

Cambridge, October 3rd.

Dear Margaret:

In five minutes it will be one o'clock in the morning. I hope my abandoned little girl is already fast asleep with a beautiful dream. Since ~~very~~ the weekend, when I succeeded in doing a great deal of work, I have not accomplished much. The extremely long and intricate dissection today the organ concert and thinking about you left me little time for any thing but a cursory review of tomorrow's histology.

You told me on the telephone, you wanted to know what I was doing. I do not think I should write you all the details for fear that the vivid impression which I receive might frighten you and make you unhappy when I was not there to try to help you. Although you probably have seen a dead person you will probably have little knowledge of death, ~ it is the great sea in which life is but a lonely island. What I am doing, briefly, besides histology which is microscopic examination of tissues, is dissecting ^{the} dead body of a man to learn the relative size and position and structure of the major vascular organs and nerves. But there is much much more to it than that, with which I will not burden you unless you ask me to tell you when you are here.

The only thing which I want you to know is that I am becoming neither callous nor indifferent to the ~~very~~ tragic significance of my work. Unlike all the others, I cannot think ~~on~~ the

P.S. I am not at the house, please wait for me a few minutes. I might not make it just on time.

dead body as a machine to be taken apart; -
It remains the temple of the Holy Ghost. I know
nothing to do but to pray for the soul to whom
this body belongs and to ask forgiveness for the
humiliation which I am instrumental in bringing
upon it. I do not think this sin is more grievous
than many other sins which life compels us
daily to commit.

I think often of Düren Dance of Death, of medieval
painting of the burial of Jesus and also of Rembrandt's
The descent from the cross. The melody and the words

Mache Dich mein Herz rein
Ich will Jesus selbst begeben
Dem er soll nunmehr in mir
Für und für (evermore)
Seine riesse Ruhe haben
Welt, geh aus, laß Jesus rein!
Mache Dich mein Herz rein.

are often in my ear. I think for me the body symbolizes
the body of Jesus, - why? I am not sure, symbols are
not logical. But I would like to bury it. I love it and
it is very easy to love because death is very easy for me to
love. Being able to love it, I feel myself more capable of
loving you, and that makes me happy. Today, when
we were dissecting the arms, it became necessary to place
them on a cross bar, in order to have free access to the
hands, so that the body appeared as if crucified. Perhaps
that was why I left an hour early to study in the
car.

You see, these things are not simple and easy,
but I don't want to transfer their burden to you.

On the contrary, I would like to take these burdens from you and
carry them for you as long as you will let me. In German when someone is sick
saying, say put in den Arm. sein forken.