

Cambridge, May 8. 1950

Dear Margaret,

Just now I have been reviewing 250 lines of Archylus, with much labor. Things are not going well tonight. I have reread your letter several times, - and I know not what I should think. I know only that I must be hurting you very much, and you should know that whatever grief I cause you is added to my own.

I cannot begin to write you about all the thoughts that trouble me, for they are very violent, and the best way to escape from them is to work hard, which I have tried to do. Probably I shall be up very late tonight, - not without thinking about you. If you can, I wish you would forgive the pain I have brought you, - though I should never ask you to forget it.

Perhaps it would be better if I did not write so often and concealed the contradictions which are so difficult. I shall do whatever you wish. As long as you ask me to write, I shall write to you as best I can. I would not blame you, though, if you did not want to hear from me. I only hope that you are still able to believe that I like you very much.

Dear
John.

5291, 8 June 1941

In closing let me only say that I am very painfully aware of this letter's bitterness. I did not intend to write in this way, but whatever I set out to say was buried under the avalanche of my feelings. You reject my pleas asking you not to be hurt by me as an easy excuse. ~~But~~ Beyond that I can suggest only that you consider my letter as the product of some sort of disease, - and I ask you explicitly to destroy it, since I have no intention of entertaining possible ^{future} amateur psychologists. All I can say is that I like to think of my unhappiness as the only possible reaction to the consciousness of uncleanness. Without ~~that~~ the purification which that unhappiness seems to work in me I cannot imagine how I would continue to live. ~ I think your sister has chosen nice music for her wedding, although I begrudge it to her, knowing that what I hear when I hear it has been written only for me.

Good night.

John