

Rheylt  
30th Nov. 63

My dear Diana,

I must write you this very serious letter. A letter <sup>in</sup> for which I am asking for help. I myself do not know what type of help I am asking for, nor can I see how you can help, except that I shall propose a few things and perhaps you can tell me what you think. It is to you of course I have to write because you & are the person most close to me.

I have rifled of me a book on psychology, which diagnoses my disease -- but doesn't tell me how to cure it. I must quote: "... it is a very disruptive emotion, and that in excess it can be extremely painful and indeed literally unbearable -- many people attempt suicide rather than continue living that way .... it is neurotic because it is much stronger and longer lasting than usual. It represents an emotional over-reaction, is backward looking and concerned with sadness about the past. The term used for this disease is called 'dysthymia', emphasizing that we are dealing here with a profound dysfunction of the person's mood, a malfunctioning of his emotional apparatus. The patient recognizes the fact that his state is without a reasonable cause. He has full insight and indeed this is the most tragic as far as the sufferer is concerned."

I have been steadily declining the last few weeks, and when I think "This must be the rock bottom, I can't get worse but only better" my disease still increases. I have tried what one would logically recommend: Fresh air, go out, meet people, have bath, exercise. I even went to

Amsterdam, hoping that the drive and the sight of a new city might help. I forced myself, by sheer will power, to ~~proceed~~ to carry out a programme I had worked out. But it didn't help me at all.

I am writing this letter after three days of utter despair, of absolute emotional and mental exhaustion. I have been unable to leave my flat these last three days and am writing this letter, I feel, with my last dregs of reason and logic.

I feel that my only hope would be to come to England soon, very soon. Not only London itself would help, but I feel, childish as it is, I need affection and friendship as people I love near me. To live in your flat for a while might be the only cure left for me. I don't think that if you come here, it would help me, neither would Pseudot being's visit, or she proposes, be of any help. This town, this country is so linked to my disease, that nothing, happening here, could help.

The obstacles to my coming at once to England seem insurmountable. First the visa. Would the Home Office refer me a visa for 6 months or one year, if your firm wants me to come to finish or write a book which you have "commissioned" me to write? ... and would Andrei agree to issue such a statement to the Home Office?

If this main obstacle is surmounted, would it be possible for me to live, practically rent-free at your place? and would I, or could it be possible that with at least a weekly short story of 'Guardian' type, manage to ~~top~~ live for a while? I could sell all I have here, radio-

gram, records, and eventually the car, to pay my debts to the bank and be able to come with enough money to see me over the first few weeks.

As you know, I don't mind sleeping on the camp bed in the sitting room at all. Of course my presence will nibble at your not very large income. I have no illusions about that at all.

It seems my only hope Diana dear. I had written some time ago to you and said "I shall sacrifice a year" and continue living here and working. But I know now that it is impossible, and that I won't last that long.

I have deteriorated physically very much and have to force food into me. Nevertheless, I do want to save myself. I can see, and I know, that life is not as I am experiencing it now.

You must tell me frankly, is what I am proposing at all reasonable? at all practical? -- possible?

Don't worry if you think it isn't. And don't hesitate to tell me the truth, please.

I know that this letter will make you unhappy, bless your kind heart, and I would have so much wished I were able to write something cheerful.

Bye by my love

Wendy dear...