Ha! Ha!

Love your sister,
Judy Lynn

P.S. I ~~guess~~ ^{guess} you noticed I changed the "e" to a "y" on my middle name. Kiss ~~Daddy~~ ^{Daddy} for me. Hope you like the picture. It's a real bronze sculpture. Don't let anybody see it. HA! HA!

I turned it back over to see if it was ~~was~~ ^{was} a sculpture - and sure enough that's what it said. ~~Used to~~ ^{was} ~~nothing~~ ^{was} ~~the~~ ^{my} estimation, it wasn't nothing but a naked woman with a see-through curtain draped over her privates. Smelled like Evening in Paris perfume. Mr. Hoke's ~~got~~ ^{got} his hands full with that 'un!

All these Fargo girls is pretty, but they'll wear you ~~out~~ ^{clean} out! ~~over~~ ^{over} ~~can~~ ^{can} hardly wait to ~~forget~~ ^{forget} out of school and take off. Reckon by ~~the~~ ^{that} ~~time~~ ^{time} they done had a bait & cheese penokee sators belling at their back door. ^{got} ^{much} ^{more} ^{like} ^{they} ^{got} to make up for coming from the flat woods: got gold bracelets half way up ~~to~~ ^{to} their elbows, and all kinds of fancy frocks & ~~clothes~~ ^{clothes}.

But ^{they} ain't none of them ~~gits~~ can hold a candle
to Mr. Foke's girls.

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I ought to know, being the mail man in these parts for close to twenty years! I'm the one brings their Sears & Roebuck catalogues & stuff for them to order out of, when they can't get a ~~ride~~ ^{ride} into Valdosta, forty miles ~~away~~ ^{away}. I've had a little firsthand experience!

~~Yes sir~~
Yes sir, it's a plum right what comes through the mail! I told ~~Emma~~ Alma Jean, it's good I got me a wife from Homersville where at least they settle down. Couldie ended up with Mr. Vohie's ~~best~~ ^{best} Carmea Sue and had to chase her down in Valdosta for my supper.

Alma Jean's plain as day, but she can sure cook. ~~Heat as they come!~~ ^{Good as they come!} I've seen her set I nuss our boy a many a hour out in the night. She'd play the devil tryin' to nuss him now, big ole fat youngun. I got to ~~find~~ ^{find} him something to do to get him out from under her dress tail.

"He ain't big enough yet," Alma Jean says.
"Beside his eyes ain't good."

My eyes would be bad, too, if I set up in front of that television set ~~much~~ ^{much} setting pecans much as he does. But he'll grow out he it, I ~~also~~ ^{also} expect.

"Living halfway betwixt & between air & that every on on a boy," she always says, like they's something wrong with living between Fargo & Homersville.

It was born ~~and~~ I raised here, and it ain't
 never hurt me. Course it had to work
 from can to can't, farming for Mr. Hoke (just
 to stay on his place ^(over) ~~for~~ ^(over) ~~power~~ laid up;
 half the time, drunk on Billy's island in the
 swamp if our old mule couldn't figger out the
 way home. It heard that old buggy a many
 as ~~times~~ ^{times} come rattling across the Swannee River
 bridge ~~is~~ long about mid night in the Fifties.

Got a new bridge ^{now}, stark white over that
 black water; ain't so much wear & tear on
 a automobile now. Course we did, never
 own ~~any~~ one growing up.
 Mr. Hoke bought a brand new ^{red} Thunderbird,
 first one come out, for that drove of girl younguns
 to show off in. Wouldn't never let 'em out of
 Fargo ^{by their selfs} though, till they got out 'in school.
 The biggest one, Carmen Sue, would drive 'em back
 and to old man Squire's store for a cold drink
 & some peanuts to pour in it, hanging around
 to wait for boys that might ~~take~~ ^{happen} up out 'in the
 flat woods from hunting. Wash Yall that many
 worse by. Couldn't counted on your fingers how
 many of us boys lived there: me and Joe Sapp,
 Caulie Herndon, Backshot Herring, Saul Carter. And
 that was about it!

~~We lived down the dirt road a piece from then~~
~~the dirt road was a shack~~

Our shack was down the dirt road a piece from
Mr. Hoker's old farmhouse ~~to keep it steady~~
with the big rooms where ~~we kept stable~~
the girl boys kept doubling up on the
beds fast as they come. Last count I
had, ~~and~~ they was 8 or 10 of 'em. And they
wasn't hurting none for money. Mr. Hoker sold
enough lumber ever year to keep 'em in high heels &
~~brassiere~~ brassiere.

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You think they had any bit of use for a one
of us? No sir! A pulpwood nigger would've
~~stood~~ a better chance! Not to say they'd have
had things to do with a nigger. They wadd
that kind 'nre gals.

They was well thought of. Went to church
reg'lar, ever time the doors was open. ~~Had~~
They'd sign to the top of their lungs, showing off their pearly teeth & reddish (over)
~~gold~~ ~~bracelets~~ ~~up~~ to their ~~elbows~~, ~~all~~ ~~painted~~ ~~up~~,
Ever last one of 'em had ^{bright blue eyes} ~~brave~~ ponytails, looked
the color of syrup candy.

And it's me here to tell you, when it come
fair time in November they'd pitch a hissy fit
of Mr. Nobe didn't lay down what he was
doing & take 'em to Valdosta. The yaut eyes
with it, too. It'd a wore the flincher rackets
out of 'em!

That's was how ~~me~~ & Carmen Sue got
to knowing one another, ^{sort of} the fair. ^{Or how} that's when
I found out what they was made out of. I'd
called myself ^{sort of} ~~sort of~~ her; ~~it figured she'd just talk~~
~~lay phone for me and that was how come her to ask me to go.~~ ~~she just~~
~~felt sorry for me, not having no way to go.~~
~~More than likely~~ Nobe ~~might~~ had the foresight to
see it'd make something out 'nre my self, seeing
as how I managed the farm in spite of
Pa's sorryness. Could've been he just ~~wanted~~
~~was~~ got tired of going year after year and was
scared to let 'em drive that long stretch of roads

Got saved ever summer at ~~the~~ ^{the} traveling tent
revival. ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~meeting~~,
(I got my own ideas about that ~~!~~!).



(~~Calvin~~) from Fargo to Valdosta
with out a man along.

Anyhow I was just pleased as punch to
~~be going along with them~~ get to go along with them
~~and if I had any two cents worth of sense, I'd have seen to it that~~
(over) only Herndon could hardly stand it. I got
dressed up in my best khakia pants & cleaned
my pa's old leather jacket. Had me a brand
new ~~to~~ five dollar bill from selling sweet potatoes
the week before!

When they come by the house to pick me up that
night, I was warming by the fire place. I ain't never been
no colder in all my days than I was that night,
but I thought to my Lord I'd smother to

death in that cloud of crinolines ^{the way there (over)}
(over) They even bring the baby, ^{with legs} ~~with legs~~ Judy
I ended up totin' her on my hip over the
while she smeared cotton candy in my hair!
She bring her a big pink stick of it and then
of with some ^{Valdosta} boy she'd run up with. And that
was the last I seen of her till we started
back home.

I said to myself right then, she wouldn't
give a Fargo girl ^{mother} a chance to make a fool
out of me, no matter how good looking they was ⁱⁿ (over)
(over) I hear ^{the fair} girl's way wild! They ^{didn't} get out of the car
good that night ^{showing out} before they ^{run off in all directions} ~~run off in all directions~~,
got to hollering and ^{showing out} ~~showing out~~. Ever now & then I'd

Q wasn't interested in no fair rides!

Offer them a piece & they'd take the whole pack.

catch sight of one of 'em throwing darts and making
eyes at the man running the game. As ~~the~~
~~from~~ two of 'em perched up on the ferris wheel
holding ~~two~~ big candy apples ^{matching their lips & the lights}, with a strong
boy between 'em. A poodle skirt would come
flirting by to go back ~~to look at~~ to ~~lay some more~~
~~of~~ them inscribed ^{broken} hearts on a chain, and
I'd know it was one of Nola's wilds.

~~Me~~ I that jumpy youngun ~~would~~ just
walked around & around & around the fair grounds
~~looking~~ at the rides and listening to all that racket.
You couldn't hear yourself think!

"~~Little~~ ^{Little} ~~Baby~~ ^{Baby}, bring that baby over here & win her
a teddy bear. Two throws for a quarter, The
first one's free," that trashy fair man would
holler.

I'd ~~nod~~ ^{shake} my head or play like I didn't
hear him if he kept on. That was the
~~aggravation~~ ^{aggravation} of gravitationest lunch I ever seen.
Wouldn't state no for an answer. To keep 'em
from hollering out at me, I finally took 'em up
on it and used up just about ever bit of
my money to get that youngun a weasel
tube to get her finger stuck in.

I ~~had~~ ^{had} to set her up on the counter to ~~put~~ throw
them rings on the bottles, and next thing I knowed

she'd done ^{loaded} ~~fell~~ off (the other side and come
 up a squalling. Ever body there was looking
 at us, come up close to see what all the
 racket was about. That was before the
 fair man set her back up and give her
 that thing - a - majig to get her finger stuck
 in. Lord, and she did set in to bawling then!

I seen one of them girls come ^{prissing} by about ~~that~~ time;
 and do you think she payed any bit of mind to
 her own baby sister? No sir! She just bounces
 right off and ducks into the picture booth,
 pulling the curtain behind her.

I had to give two dollars to the fair man
 for busting up his game & cutting that thing off
 the baby's finger and helping me change her
 britches. I'd stuck the ~~di~~ safety pin right through
 her ~~hide~~ ^{hide} & couldn't figger out why she was
 still screaming bloody murder.

~~cries~~ Seems like it was Sue Ellen bring
 me the diaper ~~flitting~~ off like a butterfly (over)
 over Well sir, I'd done had a bout of the
 fair and them Fargo girls by the time ...

I loaded up to go to the house.
 I might ~~take~~ their letters back forth for them;
 any body wants ~~to~~ ^{over} them can have 'em;
 I give 'em ~~over~~ ^{over} for ~~over~~ naked pictures and
 I'm plum satisfied! all.

~~the~~ (cont')

To get to set down a spell ~~it~~ and warm up,
and try to get that young'un to hush ~~it~~ ~~it~~ ~~it~~
spent my last quarter to get in a ~~side~~ show,
(describe woman dance - snake - room)
~~it~~ that young'un like to tore my clothes
off of me! She got loose & I took out after her,
crawling in the saw dust toward the door.

My big foot got hung on the bench & turned it
over & two or three ~~big~~ ^{men} set in to cussing.
By then the baby had done seen the big snake they
was holding up outside to get people to come in, and she
turned around & headed ~~by~~ around the ~~other~~ ^{other} side of the
tent, squealing like a bee stung her. By then the woman on
the stage had done quit dancing with the snake and come
down to help out. She got to that poor lil ole baby ^{foot} that
her hugged up with the snake, ^{she} beating at it with her little fist.
I was busy getting everybody off of me for turning their bench over.
The snake & the baby looking like they was ^{scared} dancing in the woman's arms, bowing
to each other & backing off. Finally the baby scooted down the woman's side
& set out crawling off & out the door.

When I ~~finally~~ got loose & got out, I seen Sue Ellery ^{with the baby} coming towards
me ~~with~~ ^{puffed} up like a toady ^{was out,}
(?) "You ~~got~~ ^{floppy eared} for ~~nothing~~ ^{her} ^{lugs}!" she hollers, "How dare you
turn our baby sister loose on the fair grounds?" "Wait till Daddy hear about this!"

She practically throw the baby at me & set a off again.
By the time I got back up to the front gate, they was all
standing, waiting on me, mad as hornets.

U'd got just about ~~so~~ easy, settling there
on one of these benches with the baby finally
satisfied. It was trying to rain outside & her
lil ole ^{curly} head was popping wet. Smelled like clabbered milk.

~~That old circus music started playing~~
A old man with excited green eyes come out on
the stage just ahead of us and set in to ~~play~~
blowing a mouth harp. The baby got to clapping her
fat little hands and kicking my legs, could set
still. Kind of like being at home, it expect, cause
Fargo folks loves a good hoe down.

Wash & long, though, before a right good looking
woman with long black hair come sidling out
from behind a red curtain with a big slimy snake
wrapped around her neck. She gyrated around
and ~~made~~ ^{cut} her eyes ^{at us, men} & didn't have on nothing but a
~~red~~ red & gold rag tied around her waist.
The music picked up and pretty soon she ~~set~~ ^{got} to
cutting the buck, that old snake head darting
out at us, ~~just~~ ^{just} two feet away.