

CP 18 504
Cambridge, February 8, 1950

Dear Margaret,

Thank you very much for your letter. I did not dare expect to hear from you, and I was very happy to see a letter waiting for me. I had such need of it. My conscience troubles me for not having written you earlier, but I thought of writing you very many times and each letter was much better than anything I can put down on paper.

Tonight's letter is a substitute for practicing violin; I do not think I will have time for both, since I would like to get started with my work. I shall sign for the two extra courses tomorrow, although I am afraid of the consequences. I am so very tired emotionally.

Next door Sebastian is howling like a dog. Priscilla is out, and the children have been almost unbearable in their disgusting childish vulgarity. How good it is of you to come! I feel as though you would stand between me and these people, and the fact that one side of you is related to them does not hurt me so much when I know how much the other side of you needs me.

You must not be concerned about my attitude toward what I do not understand. The degree to which it hurts me depends almost wholly on your own evaluation of it, your willingness to accept that experience as a cross with which God burdened you, or your desire to escape from it by ignoring it or rationalizing it psychologically or otherwise, into something good.

I do not know whether I can help you with it or not. If you like, we can speak of it, if you prefer, we can be silent. My own determination is very helpless in the face of anything outside of me. That is why these children frighten me so; I can give them nothing, because they have been brought up so differently. I am thankful only that they are not my children, and that I have no children to bring up in this country, - nor ever shall, -.

Amidst all this strangeness I feel very lonely, and I am very glad you are coming, because you seem to make things bearable, although in the final analysis nothing, not even you, can change them for me. - You should throw this letter away. Such things should be spoken, not put in writing. I think of these discords as if they were mistakes on the violin. The fault is that I practice so hard.

Unless your aunt is going out Friday, I shall be at the train to meet you. It is hard to think what I would do if you did not come.

Forhen.