

Germantown
June 22 1950

Dear Tochen,

We have been here only about half an hour. There is much to be done, but it all involves more decision than I feel capable of. Since you left most of my time has been spent in helping Mother clean house and prepare to leave. It was all very useful and necessary, and yet everything seems so unreal, and I feel strange and useless. And now the affection and the misunderstanding of your letter complete my mood of loneliness and confusion. I do not know what to say; I feel that I have explained so many times, and that there is an inexplicable unwillingness to understand on your part. My judgment of what Priscilla is, the wrong things that she does, the inconsiderateness and injustice of her behavior to you, is quite clear. If I could stop here and judge her and say that I would have no more to do with her, everything would be so much easier for me. And I would have done the same thing long ago with respect to my sister. But it is not so easy; she has been kind to me; the sheets on my bed have not always been clean, nor was there a waste-paper basket; yet she let me come and go as I pleased, seemed glad to have me at all times, and never objected to my changes of plans. The fact that I have accepted her hospitality so extensively and have

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felt so divided about her makes me feel guilty; I would feel still more guilty if my position with respect to her was as ~~unpleasant~~ simple and uncomplicated as you wish. My opinion of the way the children are brought up is not essentially different from yours. I do not oppose both you and my parents as you say. And you know that though they disapprove of many things that she does, and though they have felt her rudeness and indifference, they still feel bonds of affection. What I feel is duty, rather than affection, though I believe that one should be capable of loving those who wrong oneself ~~or~~ ~~the~~ those whom one loves. I have never found this easy; in fact, I do not believe I have ever achieved it, yet it is very much a part of my unachieved religious faith. Have I not written this letter to you before? Will you be severe and angry with me again?

My clothes and books are now in some sort of order. It is very late and everyone else but you and me is asleep. I am still very wide awake. I have spent the last two hours arranging your letters in chronological order and reading through most of them. They are full of so much pain - yours, and mine when I read them. And yet the most beautiful ones are very quiet and gentle. But I am so much afraid

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of being so far away from you for so long. If your letters this summer are like the the bitterest of last winter, what will I do? My work this summer cannot claim my attention and save me from ^{brooding} all day and night on a single word or sentence.

The misunderstandings that occur between us when we are together are so much easier to bear than those that are written. The latter last so much longer, and I have no refuge or home until they are mended.

Now I must try to find something quieting to read. There is much to be done tomorrow, and I have been very tired since Tuesday evening.

Good night, sleep well,

Margaret