

## L0003 (English)

Toronto, May 2, 55

Dear Mother! Wishing you all the best on your birthday. Thank you very much for your letter, I was so happy to receive it. And then the sleeping bag for my birthday! It's just fantastic. I've already tried it on ten times, it's absolutely perfect. We had always wanted to sew some for ourselves, meaning buy the comforter and then sew in the zipper; but of course we wouldn't have had such a long zipper, and it wouldn't have been so wonderfully light. With the cover, I can also always keep it in the front of the car. Thank you again. From mech I received a beautiful wallet and a ticket to the Metropolitan Opera in New York for "Carmen". Inge and Hilde and their parents gave me a wonderful pearl necklace, a lovely yellow fabric for a dress, and also an opera ticket for "Madame Butterfly". I plan to sew the dress next week. I already have the pattern. On my birthday, we went to the movies to see "The Glass Slipper" with Leslie Caron; it's the fairy tale of Cinderella, modernized, really wonderful. Mech really liked it too. On the morning of my birthday, I wanted to get up an hour early and open my presents, which is something I've done 6 times now on my birthday. But mech says that's not happening, and so we argued in bed in the morning about whether I could open my presents or not when I looked at the clock and it was 10 minutes to 7, and I was supposed to be at work at 7. So I left the presents be and rushed off.

Right now, Inge and Hilde's parents are here. Unfortunately, the father is only here for 2 weeks; he's on a business trip through the States. He has a few large department stores in Germany, so he's mainly interested in the big department stores here. I think he's already shot 20 rolls of film. He is really very nice, 57 years old, while the mother is only 29. They just got married last year but had known each other for 10 years and just waited until the girls were older. He immediately addressed me with "du," which was nice.

On Saturday, we went to the Falls in two cars; Mr. Kochendörfer's travel companion and his wife came along too. It was very nice to visit from a completely different point of view for once, that of the rich world. The dollars just flew, and of course, we were all invited. But for that, we really saw something and ate well on the 12th floor of one of more than a million hotels with a view of the Falls. We rode all the elevators and railways that go under the Falls; only the two ships that used to travel below the Falls weren't there because they burned down to the ground two weeks before the season started. That was a much-talked-about event. The ships had been built down there over 50 years ago, since they couldn't be brought in fully assembled. It's a huge loss of business for them not to be running. Imagine, Hilde is going back to Germany with her mother on June 30th. It was rather sudden, but her father wants her back because she has lost so much weight and is so nervous, so it's for the best. She has a more coveted life over there anyway. Later, she is supposed to go to the French part of Switzerland for a year to learn French. But she's leaving all her things here, as she might come back if she doesn't like it over there anymore. I'm curious to see how she settles back in over there, but as I said, she'll be in very good circumstances, so she'll certainly be able to eat bananas and oranges there too. But I think it's nice and wise of the father to let the girls be on their own for once and to basically fend for themselves for 2 years. They didn't save much, but still. Inge is expecting her fiancé in July or August.

We'll see what comes of that.

Last Sunday we were at Lake Erie on a peninsula that was really just sand dunes, and the sun was quite strong.

I also received a long birthday letter from the Betzels. They're also having a hard time finding workers, although they've had a deaf-mute girl for housekeeping for 2 years now, which seems to be working out quite well. But otherwise, they are making progress; they've done a lot of new planting in recent years, bought a large dump trailer for the winter, and the barn is being rebuilt. That makes things fun.

Well, once again, very happy birthday wishes and all the best. Doris