

Cambridge, December 9, 1949  
1:30 a.m.

Dear Margaret,

I must try to capture this moment's happiness, and imprison it in an envelope, and mail it to you as a present. In the past weeks there have been few such moments, and it has been difficult for me to write. Yet each instant of peaceful happiness, snatched from the slag of insufficiency and tiredness that I am seems all the purer for the mire from which it sprang, clear and translucent and indestructible like a precious gem.

Enge is here this weekend; I have found it easy to talk to him. He was wearing a tie, and I was convinced by the feeling that I ~~was~~ meeting him on my own ground, as if the ghosts of the past <sup>and were protecting me</sup> three years had come forth from the books in which they have been hiding. The whole momentum of my work seemed to be on my side. Without much effort I managed to be very cheerful and pleasant.

You must congratulate me on my achievement, because as you should have been able to guess, in Enge I face primarily one of your friends. Why, I don't know, but suddenly there seemed to me to be no problem in the foolishly superficial conversation. — I have thought much <sup>about</sup> Great Barrington, and I have thought of it happily, because it seems to have been the beginning of something very beautiful, and I believe that God was merciful and guided us well.

I think of you very often, and when I see how the present has grown out of the past, with how much pain the potentiality of beauty and good has realized itself, I have no fear for the future, but only reverence and trust for the ways which seem so hopeless when we walk them. And still, did not our hearts burn within us? What makes me happiest is the fact that I find it possible to be as honest with you as I have never been with anyone before, and being honest with you makes it possible for me to be honest with myself. It is not necessary that everything ~~must~~ be said, but it is necessary that everything could be said. If I could ask you for any one thing, I would ask you to be as honest with yourself and with me as you possibly could. Will you?

Very soon I must go to bed, but first I should tell you about my plans. Alex and I will drive down Wednesday night (Dec. 21) When we leave depends on whether I decide to cut my seminar which lasts from 3 to 5 p.m. As usual there will be other passengers, but I have told Alex to keep a place for you, incase you decide to come. As I wrote in my last letter, I like the idea of your coming, but I know it will entail the inevitable self-examination on my part, and when you are here you must help me with it. Whatever you decide to do, I shall not be hurt or even disappointed, because whatever happens is necessary, whatever is necessary is from God, and whatever is from God is good.

Good night.

John