

Germantown

July 14, 1950

Dear Jochen,

I hate this communication by letter; on the same day that you receive a frightened and doubting letter from me, your reassuring letter comes to me, and yet you will not know that I am reassured until next week. It is all so badly out of time.

Now let me tell you all the outward things first. While I was away at Princeton, Alex and Mother concocted a trip to Canada. It will probably be up to the tip of the Gaspé peninsula, although that is not yet determined. Alex says it is supposed to be bare and wild and lonely; he says it is probably like Denmark and that you would like it. If you would come and share the driving, he would see a lot more of the scenery. And it would mean a great deal more to me. I do not really want to go unless you come, but I think I must. Alex is thinking out a schedule and will write you about it. The trip will not be longer than a week or ten days; Alex is going to Maine with Louis Levy sometime at the beginning of August, so we must come back for that. As for the expenses, Alex is sure that they would be under \$50 apiece. You should bring your citizenship papers just in case there were questions at the border. What more can I say to persuade you? When I remember how hard I had to work at it last time, I feel very pessimistic about your answer. As for Mrs. Jarden—I do not like this roundabout approach? If I were she (grammar?) I would see right through it and I wouldn't like it. Couldn't you write to her again? Or if you came to Philadelphia, you could telephone her and make a definite arrangement to see her at some later time. Mother has suggested that you stay here as long as you want—at least until you hear from Mrs. Jarden or make some other arrangement. If you want an excuse for a second letter you might try this: your sister would like to see something of you and she has said that she would like to stay a few days at Mrs. Jarden's at the beginning of next month. As a matter of fact, Margrit asked me to urge you to come at the beginning of the month so that she could see you before she goes to Connecticut.

Your parents will probably be very loth to let you go so much sooner than you had expected, and you may have your own reasons for not coming; I will not be hurt or angry if you do not come, though I do not promise not to be disappointed. But aside from the suddenness of the trip, it sounds like the best possible thing that the three of us could do together. I remember that you have said that you are troubled by my behavior (or by something) even when Alex is the only other person with us. I wish that were not so; I do not know how to change it, but perhaps the change will come even though I do not know where to look.

I feel very calm tonight, not because of my trip to Princeton, for that was rather pointless apart from the gesture, but because I am tired by an ordeal at the dentist's and because the days ahead have some kind of form into which I can pour myself. Next week I shall have to work very hard at my German to make up for all the time I shall miss. Iphigenie, who is just beginning to deceive Thoas, must be read more rapidly. I have bought some wool to knit myself a cardigan. This will give me something to do with my hands for those terrible moments when Mother is trying to decide something and I become impatient. Knitting is for me a little like telling beads.

Thank you for your letter. I need very much to know what you are doing, though I now that the outside and the inside of your existence are not so closely linked as they are in mine. I have not been nasty yet today; I hope that my knitting will always be close by to reach for when I need it.

Now we have had supper on the terrace, the dishes are washed, and the sun has set very magnificently. I wish that I were on a high hill with you so that I could really see it. I think that Mother is immensely pleased at herself that by dividing our forces she has engineered a trip for Alex and me which she thinks we both need and which we both resist. Now it is a fait accompli and one must be docile and appreciative. Although Alex's note seems to require you to be here on Friday, I am sure that we could

wait until Saturday or even later to set out. I hope you will forgive his brisk, commanding tone; he is feeling very organizing, and is by this time almost unaware that this trip was not his idea—or is he? Alex is sometimes too simple.

Now I must begin my translation and work very hard for a couple of hours. Good night, go to sleep early, and leave the upper part of the house unpainted.

Deine

Dear Jochem,

Margaret

I have this connection letter for the same day that you receive a frightened and doubting letter from me, and yet you will not know that I am reassured until next week. It is all so badly out of time.

Now let me tell you all the outward things first. While I was away at Princeton, Alex and Mother connected a trip to Canada. It will probably be up to the tip of the Gaspé peninsula, although that is not yet determined. Alex says it is supposed to be bare and wild and lonely; he says it is probably like Denmark and that you would like it. If you would come and share the driving, he would see a lot more of the scenery. And it would mean a great deal more to me. I do not really want to go unless you come, but I think I must. Alex is thinking out a schedule and will write you about it. The trip will not be longer than a week or ten days; Alex is going to Maine with Louis Levy sometime at the beginning of August, so we must come back for that. As for the expense, Alex is sure that they would be under \$50 apiece. You should bring your citizenship papers just in case there were questions at the border. What more can I say to persuade you? When I remember how hard I had to work at it last time, I feel very pessimistic about your answer. As for Mrs. Jarboe—I do not like this roundabout approach. If I were she (grammar?) I would see right through it and I wouldn't like it. Couldn't you write to her again? Or if you came to Philadelphia, you could telephone her and make a definite arrangement to see her at some later time. Mother has suggested that you stay here a long as you want—at least until you hear from Mrs. Jarboe or make some other arrangement. If you want an excuse for a second letter you might try this: your sister would like to see something of you and she has said that she would like to stay a few days at Mrs. Jarboe at the beginning of next month. As a matter of fact, I would like to see you come at the beginning of the month so that she would see you before she goes to Connecticut.

Your parents will probably be very loath to let you go so much sooner than you had expected, and you may have your own reasons for not coming; I will not be hurt or angry if you do not come, though I do not promise not to be disappointed. But aside from the swiftness of the trip, it sounds like the best possible thing that the three of us could do together. I remember that you have said that you are troubled by my behavior (or by something) even when Alex is the only other person with us. I wish that were not so; I do not know how to change it, but perhaps the change will come even though I do not know where to look.

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Now we have had supper on the terrace, the dishes are washed, and the sun has set very magnificently. I wish that I were on a high hill with you so that I could really see it. I think that Mother is immensely pleased at herself that by dividing our forces she has engineered a trip for Alex and me which she thinks we both need and which we both resist. Now it is a fair accomplishment and one must be humble and appreciative. Although Alex's note seems to require you to be here on Friday, I am sure that we could

5321 Baynton Street
Philadelphia 44, Pa.
Bastille Day

Dear Jean,

Happy Bastille Day!

We are thinking of going on a trip to eastern Canada, leaving the end of next week (on or about Friday, the 21st.) Would you like to come? We would like to have you. Now, much as it gives me pain to tell you, you will have to decide whether or not you can come very soon, because we should leave as soon as possible after Friday (better we should leave on Friday just after my 10:00 A.M. dentist appointment.) Now Jean, if I know you you will have misgivings whether you come with us or stay at home while we go ourselves; so you see that actually a decision brings something that one doesn't like no matter which way it is decided. So make your choice bravely, and no matter how it comes out we'll know that you tried to do it the fair, considerate, sportsmanlike, American way.

Alex, (The Unwritten-To)