

Konnarock, July 4, 1950

Dear Margaret,

Today has been a very queer day for many reasons, which it would be ~~be~~ foolish to enumerate, since the enumeration would not banish the queerness. Everything has been getting in the way of my work; there are too many distractions. However hard I try, only very little gets done. Tomorrow I shall try even harder to concentrate and not to let myself be distracted. I have been trying to read many things, perhaps too many things, at once, and I have been playing too much violin. My independence, both in my behavior and in my judgments, seems to disconcert mother and father not a little. For myself I have no desire but to be alone and to work. I wonder whether that will ever happen.

You must be patient with me when I come to Philadelphia, because I will probably seem very incomplete and fragmentary to myself, and the only cure I know is work. You must not misunderstand me: to be alone does not mean for me to be without you. On the contrary when you are with me you are usually a buffer between me and everything else. But now my feelings stray and are hurt as they would not be if they were focused on you, and my thoughts become entangled in problems that do not concern me. My parents demand much more sympathy and understanding than I seem to be able to find, and when I flee into my books they accuse me of egotism, - and justly so.

What shall I write you about tonight, when everything is so dreary? I wish I could stay up all night working, but if I did that, I would be very tired tomorrow and even more confused than I am. Although mother does not know it yet, our refrigerator has gone bad. - - - I just ~~now~~ now repaired it, at least for the night. Tomorrow I may have to go to Bristol to get a new condenser. The job took almost two hours, but my parents were pacified, and wryly contemplating my efficiency mother commented that one should not wonder at my being strange considering all the things that were in my head. And now it is one o'clock, time for me to go to bed.

I know that this is a very strange and disconnected letter, but I also feel strange and disconnected. I think of you often, and my mind indulges in fond sentimentalities which the paper would blush to tell. Please tell Alex that I plan to write him soon. Good night. I will fall asleep thinking of you.

Dein

John.