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{lh}To Aniela Zago{a}rska

Text J-A, 1, 274; Najder 231¹

{lra}Pent Farm,

12th April, 1899.

{lsa}My dear Aniela,

{lb}Excuse these few words. I am anxious about Karola.² Please be so kind and let me know how she is--and how you all are. Since your last letter I have sent: 1.--the photo of the boy; 2.--3 packets of cuttings; 3.--a number of Literature; 4.--Wells's novel The Invisible Man. Let me know, my dearest, if you have received all this; especially the photo and the book. If the cuttings have gone astray, it will be necessary to send them in envelopes. If you have received Literature³ I will send it to you regularly. If the book has not reached you, I will send another copy at once.

I have been in bed for a whole week with gout. I do not feel at all well. But that does not matter. My wife and the youngster are both well. God grant that all may go well with you. A few lines will reassure me. I embrace you affectionately and kiss your hand.

{lc}Your

{ls}K. Korzeniowski

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{lh}To John Galsworthy

Text MS Forbes; J-A, 1, 276

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]¹

17 Ap 99

{lsa}Dearest Jack.

{lb}We were awfully disappointed but perhaps you are right. It would have been like the glimpse of a ship in a fog, tormenting, disturbing, conveying no sense of companionship. I had nothing to show You, so You haven't lost much; but I am anxious about these thousand words You've written.² At this juncture every word is an object to be considered anxiously with heart searchings and in a spirit of severe resolution. Don't write them (words) hurriedly. I am glad you have written no more than one thousand. If it had been only one hundred I would have said: it is well. Don't smile and think that it is only my own cursed tongue-tied state that gives me that point of view. There may be something of that of course--but for the most part it is sheer conviction. And I think of your prose just as I think of mine own.

I am sincerely pleased with what you say of Elstree.³ You know that I am loyal enough; that my memory is good and sane even if my mind is diseased and on the verge of craziness. I am glad they think well of me; it is the only kind of treasure I want to lay up, the only sort of wealth I prize. And I am not ungrateful to those who contribute. I've been more moved by your letter than I intend telling You. I wait as patiently as I can for your return trusting that you will come here with the MS without loss of time. Jess sends kindest regards. Ever Yours,

{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 275; Watts 124

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

17 Ap. 1899.

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher ami

{lb}Your letter this morning made me feel better. Is it possible that you like the thing so much?⁴ Well, you say so and I believe you but--do you quite believe it yourself soit dit sans vous offenser. The element of friendship comes in. But still I am willing, even eager, to believe in your .p179

scrupulous literary honesty. And in any case my blessing on your intention.

I hold {op"}Ipane".¹ Hoch! Hurra! Vivat! May you live! And now I know I am virtuous because I read and had no pang of jealousy. There are things in that volume that are like magic and through space through the distance of regretted years convey to one the actual feeling, the sights, the sounds, the thoughts; one steps on the earth, breathes the air, and has the sensations of your past. I knew of course every sketch; what was almost a surprise was the extraordinarily good, convincing effect of the whole. It is not always so with a collection. The style grows on one from page to page. It is as wonderful in a slightly different way as the Morocco book. How do you do it? How? I do not say which I like best. I like best the one I happen to be reading. I think the sequence of the sketches has been arranged very well.

I have read it already three times.

I am cursedly tongue tied. Not only in my own work but when I want to talk of a friend's work too. From a full heart nothing comes. A weariness has laid its hand on my lips -- I ask myself at times whether it is for ever. Then I ought to die.

However one is never sure, and thus one hangs on to life. Can there be anything more awful than such an incertitude and more pathetic than such hanging on? Shall I see you before you leave for the Sahara O Fortunate Man? I'll come to town {op'}a-purpose' you know!

Jess sends her kindest regards Ever Yours
{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To Hugh Clifford

Text MS Clifford; J-A, 1, 237

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

17 May 1899.²

{lsa}Dear Mr. Clifford³

{lb}It is very good of you to have forgiven me my review of your Studies.⁴ I suppose You have seen between the lines the feeling which dictated the .p180

words. For me to review Your work would have been a mere impertinence and I would have left it to some journalist who lives by that kind of thing had it not been that I meant it for a tribute not only to the charm of the book but to the toil of the man; to the years of patient and devoted work at the back of the pages. This is why when approached by the Academy, I stipulated for my signature. Reviewing is not in my way; I had never done any before and none since.¹ I had rather use my ignorance in other ways--for writing novels, for instance.

I appreciate the more the kind things you say in your letter because I suspect my assumption of malay colouring for my fiction must be exasperating to those who know.² It seems as though you had found in my prose some reason for forgiving me. Nothing could be more flattering to a scribbler's vanity or more soothing to the conscience of a man who even in his fiction, tries to be tolerably³

{lh}To Hugh Clifford

Text MS Clifford; J-A, 1, 276

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

24 May 99

{lsa}My Dear Sir.

{lb}If we haven't met last Saturday it is the P.O.'s fault.

Thanks very much for your kind letter. I am sure you won't take it ill if [I] confess my inability to take immediately advantage of your friendly invitation. The reasons that keep me at home just now are too many to be set down but you may well believe that if they are not good they are uncommonly strong or else I would break through them, for my desire to meet you is not only prompted by a very natural gratitude for Your appreciation (the most flattering and welcome recognition my work had brought me) but by a profound regard for your personality, for your life-work, for Your large and generous sympathies--as far as it is given to my ignorance to understand these things.

The institution of domestic slavery having broken down in this country and my wife being far from well just now I simply dare not take you at Your word, tho' my restraint costs me something I assure You. You would probably get nothing to eat, and though You have known .p181

worse hardships think how black my face would be after such a misfortune.

I take it I have your permission to let you know when I come to town next and if then you can spare an hour I will be most happy (this is no conventional phrase) to call on you; and I live even in hopes that before next Nov^{er}l you'll sacrifice a whole day to seek me out in my jungle. Believe me, my dear Sir always very faithfully yours
{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}3To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

24 May 99

{lsa}Dearest Ted.

{lb}Your letter came as a blessing for indeed a man is blessed in his friends; and when I think of all the honest affections given me by men much too good for me I feel bitterly ashamed of my pessimism, of my ineradicable tendency to quarrel with fate.

And in the depth of Your friendship You can find words that are sweeter than balsam to the soul of the scribe; after reading your messages I think a little better of myself and thus You confer on me not a small benefit O! Friend long unseen but never forgotten.

I close this with the word--thanks, without my usual jeremiads. You don't say anything of wife and child, but fortunately I had news through Your mother, so I know you are tolerably well. My affectionate regards to Your Wife, love to Miss Katherine (I hear she looks best[?] taking a walk {op'} in maiden meditation fancy free² under the Elstree elms) and I am
{lc}Ever Yours
{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To Algernon Methuen

Text J-A, 1, 277

{lra}Pent Farm.

25th May, 1899.

{lsa}My Dear Sir,

{lb}My letter to you was not a coy manoeuvre with a view to a vast amount of shekels. The facts are these: I am engaged to Mr. Heinemann .p182

here, and to the McClure Co. over there, for the Rescue. I am almost a year behind my date with that extremely long story and I am beyond measure distressed by the delay. The thing simply won't come out as quick as I fondly hoped. I am also engaged to Mr. Blackwood for a vol. of three stories which is still 80,000 words short. It is clear to me that my power of production is as uncertain as the weather of these Isles. If H. and McC. get tired of my irregularity (to pick out a mild name) I shall come to you and I don't think you'll find me exceptionally rapacious. I have no reason, however, to think that such would be the case, and these two houses have treated me with such consideration, patience and friendliness, that I don't see myself going elsewhere of my own movement. Apart from very friendly relations, Blackwood's is the only periodical always open to me--and is the only one for which I really care to work. Such being the true state of the case, to talk about any future work of mine would be futile and not very sincere. Nevertheless I am very grateful to you for your generous suggestions. The disposal of my work cannot be governed purely by questions of payment. That is at least how I feel about it, tho' nowise bound to these firms except by their good offices rendered to me at a time when they were needed rather badly.

Pardon the length of this. It is just because I appreciate the spirit of your offer that I am anxious to make my position clear to you.

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Bookman (NY) 69,232¹

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

Monday [29 May 1899]²

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Crane.

{lb}Just a word. Your expected letter did not come this morning. Ever so many thanks for allowing Dolly³ to come. I think if you don't mind we shall come on Sat^y as we made arrangements with whitewashers and such like ruffians to come into the house on Monday. I shall bring my dress clothes along and we shall both try to be a credit to you and Stephen.⁴

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Please say if we may come early on Sat? About noon. Unless we hear from you we shall do so.--and write on Thursday the exact time.

In awful haste. Your most affect^d and faithful servant

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}Jessie's love.

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Bookman (NY) 69,371

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

30 May. 99

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}I am afraid we are giving you a certain amount of trouble but as the milk is--in a way--already spilt--I trust you will not cry--or at any rate not much. Seriously--if I had the cheek to ask about Dolly it was with the idea of saving you the bother about the little girl and under the impression you would have a clear house. Now Dolly knows, it would simply break her heart if she were stopped; moreover this excitable Borys is more likely to be good with her than with a stranger. Would you believe that since you left he has been quite sleepless getting up in the middle of the night to talk about the {op'}nice man' and the {op'}Ann-ann' (which means aunties) and generally behaving like a man in the first

stages of lunacy.

My letter of yesterday has no doubt reached you by this. If we may we shall come by the train arriving at Rye 11.14 am. Would Stephen write to some livery stable at Rye for a landau to meet us at that time? and then we can manage. We invade you so early of course on account of the boy the only practicable train in the afternoon arriving only about six. Jess is sorry your sponge bag has been detained. Mrs Nash¹ put it away carefully so that we did not even know it was here. It goes by this post.

Unless we hear from you we shall carry out our dreadful purposes as set forth in my two letters.

Jess sends her love. She's too busy to write herself--or says so.

In haste to catch post I am dear Mrs Crane your affectionate and obedient servant

{ls}Conrad.

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{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text G. 151

[June 1899]¹

{lsa}Dearest Edward.

{lb}This is the sort of rot I am writing now.² Frankly it is not worth troubling about but still I send you this--the first part of a B'wood story in two parts.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad

{lps}Send it back at your leisure. Of course you can see it is not corrected in any way.