

Cambridge, May 4, 1950

Dear Margaret,

The radio is playing what I think is Münch's new recording of Beethoven's seventh symphony, a beautifully sensitive and mature interpretation of which I am very fond. It is seven-thirty by now, a little bit late just to have finished the dishes, but Miss Smith, Danny's ~~XXXX~~ teacher was here for supper, so that Priscilla lingered longer than she does when merely the children are here. As for Miss Smith, - she seems mild and pleasant and docile enough; I should rather dig ditches or stack dishes in a hundred dishwashers than have her job. - Nicky's teacher seems to be at the brink of despair. She asked her class everyone please to wash and put on clean clothes for May ~~XXXX~~ Day.

I had planned to telephone you tonight, but it is better that I should spend the time on a letter, since I could not speak what I think even if you were here, much less by telephone. Yesterday and today have been such days for me on which I tend to see things "realistically," i.e. to become aware of all the incongruities and falsehoods which you have helped me so eagerly to bury in ~~xxx~~ some corner of my mind. Before, when I thought like this, I would have written you one of those letters which makes you angry and causes you to think that I am playing with you. And since you will not let me write you the only possible conclusion of my ideas, let me at least tell you what I think, so that you, if you were not ~~xxxxxx~~ so adept at ignoring things which are very obvious, could draw your own conclusions.

The most vivid memory of your being here last weekend, - besides the music, which as you said did not affect you very much, - is ~~XXXXXX~~ Alex's visit, when I came down to talk to him, how your Aunt stopped her conversation, ~~xxxxxx~~ became completely silent for 10 minutes, after turning her back to me and putting her legs across the arm of her chair in a most uncouth manner. ~~xxx~~ and then, after all that, your telling me that she was listening to Alex. Now you will write me indignantly that you at least find more significant things to remember, but you forget that your relatives are the only thing you leave with me. I tend to become oblivious to them, except when I come in contact with cultivated people, such as last night, when I was invited by Prof. Schneider. I cannot disentangle you from your aunt.

I was not surprised, but more than slightly hurt by your inability to understand my predicament, and your stupid and silly insistence in saying I was trying to be omniscient. I ~~xxxxxx~~ never presumed to know the truth, but merely to say what I observed and to express how I felt. I am like a little boy in this respect: I always take sides with people I like, I imagine myself in their position and react as I see them react. And I know that in most cases you do the same thing, why you are so indifferent now, I think I understand, but you will not let me say it.

No, you need not fear, I shall never run away from you, but before you know it, you will be gone from me. Spiritually I do not think you ever came very close to me, - I at least still ^{waited and} feel very much alone in that pitiful uniqueness which you would so gladly explain away. You were like a very distant ship whose direction one cannot tell. I hoped very fervently you were coming to me, but you seem to have passed far beyond the horizon. You will insist that you are still coming, - I will not argue, time will tell. But for the moment I cannot see you, and I think

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you are very far away from me, beyond my horizon.

I imagined how it might be if you came, and now I cannot forget my imaginings, which are very beautiful. You made me aware of my great need, without filling it. When I think of you now, closing my eyes, I feel as if my chest had great gashes in it and as if ~~my~~ thickening blood were ~~slowly~~ slowly running out of me and dripping on the ground, all that was left of me.

As for the physical closeness, it seems grotesque, like a cheap farce, for me. I merely despise my own weakness. It seems quite inexplicable to me.

Good night, and do not be too angry with me, please. I do not want to hurt you. But the truth which I cannot conceal ^{from} myself, I cannot conceal to you either. Perhaps this letter is merely an expression of my great need. Do not be afraid: as long as you say you need me, I will be there for you. And now, don't be upset by my letter, ~~xxx~~ or your parent will think I am very bad for you. Perhaps they would be right.

Dein
Jochen

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540 Philadelphia Road
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My more "realistic" moods usually make it very difficult for me to write, but I shall try to write you again, as soon as I can. — — —