

C H A P T E R 31
L E T T E R S F R O M T H E P A R E N T S .

There arrived all the time in relatively short intervals letters from my inlaws in Vienna. I have a great collection of these letters, and I will attach all of them as a special supplement for those who will be interested in the details. But a few of them, which are important for the understanding of successive events, I have translated and will insert them here, to show in what condition they were at about the time, when they were living in Hollandstrasse 9, relatively peacefully, but constantly worrying, now not anymore about us, but still about Lisa and Francis. These letters show, better than any description about them, what wonderful people they were, full of love, goodness, and understanding.

The first letter is from the mother and reads as follows:

"My dear Hedy and dear Adolph; Vienna, Oct. 13th, 1940

We were very surprised that a letter from you, dear Hedy, arrived yesterday (on the long day), written 8 days ago in Miami. A few days before, your letter of September 25th came.

Unfortunately, you never answer regarding the main problem (the liftvan). You must have already letters from Julius, considered the problem, and have acted accordingly and rapidly. We were happy with Erich's letter, although it was from way back and hardly satisfied our craving for knowledge. You wrote that aunt Betty has moved again. Where and why? Did Dr. Holzer pass the board examination? What can Dr. Lazarus do for Lisa? You wrote before that you cooked; is it only lately that you don't have a kitchen? Or does it mean that you ate in a buffet while staying in a hotel? We passed well the long day yesterday, but afterwards I had, as you know, slight cramps. Aunt Clara was yesterday afternoon here, she feels happy in her community (?). Uncle Martin was also here, a few days ago. I hope you will have now relaxation and find the time to write us in detail. Very often we had to think over and construct things, as you had forgotten to write us certain details. Especially the meeting of Adolph with you and with Hannerl. Anyway, you, dear Adolph, will write us and in this way supplement each other. Your aunt Rosa is not very happy with Alice in Bucharest, and from your mother we don't have any news. Don't worry about us, since there is now anyway no chance at the American consulate for us. But I beg you to do everything that Julius wrote. Mrs. Glaser sends regards. She advises you also to do what she wrote regarding the liftvan - if there is still time. Julius is very excited about the Erdsteins. Things don't look good there at all. Kiss for me my sweet Hannerle. Everybody finds her very much changed. I would like to know, whether she had recognized you, dear Adolph. With God's will, Lisa and Franzerl will also come soon. Embracing and kissing all of you,

your Mama.

The following lines are an addition to the letter of the 13th of October:

"My dear Adolph:

Today, the 14th of October, arrived your dear and long letter of September 29th. Now we know you all finally together and imagine how your new home is. Meanwhile, we give up the hope to see you soon, and your being together will hardly soon be disrupted. As we see from your plans concerning the extension of Hedy's re-entry permit, you seem to have little hope to get to the U.S. soon. Please, write to Erich and send us the letters. They both were interned. I think you should follow the advice of Julius, which was considered forth and back, if it is not too late. It stays there, well preserved, at your disposal. Again embracing and kissing you, Mama."

There follow now two letters, written by the parents.

"My dear Hedy:

Vienna, October 29th, 1940

Today's letter is for you and hopefully we will have luck as in the case of Hannerl and the letter arrives exactly on the 15th of November. We think now often about last year, when you made preparations at that time for the voyage. Then I could take sweet Hannerl on my arm, and had her as sleep-comrade - in reality, not only like now in my dream. Now my thoughts at night concern my little Franzerl and Lisa, that means also during the day I can not get away from them! Yes, these thoughts are wandering now over all continents and with the exception of you, thanks God, they don't find a fix point. But I want to congratulate you, my dear Hedy, my good child, on your birthday and wish you that you and dear Adolph may again find a permanent home with your dear good children, who

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are really so well-bred that that alone constitutes a gift of God. - And God may help you to be able to bring up both to become happy beings, and perhaps will fate allow us to live and participate in your happiness. Enjoy this day, in thoughts also on Lisa and Erich, as you always celebrated this day together. Unfortunately, I forgot to write to Erich that we thought much of him on his birthday. - We are well, here the winter has already started. You will not know about that this year. What could be the situation of Lisa and Franzerl? Do you think, dear Hedy, that we will hear from the Runes? Today I met mother Axmann, she sends regards to you. Everybody is glad that you are together. Please, don't forget to send regards for the Rosners. Aunt Elsa will move to the Meisls on November 15th. The letter of Adolph and you I have sent to Minny; she wanted again your address. They live in Bruenn, Königsfeld, Smetanova 41 now, all of them together. Heinrich reached now 70 years. I embrace you heartily and kiss you all.

Your Mama."

Now follows the letter of the father.

"Dearest Hedy, dearest Adolph! October 29th, 1940

It is now one year since you and our sweet Hannerl started the emigration on your birthday, from your parents home, from the place of your birth, parting from your beloved home town, with Hannerl, drawing away from us, looking for a new aim, with the view at an unknown world and an uncertain future. You have proved yourself equal to your task, have known how to assert yourself with Hannerl successfully in a strange world, where the charm of the delightful Hannerl may have facilitated the road. Now, dear Hedy, you have finally

succeeded after more than two years of having been torn apart, after many efforts to get to your husband, with your child, to be united with him and to celebrate your birthday this year on his side, and quieted the longing of dear Adolph, of course with the not yet quieted longing to have your dear Franzerl near you, so that the happiness of the family is for the present not yet complete. But there is legitimate hope that it will soon be fulfilled. The heartiest congratulations are herewith offered on your birthday this year, and wishes that you may always have gladness with husband and children, that you may soon find firm ground and that there may always be with you happiness and satisfaction, for which all expectations seem to be present. So, head high! A kind fate may bring it about that you will soon see again your child with Lisa, that you will embrace Franzerl, and that you will be able to guard his life and thriving. - Besides, in the face of enormous happenings in the world and the continuous overthrows of human destinies, one should look at everything more beyond his own "Self" and his fate and that of his loved ones should not be let come too close to oneself. One should persevere, endure, and resign, without lamenting, but not forgetting the goodness and love of humanity and in this way fight the battle of existence. - We are expecting your detailed description of the development of your further progress, how Hedy and Hannerl have adapted to the new surroundings and circumstances, especially how the golden Hannerl, the 4-year old globetrotter inserts herself with Papa and enjoys herself. We have here for a few days cold weather. We are well in our apartment, quite comfortable. You probably have still warm weather and can still

habe und 9 Jahre alt bin.

Im welchen Stock wohnt

Du Mama.

Sieher Papa schreibe mir

so bald weil ich weiss, dass die

Mama keine Zeit zum schreiben
hat.

Viele Susi von Frangi und

viele Grüsse und Küsse für die

Frau Dr. Sarel

Siehe Mama und lieber Papa!

Jetzt habe ich Osterferien und bin

den ganzen Tag draussen und wenn

die Lisa fort geht da bleibe ich

da um mit den Kindern zu spielen

Wenn die Lisa wieder nachhause

kommt darf ich mich mich zeigen

weil sonst ruft sie mich herein

um Euch einen Brief zu schreiben

- wie heute.

Im der Schule war ich der

2, von 29 Schülern. Die Lisa hat
mir ein Buch gekauft. Da seht
Ihr wie es mir gut geht.

Glaubt Ihr, dass es eine
lieben Gott gibt? Ich glaube, dass
es das Gewissen ist und wenn man
etwas schlechtes machen will
da macht man es rasch und tut
damit es niemand sieht und tut
sich dabei weh.

Wie geht es Euch?

Ich schreibe jetzt schreibe
ich jedesmal den Hammer wenn
die Lisa oder ich Euch einen
Brief schreibe. Das ist meine
größte Freude. Die Hammer soll
dir einmal einen Brief für mich
diktiertem. Die Hammer wird sich
hoffentlich mit meinem Ostersei
feiern. Hat sie ein Ostersei dort
bekommen?

Ich habe am 1. Mai Geburtstag

bathe in the ocean. Write about everything and about relatives and friends in the U.S.A. Regards to Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Weinberg, also to you from many people. Again heartiest birthday congratulations to Hedy, all conceivable goods. To sweet Hannerl thousand pussis. Embracing and kissing you, Papa.

We were quite unhappy that we could not do anything about Lisa and Francis. Hedy had met one evening a lady, who had her son in Belgium. She spoke about nothing else than her fear that the Germans will get him and that she will never see him again. Hedy became very restless from then on and was talking day and night about Francis, cried all the time "Bring me my boy over, bring me my boy over", especially at night. I did not know what to do.

At about that time a letter from Francis came, which I am inserting here, with a translation into English; The letter was not dated, written at a time, when he was already in Nice, with Lisa and Paul. It reads as follows:

"Dear Mama and dear Papa!

I have now Easter vacation and I am all day long outside and when Lisa leaves, I stay here to play with the children. When Lisa comes home again, I don't show up, because otherwise she would call me to come in to write you a letter, like today. In school I was the second best of 29 pupils. Lisa had bought me a book. So you can see how well I am off.

Do you believe that there is God? I think it is the conscience, and when one wants to do something bad, one does it fast, so that nobody would see it, and causes pain to oneself.

How are you? I will from now on write to Hannerl, each

Written in
April 1940
from Le Touquet
Paris Plage,
not from Nice

time Lisa or I will write a letter to you. That is my greatest pleasure. Hannerl should dictate to you once a letter for me. Hannerl will, I hope, be happy with my Easter egg. Did she get there an Easter egg?

I will have my birthday on May 1st, and will be 9 years old. On which floor do you live, Mama?

Dear Papa, write to me very soon, because I know that Mama has no time to write.

Many kisses from Franzi
and many greetings and kisses for Mrs. Dr. Saxl."
