

Cambridge, May 31, 1950

Dear Margaret,.

This must grow to be no more than a thirty-minute letter, like the half-hour essay questions on my examination Saturday. I should have started to write you sooner, but I was playing something on the violin which would find no end. I came back to Lakeview Avenue today expecting to find a letter ~~xxx~~ ~~xx~~ from ~~xx~~ you, but although I was disappointed, I felt a little bit less guilty about not having written you.

So much work has crowded in upon me in the past four days, and I have tried to do it all, carefully and thoroughly. I feel less worried about my several examinations now than I did last week, but chance will play an important role - as usual. In my mind I have written you many letters, but I would be ashamed to put the many things I have thought on paper, particularly since I know that you preserve all these documents from me. ~~xx~~ My mind is like a dull knife: either it skims only the surface of problems, or it hacks into them and mars them beyond recognition.

I am afraid to think about the problems that really concern me. If I once began, my mind would be carried faraway from the work that it should be doing. The only thing which is real for me at the moment are my four examinations. You can come next week and distract me and we can think about more serious things together. One of the more annoying things that tends to interfere with my work is the emptiness of the stomach. It seems very strange that I have been hungry almost all the time since I came back. It is all mother's fault for feeding me so well at Manteloking.

Where are you now, and what would you be doing this time of day? The sky is pale blue, the air is warm and humid, and the trees are a bright green, or so they seem through the rusty screen which ~~xx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ separates me from the things outside. I am sitting crouched over my typewriter in a very unhealthy way. My eyes hurt a little bit, and my stomach is in revolt against its own emptiness. You must pardon me for writing no more, but I have a habit of ~~xxx~~ trying to express too much, and most things are better left unsaid.

Dein
John.