

Cambridge, May 10, 1950

Dear Margaret,

All is very calm and quiet now, without and within. A soft rain has fallen all evening, and the air has become very pure. Before I go to sleep, I want to write you and to thank you, - the words are worn, but their meaning takes on new reality every day, - for what you ~~in~~ your love for me have been ready to give me.

If I cannot accept it, that means not that you have thrown yourself away, but that I have not carelessly wasted that which is the holiest and most wonderful thing which you have to give. We must not be like children and ~~waste~~ throw away that symbol which should be the seal upon the fullness of our lives, - not a confession of their emptiness.

I think you have a wealth of things to give me of which you do not even know that you possess them, and you are not aware how beautiful they are. Nothing in your life could not become meaningful and very great, - however small and superficial it might seem to be, - if only you will love and reverence it. Not only those things with which you deal daily, animate or inanimate things, music and books, birds, trees, and stones, but even the chair on which you sit or the pillow on which you lay your head at night, and the windows through which all light comes to you. Even strange thoughts, the memories of your childhood, which time has simplified so that you now see a pattern in them, and whatever you dare to hope for the future, all these things you must learn to cherish, and whatever of them you wish to give to me will make me very happy.

If there is to be a bond between us, it is of such simple things that it must be built. We must love each other in such small and simple things. Great passions are destructive and often fatal in their violence. We were not made to weather such storms. I, for my part, have found many things which I must give away; sometimes I get very tired holding them, waiting until you are ready to receive them, but I know of no one to whom to give them but you.

I must go to sleep now; I thank you again; my whole relationship to you is gratitude for your existence, for that part of your life which is turned toward me. You will not hear from me again before your sister's wedding. I could not write to her, else I should have. Would congratulations really be appropriate? Please tell her, if you can, that I hope the unhappiness which must accompany her bliss will fuse with it in such a way as to make her life very rich and very beautiful. And give my regards to your parents.

Lein.
John.