

Pre., Feb. 7, 1969 1:45 a.m.

Dear Sylvia,

I had been hoping against hope that I'd receive a letter from you. Hoping to receive a letter that would lift my morale, but no such luck. First I rationalized that you might be timing it so that I'd receive it after Tuesday, the day of Menachem's departure, but now I feel you probably feel you've paid everything you could pay to me — and what more can you do?! Frankly, I couldn't blame you if you were weary of being involved with T.H.O.'s & the Arnona turmoil.

Menachem left Israel Tues. 8:20 a.m. On Monday afternoon he was ready to cancel his reservation! This was only the last of about a hundred changes of mind and unbelievable indecisions. I cannot take any more!!!

It would be difficult for me to fill you in on every mood — good ones and the bad — but I will try to tell you of the most recent feelings I have had, and why I want him to try to revive T.H.O.

I don't think we have a chance for a future as long as she is within reach. He saw her several times since returning here Dec. 23rd. and he has told me that their meetings were in public places, that

Their conversations were unemotional and unromantic. But, her husband, refuses to accept a reconciliation, will not consider a meeting of the four of us. When she would meet him, it would have to be without his knowledge. If he were ever to find out he would probably take immediate divorce action. She is evidently willing to take such a gamble. She may very well feel confident that she would then get her man! I am not a gambler, and certainly not when the stakes are so high. Is this not reason enough not to want to be here?!

Monday evening, her last in Israel, he agreed to meet her at the hospital where her lesson is a patient. It was to be a short good-bye while I waited at Albert Kaplan's office. He later told me she came dressed to kill. She told him that she had the entire evening because her husband was on an assignment (he's a journalist). He told her that I was waiting for him and that he had not planned to make a note of it. (There was at least one frustrated woman in Tel Aviv that night!) He has wanted us to meet, but she has refused. "What will we talk about? The man we both love?" He thought he might try again that evening, but when

She appeared at her very best. He changed his mind. He and I were in sports clothes, and were rather pooped from an entire day of punning around taking care of last minute details. He said (to me) it wouldn't be fair to me that she meet me for the first time not looking as I would want to. I did appreciate her consideration, and I certainly would not have seen her that evening even if she had been wearing a house dress.

I feel that her behavior of that evening — and her intentions — do not prove that she is trying to make a successful reconciliation of her marriage. I am not willing to gamble that every time she sneaks out of the house (on some pretense or other) that she will be successful to get away with it.

Mercedem insists that we are making strides towards a happy future. In several ways in the two weeks we were together, I saw signs of it, but it's not enough. He says I should be secure — I am the victor. But I don't feel secure. The few times he saw her, he told me he was going, and I felt ill — I was afraid, and I don't think I can overcome this. I cannot forbid him to see her because then he too might break, and perhaps the far hidden fruit will become sweet again. He

tells me to be patient — maybe it'll take 3 months, 6 months, 5 years, maybe tomorrow — and the great emotions he chose to give up (for the security of the family and marriage he knew) will disappear. I prefer to wait out that time — whether short or long — as far away as possible from her.

(In the last day or two, one of the things he told me about her was that she was a very domineering and aggressive woman. I said "you do make some pair!" and he said "of course some adjustments would have had to be made".)

I cannot understand what motivated him, but he showed her our wedding pictures. He says she is no beauty, and he says she has a terrible figure. Would you not think he'd be hurting her feelings by showing her those pictures?

Re T.H.O. — I think the only thing that will ~~prevent~~ prevent him from passing the magazine are some legal technicalities which he must look into the first day he returns. If these can be overcome, he can probably make it. The printer — his second biggest problem — has agreed to work and be paid off gradually. He will get an office in the same building that the printer is in.

I know the personal road will be a hard one — for me too — but I prefer that road than the one that may await me here.

I have told Menachem that I want us to return, and that he must make every effort to make it possible. For my mental health, I hope he succeeds. I pray that when he arrives in N. Y. (on Sunday, if memory serves me) he will not again start going thru those terrible stages of indecision and regrets.

Incidentally, when he told her that he was returning to the States, she was shocked! She tried to convince him that he should leave the dead alone — that was the part. She told him he had not applied himself sufficiently to settling here. (I said so, too, when he called me, wanting to return.) But my answer to her attitude is that she didn't live thru the nine years of T.H.O. with him, so she cannot know all that it means. Alas, she would prefer that the past be dead!

Well, Sylvia, it is now exactly 3 A.M. I now feel that the sleeplessness that I felt has passed, and I must get to bed.

Saturday morning I am leaving on a three day

Trip that will take me as far as Eilat. This will be my first sight-seeing except for last Saturday morning when we went to visit the Old City of Jerusalem.

I hope I'll find a letter from you when I return.

Again, thank you for being my friend.

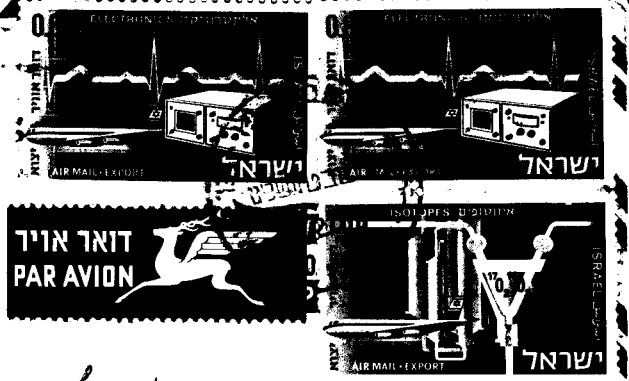
Love,

Ruth

P.S. You may be surprised to see Max wearing a very feminine pair of cuff links. They were once her earrings. I told him he has never owned or worn anything so contrary to his personality and appearance. He agreed with me, but still he wears them! They, too, must die!!!

R.

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