

## Søren Padkjær

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Dear Bedstemor Hildur and Tante Anna.

25<sup>th</sup> December 2000

Thank you very much for your fine letter. We are very impressed that in spite of your ailing fingers you are capable of writing such letters, although of course we are as usual especially impressed by the intelligence behind the words, which definitely has not been shaken one tiny bit.

I am also fortunate to have my mother around and was inspired by your letter to include a paragraph about her in my Seasonal letter, which is enclosed together with Benthe's special greetings for you.

However mother had a stroke two years ago and although she has recovered almost fully it is clear that her mind is now slowly deteriorating. It might be though that it is simply caused by age. The only outside help she has is a biweekly cleaning help for the house and a gardener in the summer to keep her lawn cut and the garden always freshly raked. She has always been a very active woman and it is hard for her to accept that she can no longer do everything as she used to. Therefore everything must be in perfect order and since I have a much more lenient look at such things she cannot wait till I have time to do it for her.

In my childhood she was partly a waitress on the local hotel and partly a seasonal hand to the surrounding farms, which have long ago been converted into residential areas. She helped collecting potatoes and cleaning the beets – you surely know how everything had to be done by hand in those days. Then my father's mother was very ill for several years – not ill enough to come to the hospital but enough so she always needed almost total care. As she was living on 1<sup>st</sup> floor (where the girls are living now), my mother was her ever-attending nurse.

Shortly after she died in the age of 93 my father got sick, and she could continue her nursing job. My mother is a very stubborn but not especially strong self-sacrificing woman, and it was very hard on her. After my father's death my mother, who for years had been 'skin and bones' suddenly got weight problems! I presume she made up for the lost free time and meals, and she even found a friend who very unfortunately died shortly after. She is now very content with her life, not least when Camilla tells her about the tragic cases in the nursing home.

Therefore my mother has decided to stay in her house as long as she possibly can, she is very happy to be not ill and she has her two remaining sons close by.

We are happy for you that you have Anna to assist as you surely also prefer to stay in your own home as long as possible. We wish you both all the best – and a special greeting from Anja and Camilla to Tante and Bedstemor.