

London April 3rd 1951

My dear Raza.

I was nearly moved to tears by your letter. I felt like Damier when he was ~~given~~ offered a house by Corot. I don't think I'll have any means of showing you my gratitude.

You and Mr Gotala must have had a splendid holiday. I was really surprised to see his development from the two photographs he sent me. They are superb. I ~~must~~ be mistaken about his tone value, but apart from it, ~~do~~ you think "tone value" is important? We will discuss it one day. In your letter you write referring to Bezaune ~~you~~ something about "Formal harmony". What is it? I understand the meaning of the two words separately. But I don't know what it means when they are combined. We will talk about that too. I hope Padamsee will start work with ~~renewed~~ renewed vitality and energy. In a way, I was glad to hear from him that his Venus had vanished, before the little cupid^{came} flying about all over Paris, and before complications ensued, because he is still a youngster. ~~you~~ As for you dear fellow, you are the luckier. As far as I have read some biographies of famous men, most of them seduced other men's wives, and troubles involved, but ultimately, every one went on happily. Therefore in a way I envy you. You are however taking

it all too seriously. Its nothing at all old boy. It is part of life, and if you get the chance again, I would advise most wholeheartedly to do it again. You say your experiences with women have ended in tragedies. Not at all Raza, ^{and I know, she made you happy often, you told me so.} Your wife is a magnificent looking woman, Women are delightful creatures; they are like frivolous toys, and Man plays with them when not at work, as a recreation.

12-4-51 I am sure your holiday has made you forget, and I am happy to learn that you have got a lot of material to work from during the next few months.

Since you ~~have~~ ^{London} left, I feel I have deteriorated progressively, both as a painter and as a man. I have never been more miserable and more poor in my life. Our child comes at an unfortunate time. It is going to be our fruit of adversity. I dreamt a dream that the angel of the Lord said to me: "Rejoice and be glad, for a child is being born unto your wife." But I arose, and fastened the hangings and festoons of sorrow, and wept.

It breaks my heart to see Maria go to work every morning, and come home late every night, even in her final stage of pregnancy. And God knows how she can endure it. Her health ~~could be~~ seems alright.

Today it just happens to be my birthday. 27 years old now, getting old. I feel sad because I have not accomplished anything worthy up to this age.

Life is too sad, but my sadness is not lively. There are two kinds of human suffering. The material kind where a man suffers sheer want through poverty: hunger, nakedness, ill health, and sordid living. The other suffering is the inner spiritual suffering, the very core which makes an artist. In me the former has devoured the latter.

I read in the papers, that famine is facing India. What need has a nation which hungers and starves—for its artists? None whatever.

There's nothing anyone can do about it, none of us at any rate.

These days, I am often pursued by ideas to change my course, to divert the aimless sailing of my ship in unknown treacherous waters, to retreat and land and resign my captinacy of my ship, and take post in another service, where I shall at least secure my bread for my family. But I am not happy with these ideas, though I have filled up the employment form for a job at India House.

I remember, 2 years ago, in 1949, I had a quarrell at home in Bombay on my birthday, (The whole atmosphere in my house was restless and poisonous that year due to jealousies and intrigues between my mother and my step-father) and I fought bitterly with my mother for not attempting to keep the peace of the house even for a day, even ^{on} the birthday of her son. So I wrapped my bedding, and my clothes in the bedding and went to you at Studio Rajaram. Unfortunately (or fortunately) you were not there, and I was ashamed to ~~have~~ be seen about carrying my bedding. You were of course at Kalyan at the time, but this as one of the days you usually were in Bombay. I didn't know your Kalyan address then, so I went to Flora Fountain to my aunts' place, and stayed the night there. Maria came ~~that evening~~ and ~~was~~ salvaged me back home the next day.

I am sorry about the photographs. I have ~~not~~ none worthwhile with me. One Madras fellow ~~named~~ I forget his name, wrote me that the Oxford University has asked him to write a book on Modern Indian Art, and requested me to send him a few photographs.

So I sent him some of mine, and the few I had of Husain, Ara, and Yours, and if he wanted more, I wrote him to contact the photographers whose stamp is behind each photo. (At that time I did not possess any of Padamsee's) but I had asked him to return them to me after his use.

He's the fellow who published the monograph on some Bhaudri or the other. There is no sign of the fellow.

I will bring with me, when I come to Paris, ~~some~~ wheat ^{flour} ~~flour~~, and the rest of the paraphernalia to make chapatis. You'll be the fellow who'll ^{for the best} roll them, I'll fry them, and hope ~~not to~~ ^{when} a Padamsee will eat them.

I hope my plans of coming to Paris is not upset one way or the other. Anyway I have always hope, that's why I despair so much, for he who never hopes can never despair.

At the moment we are all fine, except for the congestion in the house.

I showed ^{+ Padamsee's} your letters to Nissim, and he was very happy about the literary originality of artists, and he said all our letters to one another should be published someday, after being edited.

You have a beautiful style of writing. I don't know ^{why} you complain so hard that you can't express yourself by writing. Your pen lays down your thoughts clearly and unequivocally, and you have the capacity to write exactly as you feel, and beautifully. Even better than I do. I lack this quality. My writing is confused, and often ~~is~~ ambiguous, and people misunderstand the meaning. And at the moment I am so misunderstood, that I have already developed a complex ~~at~~ when I begin to write a letter or something!

With my warmest wishes,

Yours
Newton