

1926
Saturday. Berlin.

Dearest Florence:

I am out of bed today, but after I returned from Munchen I was very sick and was in bed with a high fever and a very heavy cold on the lungs. Now I am feeling much better, but am not well. I went out today to get a Hohensonnen Bad, which warmed me to the bone, and I quarrelled with everybody who waited on me. Then I got my head washed and electrically massaged, hoping that would help some. It did not help much.

So you see I have been able to do nothing about your trunk, and must postpone it until Monday. In the meantime my rain coat came, and I must thank you and Sam. I know I must have given you a lot of trouble just at the last minute, but I feared the hotel would not return it to me if I depended upon them.

In the meantime I have your little dackels sitting on my mantel and they delight the hearts of everyone who comes. Yesterday Mrs. Grabisch was here with a big schäferhund, and I placed one of them before him and he jumped back, cocked his ears, and at first seemed to think it a real dog. When I replaced the dog on the mantel, he still stood under it, looking up with his ears cocked up in the most interested expectation. Then Mahdi comes in often and he always stops and gives one of the little dackels a slap on the head and asks him why he is crying like that. He always arranges them anew, and to give them something to cry about, he has perched my black cat on one of their heads. I have a black cat of fuzz and his tail is hoisted gallantly in the air. So now he remains perched on one of your dackels and one can see why the dackel weeps so continuously.

Then Mahdi brought my radio and put it up in my room so I could hear lectures and music while sick. I have improved my mind while lying in bed: have heard marvellous lectures; a series of lectures on the theory of Marxism; one on the Typhus, its spread, and its fighting. Night before last Thomas Mann himself spoke for over half an hour, chiefly on Joseph Conrad, and then his daughter read from his roman, "Die Zauberberg". Last night I heard "Tristan and Isolde" broadcasted from the State Opera here with Bruno Walter directing, and it was as if I were sitting in the opera. Tomorrow Herhardt Hauptmann reads from his unpublished epic "Till Eulenspiegel", on Monday there is a Haydn-Mozart Concert broadcasted from the State Opera, and on Tuesday there is a Beethoven concert. The opera "Martha" is being broadcasted the coming week, as is George Kaiser's drama "Gas". I have the Radio program and it is filled with good lectures, so maybe I will continue to be sick and improve my mind. My radio is an excellent thing, but one tires of it often.

October 1943

Dear Barbara

I've a letter from Gilert Roe in New York and he has placed my book before the Viking Press Publishing Co. He says he himself found the book of deep interest and of importance, but he does not know if the publishers will be attracted by it. He expected to hear soon from the publishers.

I say: one of the days this week I heard an operetta by radio, and really, some of the jokes were such as we tell each other only in private. One was much like my minister's joke, except it was like this: "It seems a little Maurice was feeling very strange and he went to a Krankenkasse doctor (you know, the State physicians to which all workers may go free of charge and get treatment free of charge.) Well, the doctor told him that what he needed was to pass a pleasant, very pleasant evening with a girl. Which was done. The next morning the girl said "That costs money." "What! Money!" exclaimed little Maurice, "but I come from the Krankenkasse!"

I don't know if you see the joke. It is a purely German joke. Anyway I heard the audience roar with laughter at such jokes.

Bakar is returning to India in December of this year. At least he writes to this effect.

Mahdi was glad to get your love. I've seen no one else except Nanu. When I see Naidu I'll get Sam's pictures.

Give Sam my love. And you, dearest darling, always.

Agnes

[Faint, mostly illegible text at the bottom of the page, possibly bleed-through or a second page of a letter.]