

August 10, 1951

Lieber Jochen,

My mail today contained a bank statement, a letter from Miss Vaillant, and the letter which you wrote Tuesday night. I had waited for the postman a long time, sitting at the piano trying to figure out scales and one of those very simple Bach pieces. The bank statement and my check book show a difference of twenty dollars, their favor. I suppose that I should get Papa to help me with it, but I am so afraid that we would have to spend the whole evening on it, the evening which I want to spend on Pope's "Essay on Man," that perhaps I will just accept the bank's mathematics. Miss Vaillant's letter is nice. I am glad that I am working for her. And in your letter I find you, whom I love, and also what you used to call the "impossibility." Now it seems to wear my less glamorous titles of "dead end" and "incompatibility."

No matter how I answer your letter, you will say that I do not understand. Perhaps I do not. I will try to say what I have been thinking during the past weeks very briefly. You have told me several times that I shouldn't worry so about justifying myself and my actions. While I was still in Konnarock we talked about many of the things that sometimes made my stay very hard. There cannot be very much more to say. I know that the reasons for my unhappiness lie mostly, if not altogether, within me. Your father is annoyed when I say "Es ist alles mein schuld," yet that is very true. It should be easier for me to be happy than it is for you. Fewer things hurt me so keenly. But I have made it very hard for myself by looking away from the many little things that lie around me to something very far away. I often think of the Blake engraving.

I am glad that you find yourself so quiet and calm. Most of the time I am quiet too. Some of the things that are very hard for me when I am with you are more bearable when I am alone. The slowness, heaviness, and clumsiness of my thinking is very hard for me, but I can accept it better. I do not feel it as a barrier between us, as I often do when we are together. When I had finished reading Sheridan's "The Rivals", I could think of almost nothing to say. My few incoherent notes seemed a very poor beginning to make with the Seniors. I went to the library, and I will go to more libraries, and I will think about what I read in the reference books. When my notes are finally put together they will not be very good, but by that time I will like the play better than I do now, and so my class will not be so bad as I imagine it. If you were here to help me, the notes would be more quickly made, better, but by the time the evening was over you would be very tired. I know that you love me, but I do not think that your love accepts this slowness and clumsiness. You love other things which we were once ugly and are now beautiful or which are becoming beautiful. But the slowness and clumsiness will always be there, and the fact that neither of us can accept it when we are together makes it very grotesque. You say that no matter how discontented I am with you, you will always be contented with me. Are you sure that that has been true and will be true? Aside from the fact that I understand you so much less than you need to be understood, remember how much you need to be alone. I have not forgotten as easily as you have what you said the day of the unsuccessful finger-prick. When I think of it, I try to make it easier for myself by remembering how young you are, and that you sometimes talk wildly, like a hurt child whose hurt eclipses everything else. I think of it with less fear than I would have a year ago and without resentment. If it is God's will that we should not be married, I hope that we will help me to make my life alone beautiful. The unreality of theology for you is not hard for me to understand. My Christianity, like the rest of my thinking, is far more emotional than intellectual. Last night I was completely alone in the house for several hours. I studied, and occasionally I went up to look at Algis. He lay very little and still, and I knew why Elena had so little time to help

Mother. Vicky followed me into every room. Even while she wiggled appreciatively at being patted, her eyes rolled desperately as she wondered where the fleas would bite next. Poor Vicky, she is so grotesque. Alex and I remind each other from time to time of Bob's meditative comment: "You know, I just don't hate Vicky the way I used to." Finally, I stopped working and listened to two records from the St. John Passion, beginning with "Was ist Wahrheit?" I was happy.

Now I must go downstairs to help Mother with supper and then with making things pretty. In a couple of hours Alex will be here with Cecile. I have not written all the things that I had intended to, but perhaps it is enough. Your letter makes some of the self-control crumble. What floods of tears there are behind the dikes, but I will stop up the holes and be very nice. It will be a hard evening and tomorrow will probably be still worse. I wish that Janet had not abducted the St. Matthew Passion. I have wanted it since I came home, and tonight I want it more than ever. But though I cannot play or sing, I can still hear a little of "Mache Dich mein Herze rein."

Deine,

Margaret