

Ever Your Kurt

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The Intimate Family Letters
of Kurt Gödel

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Black Sheep Press

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Introduction:

“Such a Strange Mix of Depth and Otherworldliness”

The mathematician and logician Kurt Gödel (1906–1978) wrote some 280 letters to his mother Marianne and brother Rudolf in Vienna from 1940, the year he arrived in America to take up what would become a permanent position at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, until 1975, three years before his death. These letters constitute not only a unique source of biographical details of Gödel’s life during this time, but also the most direct and intimate record—from any period of his life—of his innermost thoughts, personality and character, philosophical and political views, interests and fascinations, and marital and family relationships, as well as the deep-seated anxieties over his health that would ultimately lead to his tragic death from paranoia-induced self-starvation at the age of 71.

Albert Einstein was not in the least joking when he called the Austrian-born mathematician “the greatest logician since Aristotle.”¹ Gödel achieved his lasting renown for the remarkable mathematical proof he completed in 1930, at age 24, which demonstrated that no mathematical system containing arithmetic, based on axioms and logical inference, can be both consistent and complete: that is, there will always be some true mathematical statements that cannot be proved within the system. (An oft-cited possible example of such a true but unprovable assertion is Goldbach’s Conjecture, which posits that every even integer is the sum of two prime numbers. Although no one in the three centuries since its formulation has *ever* found an even integer that is *not* the sum of two primes—and every integer up to 400,000,000,000,000 has been tested—no successful proof has ever been produced of this statement.)

Gödel’s theorem was a stunning blow to the optimistic hopes of turn-of-the-twentieth century theoretical mathematicians—notably laid out in a famous series of challenges of foundational problems to be solved, presented to his colleagues by the mathematician David Hilbert—to place all of mathematics on a solid and logical footing. His paradoxical result continues to cause consternation to this day, as logicians, philosophers, scientists, and theologians wrangle over its implications for mathematics, logic, human knowledge, free

¹ Moritz Schlick to Otto Pötzl, 8 January 193[6], Schlick Nachlass

will, artificial intelligence, and the nature of truth. What no one disputes is that it was a work of extraordinary originality and brilliance, the discovery of “the most significant mathematical truth of this century” as the citation accompanying Gödel’s honorary doctorate from Harvard University in 1952 put it.

The incompleteness theorem followed by just two years Gödel’s Ph.D. dissertation, another precocious tour de force in which he tidily disposed of two of the key foundational challenge problems offered by Hilbert just the year before: Gödel showed that all of the axioms of so-called first-order logic are both necessary and sufficient to deduce any universally valid statement.

During his long tenure at the Institute for Advanced Study, his scientific contributions began to notably decline, especially by the mid-1950s when health problems, real and imagined, began to take a mounting toll on his mental state. But he nonetheless produced two other extraordinary mathematical results during this time, the first to set theory, the second to cosmology. In 1939 and 1940 he published proofs of a longstanding problem in the foundations of set theory, demonstrating that two fundamental hypotheses of set theory, the axiom of choice and the continuum hypotheses, are consistent with its basic axioms. And in 1949 he published a remarkably original solution to the equations of Einstein’s general theory of relativity, in which a constantly rotating universe exists and time disappears—making it literally possible to engage in the sort of time travel imagined by science fiction writers. Although few cosmologists would accept Gödel’s solution as an entirely plausible reflection of reality, his results continue to intrigue physicists, and recently have been the subject of considerable renewed interest among specialists in the field who once accorded them little significance.

The picture of Gödel that most clearly emerges from these fascinating letters is of his utter lack of affectedness or self-importance. He seems almost boyishly proud in telling his mother of the awards and recognitions he has received, of his close friendship with Einstein (which clearly fascinated his mother), of the significance of his own work and his prominence in the mathematical world. For all his own manifest social anxieties, he consistently demonstrates great human understanding, insight, and consideration towards others, all with a kind of endearing innocence that does much to explain the devotion, protectiveness, and solicitousness toward him shown by friends and colleagues like Karl Menger, Oskar Morgenstern, and John von Neumann.

Although there is a certain amount of inevitable repetitiveness in his somewhat dutifully writing every second or fourth Sunday evening to his mother month after month (he even jokes in one letter, “A ‘publisher’ of our

letters would doubtless be puzzled by the repetition”¹), the letters offer an unparalleled look at Gödel’s inner life and thoughts, without guile, pretense, or affectation. He clearly enjoyed a long, close, and trusting relationship with his mother, which gave him the freedom and comfort to lay bare his problems, observations, and beliefs. The Kurt Gödel of these letters is a much more human, kind, observant, conscientious, humorous, and socially adept person than the simple caricature of eccentric genius that has come to dominate popular portrayals of him from his years at Princeton.

Among the most important biographical revelations that they contain are Gödel’s absolutely frank discussions of his wife’s psychological problems and the portrait of their unusual, yet clearly mutually devoted, marriage. They were certainly an odd match. Gödel most likely met Adele Porkert sometime during the year 1928–1929 when he lived in an apartment on Langeasse in central Vienna almost directly across from Adele’s (Gödel at No. 72, Adele at No. 67). She was six years his senior, separated after a brief and unhappy marriage, living once again at home with her parents. Her father was listed in the city directory as a photographer and painter; Gödel later cited the overly strict upbringing Joseph Porkert had given his children and Adele’s difficult first marriage as the cause of his wife’s manifest difficulties in normal human relations. She had worked at one time as a dancer at a Viennese nightclub called Der Nachtfalter (“The Night Moth,” named after a 1917 operetta by Oskar Straus), but at the time she met Gödel she was trying to earn a living as a massage therapist, working out of her parents’ apartment.

Oskar Morgenstern, an economist and fellow Viennese who became one of Gödel’s closest friends in Princeton, recorded his impression of the great logician’s wife upon first meeting her in 1940: “Viennese washerwoman type. Talkative, uneducated, determined & probably saved his life.”² In saying she saved his life, Morgenstern may have been referring to the general support and happiness Adele gave him in their marriage or more specifically to the devoted care she provided in early 1936 when Gödel was institutionalized at a sanatorium outside of Vienna during a severe psychological crisis, where she patiently spent hours feeding him by spoonfuls when he refused to eat.

Morgenstern later softened his initial harsh judgments of Adele (“dreadful” and “horrible”), observing that she usually meant well and did not have an easy time of it either: “She is a naive, well-meaning soul, often too loud.”³ But he wondered how she could possibly fit into Princeton society. Adele indeed found

¹ Letter, 16 December 1964

² Morgenstern, *Tagebücher*, 4 July 1940

³ *Ibid.*, 12 February 1947; 20 March 1947

life in the intellectually rarefied Princeton community difficult, especially at first, eventually making her peace in her new circumstances by devoting herself to maintaining a beautiful garden and home.

Gödel's clear-eyed defense of Adele to his frequently disapproving family back home shows a side of Gödel that is both deeply human and self-aware. He frankly acknowledges that Adele seems to be "not quite normal in her relationship to other people," becoming gravely insulted over trivial matters.¹ But as he tells his mother, "I did not keep from you that Adele has her sizeable flaws, only merely said that the resultant unpleasantries are more than balanced out by the good sides of my life here. And do you have anyone among your acquaintances who lives in a paradise and has nothing to complain about?"²

The constant criticism and unflattering comments about Adele in Marianne Gödel's letters is probably the reason that Adele apparently destroyed all of them after his death. In the files of the director of the IAS is a single letter from Rudi to his brother in 1946 dealing with his concern about the sudden deportations from Vienna of ethnic Germans lacking Austrian citizenship (as was the case of their mother in Vienna), and that is included here³, but no other letters from his family are known to survive. While Gödel frequently mentions letters that Adele has written to his mother and brother, there is similarly only a single extant letter of hers.

The pleasures Gödel took from animated Disney films (he reported that he had seen his favorite, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," three times); his childlike pride in winning a set of stainless steel cooking utensils for Adele playing Skee-Ball on the Jersey Shore; his gushing enthusiasm over the antics of their tame parakeets, allowed to fly freely about the living room; his love for shmaltzy pop music, sentimental paintings, and cutesy knickknacks that he was always praising; and (perhaps most famously) his great admiration for the "terribly dear" pink flamingo that Adele installed in the yard of their Princeton home were a source of amusement and wonder to his more culturally sophisticated academic colleagues. But in reading Gödel's own words, there is a simple and guileless enthusiasm that casts a different light on this aspect of his personality, too. One can certainly detect a very Austrian kind of sentimentality and susceptibility to kitsch here. But it also reflected his utter lack of affectation or concern about striking a pose: it is clear it would not even

¹ Letter, 26 May 1947

² Letter, 10 May 1953

³ Letter, 21 January 1946

occur to him that these tastes were anything to be ashamed of, to hide, or to apologize for.

“He is such a strange mix of depth and otherworldliness,” Morgenstern observed.¹ Gödel’s political views, which he frequently discusses in these letters (and almost nowhere else), show considerable awareness and study of current events and history and often considerable penetration, yet frequently take a turn to the conspiratorial as he seeks to explain seemingly inexplicable events in a chaotic world. His politics were notably left of center and “thoroughly anti-nationalistic”²; he strongly disapproved of America’s arms buildup and militarization, rising Cold War tensions, America’s involvement in the Korean War, and the Communist witch hunts of Sen. Joseph McCarthy (whom he describes as “roughly the American Hitler”³). At the same time, his quasi-mystical beliefs in cycles of predestined history and his stubborn insistence that *everything* happens for a reason led him to some extraordinarily naïve and bizarre conclusions—finding shadowy political motives, hidden meanings, or mystical significance in everything from the deaths of Senator Robert Taft, Josef Stalin, and the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court within six months of one another; the quality of movies being shown in the theaters in Princeton; the kitschy decorations in the castle of King Ludwig of Bavaria; the number of years between the First and Second World Wars; and FDR’s death just a week before the first meeting of the UN in San Francisco.

During the 1950s Gödel increasingly shifted his interests to philosophy, a field which he felt had not even begun to address the fundamental questions of humankind’s place in the cosmos. “Philosophy today is—at best—where mathematics was in Babylonian times,” he observed to Morgenstern. Gödel however left almost no published works in the field, despite decades of intense study. Among his unpublished philosophical writings is an ontological proof for the existence of God, which he told Morgenstern in 1970 he had not published because it might then be thought “he actually believes in God.”⁴ But the rediscovery of Gödel’s philosophical notebooks in which he recorded many of his ideas, and their transcription by several groups of scholars from the original (and now obsolete) Gabelsberger shorthand system that he used, has led to renewed scholarly interest in Gödel as a philosopher. His confirmed Platonist view of mathematics—the belief that mathematicians do not *construct* mathematics, but rather *discover* pre-existing mathematical truths—was by his

¹ Morgenstern, *Tagebücher*, 11 March 1940

² Letter, 7 November 1956

³ Letter, 16 January 1956

⁴ Morgenstern, *Tagebücher*, 29 August 1970

own acknowledgement deeply at odds with the entire current of modern philosophy, most notably the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, led by his mentor Moritz Schlick at the University of Vienna in the 1920s and early 1930s. In a reply in 1975 to an inquiry sent him by a doctoral student studying intellectual developments in the twentieth century, Gödel wrote: “I don’t consider my work a ‘facet of the intellectual atmosphere of the early 20th century,’ but rather the opposite.”¹

His willingness to entertain the existence of an afterlife (even ghosts) has been a source of embarrassment to some admirers of his intellectual achievements, but as he makes clear in several of the letters, he saw these beliefs as all of a piece with his conception of the world as fundamentally rationally ordered—and likewise with his conception of the actual existence of mathematical objects, which thus constitute an unseen yet nonetheless real “other” world. He told his mother: “We comprehend neither why this world exists nor why it is made the way it is, nor why we are in it, nor why we were born into these and no other external circumstances. So why should we imagine we know one particular thing definitively, namely that no other world exists and that we were never in another nor will be?”²

In one sense, to be sure, his religious and philosophical views are marked by the same paranoid, or at least naïve, reasoning that afflicts his political theorizing, in which he applies rigorously logical inference to a dubious premise, namely that everything that happens in the world has cause and significance. Thus while acknowledging that many mediums are frauds, he insists that “the result (and the significance) of the fraud is not, in my opinion, to feign genuine apparitions but to cover up genuine apparitions.”³ Insisting that the world is “rationally organized,” he similarly considered it nonsensical that so much trouble would be expended to create human beings with a capacity for learning and ever-deepening relationships, only to have those capacities extinguished by death before one-thousandth of their potential can be realized. By the same reasoning, he considered the Catholic notion of Hell to be impossible. “Religions are for the most part bad,” he observed, “but not religion.”⁴

In translating these letters we have conscientiously strived to preserve the style and personality of their author: in the original German, the simplicity, directness, and precision of Gödel’s words is their most striking characteristic,

¹ KG to Burke D. Grandjean, 19 August 1975, *Collected Works*, 4:443

² Letter, 27 February 1950

³ Letter, 3 April 1950

⁴ Notebook entry, quoted in *Collected Works*, IV: 425

as is the simple humanity, innocence, kindness, and at times tragically anxiety-beset soul of the intellectually towering man who wrote them.

Editorial notes

The original manuscript letters are held by the Wienbibliothek am Rathaus in Vienna, and can be viewed directly via the library's online digital archive website, digital.wienbibliothek.at.

Approximately 240 of the letters, addressed to his mother or to both his mother and brother, were sold by Rudolf Gödel in 1980 to the library (known then as the Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek). The letters in this group, which begin in 1945 and end in 1965 (the year before his mother's death), are annotated with serial numbers running from 1 to 237, written in red or black pencil in the upper right corner of the first page. (The numbers are in a hand other than Gödel's, perhaps having been added by Rudi or Marianne.) A few numbers are out of chronological sequence, perhaps because the corresponding letter was delayed in the mail, and a few numbers have been skipped either by mistake or because the corresponding letter was subsequently lost.

A smaller set of letters addressed to his brother alone surfaced some 25 years later, following a burst of publicity about Gödel's life and work during the centennial of his birth in 2006. Karl Sigmund, who had organized an exhibit about Gödel in Vienna that year, was contacted by a woman in Linz, a friend of Rudi's, who explained that she had received the letters upon Rudi's death in 1992 and wished to donate them. These 30 letters span the years 1940 to 1975, and include the sole surviving letter from Adele to her husband's family. The Wienbibliothek collection also contains 25 brief telegrams sent by Gödel to his family from 1949 to 1966.

The single letter from Rudi to Gödel now in the Institute for Advanced Study Archives is also included here.

Paragraph breaks have been added where Gödel uses a dash (“Gedankenstrich”) or extra long space between sentences. The various symbols Gödel uses for his own footnotes have been replaced with the standard sequence of *, †, and ‡ within each letter. Other emendations and editorial notes are indicated by square brackets []. Gödel uses both regular parentheses and occasional square brackets to indicate parenthetical phrases, but there is no apparent distinction or significance to his choice of one or the other, so for clarity all are rendered here as regular parentheses (). Where crossed-out words in the originals are occasionally of significance or interest (and not just minor corrections of grammatical mistakes, e.g.), these are retained and indicated with

a ~~strike through~~. A few untranslatable German words or expressions are retained as they appear in the original, indicated by italics, and with a footnote elucidating their meaning.

Part 1

A New World, A New Life

1940–1948

Gödel made his third visit to America for the 1938–1939 academic year, spending the fall at the Institute for Advanced Study once again, and the spring semester—at the invitation of his Austrian mathematical and philosophical colleague Karl Menger—in Indiana at the University of Notre Dame, where Menger had accepted a position following the Anschluss and the loss of his professorship at the University of Vienna.

Although Gödel accepted an offer from IAS to return for the 1939–40 academic year, to Menger’s dismay Gödel insisted on returning to Vienna first. Menger was appalled at Gödel’s naïve insistence on his “rights” to have his position as *Dozent*, or lecturer, at the University of Vienna restored (the Nazis had suspended all lectureships immediately following the Anschluss, part of the *Säuberung*—purge—of Jewish and liberal academics), and by his colleague’s obliviousness to the looming crisis in Europe. “How can one speak of rights in the present situation?” he demanded of Gödel in obvious frustration. “And what practical value can even rights at the University of Vienna have for you under such circumstances?”¹ But by the end of June 1939 Gödel was back in Vienna.

Just two days before Nazi troops marched into Poland on September 1, initiating the cataclysm of World War II, Gödel wrote from Vienna a letter that Menger dryly observed “may well represent a record for unconcern on the threshold of world-shaking events.” (“How did the examinations for my logic course turn out?” Gödel blithely inquired, adding, “In the Autumn I hope to be in Princeton again.”)²

Gödel’s naivete, Menger later acknowledged, “somewhat estranged” him from his onetime close associate in the following years.³ But aside from Gödel’s obvious concern to return to Adele, whom he had married in September 1938 but who for unclear reasons had remained behind in Vienna, he in fact could not

¹ Menger, *Reminiscences of Vienna Circle*, 224–25

² KG to Karl Menger, 30 August 1939, *Collected Works*, 5:125–26

³ Menger, *Reminiscences of Vienna Circle*, 231, 235 n. 35

have stayed in the United States past July 15, 1939, on the U.S. visitor's visa he obtained in October 1938; he would in any case have had to leave the country and reapply for a new visa from abroad.

As it was, Gödel returned to a dangerous and nearly catastrophic situation. Though not Jewish, Gödel had come under deep suspicion of the new regime for "always having moved in Jewish-liberal circles," and for having completed his dissertation under "the Jewish Professor [Hans] Hahn," as a dossier compiled by the head of the new Nazi Party lecturers' association at the University of Vienna noted.¹ His bespectacled, intellectual—and thus "Jewish"—appearance made him the target of Nazi thugs on the street, who on one occasion roughed him up, before Adele chased them off by brandishing an umbrella.

Worse, there was now no clear or easy way for him to return to the United States. He immediately found himself in a bureaucratic Catch 22. The American authorities had stopped issuing new visitors' visas with the outbreak of the war, and the thousands of desperate German and Austrian Jews seeking immigrant visas far exceeded the quota allocated to those countries. Even if Gödel succeeded in obtaining an American immigration visa, he feared that that would cause trouble with the German passport authorities, who were unlikely to give him permission to leave the country without a guarantee of his return. Worse, he was summoned in September to an army medical examination and found fit for garrison duty, liable to be drafted into the German Wehrmacht at any moment.

The great Hungarian-born mathematician John von Neumann, one of the first professors appointed to IAS, who knew and greatly admired Gödel and his work, came up with the solution to break the impasse, at least on the American side. Discovering a loophole that would allow the State Department to issue Gödel a special "non-quota" visa reserved for professors even though Gödel did not meet the normal requirement of having "followed the vocation of professor continuously for at least two calendar years immediately preceding" the visa application, von Neumann wrote a long legal analysis² to the Institute's director that did the trick. But Gödel still did not dare to complete his formal application with the U.S. consulate in Vienna until he had first secured permission from the German authorities to leave. That finally came through in early January 1940, on January 8 the U.S. visa was issued, and he and Adele started at once for America.

¹ Arthur Marchet to Rektor der Universität, 30 September 1939, reproduced in Sigmund, Dawson, and Mühlberger, eds., *Gödel: Das Album*, 72

² Von Neumann to Abraham Flexner, 16 October 1939, KG, Visa-Immigration Files

Although German citizens could still cross the Atlantic on Italian passenger liners (Italy would not enter the war until June 10, 1940), French and British warships had already on several occasions halted Italian vessels and arrested German passengers. The other option seemed equally perilous, but it was the only route the German authorities would permit: by train across occupied Poland and Lithuania and Latvia to Moscow, then via the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, then by steamer to Yokohama. All the way, Gödel feared they would be detained and sent back home. After a two week delay in Japan, Gödel and Adele boarded the President Line's ocean liner SS *President Cleveland* for San Francisco, crossed the American West by train, arriving finally in Princeton the night of March 9—two months after the start of their extraordinary adventure. In nine months Gödel had traveled completely around the world. He would never take another trip beyond the East Coast of the United States again.

Dominating Gödel's correspondence with his family during this period are his natural concerns over their health and safety amid the war's turmoil and privations, as well as the tangled question of his legal status and financial affairs back home. Despite a lukewarm report from the newly installed Nazi academic authorities regarding his ideological fitness to become a "Dozent of the New Order"—the head of the Nazi lecturers' association did however acknowledge that "direct comments or activity against National Socialism have not been made known to me"—and Gödel's failure to provide all of the required proofs of Aryan descent (including the four marriage certificates of his and Adele's grandparents), the appointment came through on June 28, 1940. The position, unlike the old lectureships, carried a regular salary, which Gödel had optimistically hoped to receive.

But the German military and educational bureaucracies continued to raise questions about his whereabouts and whether he had properly applied for a leave of absence from the university. Rather more ominously, the German consulate in New York informed him in the spring of 1941 that a further stay in America "would be undesirable,"¹ when he asked for an extension of his official leave to remain at IAS for the following academic year. The German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 finally rendered the question moot, shutting off any possible route for him to return to Vienna for the duration of the war.

Gödel had suffered attacks of depression serious enough to require stays in sanatoriums in 1934, 1935, and particularly 1936. Shortly after their arrival in

¹ Reich Ministry for Science, Culture and Education to the Rector of the University of Vienna, 21 June 1941, reproduced in Sigmund, Dawson, and Mühlberger, eds., *Gödel: Das Album*, 84

Princeton in 1940, both he and Adele began seeing a New York psychiatrist, a fellow Viennese, Dr. Max Gruenthal. The strains of adapting to new circumstances and anxieties arising from the war had taken such a manifest toll on his mental state that on December 2, 1941, the director of IAS wrote to Gruenthal to inquire whether there was any danger of “the mental tension from which [Gödel] is evidently suffering” taking “a violent form which might involve his doing injury to himself or to other people.”¹ He had, the director noted, become convinced that the radiators and refrigerator in his apartment were giving off toxic gases, going so far as to have the radiators removed “which makes the apartment a pretty uncomfortable place in the winter time.”² Gruenthal was able to reassure him that Gödel was no danger; and IAS continued to renew his appointment—though cautiously, on a year-to-year basis—until 1946, when he was finally given a permanent position at the institution where he was to remain the rest of his life.

* * *

Princeton, 31./III. 1940.

Dear Rudi!

Today we've been here 3 weeks and except for your airmail letter of 7./II. I have not had any news from you and Mama. I don't understand why; Adele already has 5 letters from Vienna, among them one of 8./III., which was not even sent via airmail. You did probably already hear from Mama that we already have a nice 2-room apartment with furniture rented separately. The address is 245 Nassau-Street, but you should keep writing to Fine Hall. Of the journey the best part was San Francisco and the Hawai-Islands. I also sent you a card from there. San Francisco is absolutely the loveliest of all cities I have seen up to now. We would like to send packages from here with coffee etc., but it apparently all gets confiscated. Groceries here are unbelievably inexpensive, so that it really pays off to run one's own household (much more than in Vienna.) Also furnishing a household is surprisingly cheap. There are the so-called 10 cent-stores, where all household articles are almost given

¹ Frank Aydelotte to Dr. Max Gruenthal, 2 December 1941, KG, Faculty Files, pre-1953

² Ibid., 5 December 1941; see also Letter, 21 September 1941, below

away. E.g., a nice glass sugar bowl costs 5 cents and a little framed picture (very charming) the same.* I pay 50\$ a month rent (and if I stay till the end of Sept. 40\$), the furniture costs 8\$ monthly. How did you like your trip to Cologne and Berlin? and what's new in Vienna? Letters from my scientific colleagues (e.g., Bernays¹) please always forward. Since mid-March American planes are not landing in Bermuda anymore to avoid the English censor, though that seems frequently to be impossible due to bad weather. I was very happy about the approval for hardship compensation. I still cannot yet quite believe that I am really getting that money. And how long will it go on? What is going on with the hardship compensation that was promised for the dollar loans? Did you already do an income tax statement for me? If they send you a form please do it by all means along the lines of what I sent you from Berlin. But any way would probably be fine. I have not submitted any up to now. The confirmation that I paid income tax for 1939 in U.S.A. is with the tax things in the desk. How is your Vienna practice going? My invitation here was extended to June 1941. Tomorrow we are going to New York for 2 days, where I will go the German consulate. I hope you received the 300 RM that I sent from Berlin. Am very anxious to have word from you two again. This is my seventh letter to you two. Warm regards also from Adele

Your Kurt.

* How long the things last will only be evident later!

Princeton, 5./VI. 1940

Dear Rudi!

Your letter of 21./IV. arrived ca. 3 weeks ago, airmail now takes fairly regularly some 14 days. However I have only received 3 letters from you (of 7./II. and 31./III), so one has apparently gone missing. Of the forwarded mail I have received nothing up to now. Or did you not forward anything? The letters

¹ Paul Bernays (1888–1977), German mathematician, assistant and collaborator of David Hilbert in his work on mathematical foundations. Dismissed from his position at the University of Göttingen in 1933 because of his Jewish ancestry, he resettled in Switzerland. He visited IAS in 1935–36 and 1959–60

from Bernays and Graustein¹ would interest me. I am doing fine, except the heat is now starting to get fairly unpleasant. It is horribly muggy here (due to the high humidity) so that one does not sweat a lot even at high temperatures. I believe I will travel for a few weeks to the North, where it is supposed be very pleasant. I submitted my request for an extension of leave of absence ca 6 weeks ago at the German Consulate, but I believe that it is not particularly important whether it is done in time, since currently one cannot return because the ships and flying boats take no German passengers (at least that is what they told me at the German Consulate). I would like to submit notice for the Vienna apartment on 1 Aug. for 1 Nov., but where should one put all the things? Perhaps it would be possible to find a sublettor. The books etc. could be put in the large trunk in the parlor. I would be very in favor of that. Is there any movement again regarding tax payment and fee notice? We already sent a few packages to Vienna (despite the very unfavorable report at the German Consulate). Did you two get anything? Mama wrote me that you have much to do but in exchange you must be earning quite a bit. How does it stand with the new *Kasseninstitut*? In Hawai the ship was at anchor for an entire day, it is really wonderful there, the vegetation really quite tropical and yet not too hot. Mama writes that there is horrible inflation in Brünn. Is that really so awful and does one feel it in Vienna too? How is Mama getting along? I am also currently not exactly swimming in money. Only half of the stipend for 1939/40 was paid out and of that more than half went for the trip. I even had to borrow money, of which I still owe 50\$. On 1 July payment of the stipend for the next year is to start; that will rapidly improve the situation. How did you like Baden? Please send 150 RM of my money per bank wire or some other means to Joseph Porkert², Längegasse 67.

Many warm regards (also from Adele)

Your Kurt.

¹ William C. Graustein (1888–1941), instructor of mathematics at Harvard, who had invited KG to address the International Congress of Mathematicians that was to be held in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in September 1940, but was subsequently postponed because of the war

² Adele's father

Princeton, 4./VIII. 1940.

Dear Rudi!

I have not had any news from you for an eternally long time and in fact in total only 3 letters (of 7./II., 31./III. and 21./IV). Did you get my letter of the end of May (or beginning of June)? We have already sent quite a number of packages (since mid-June 1–2 per week). Is anything arriving? Is there not any mail for me coming to Vienna? If so, do please forward me the scientific items from colleagues! (also the ones from before). Recently I was in New York at the Consulate, where they told me that an answer from the German Military to my request for an extension of my leave of absence would “not be forthcoming,” but that the request via my declaration at the local consulate “is militarily completely in order” and I can stay until I receive news to the contrary. How is Mama? I am now 4 weeks without news from her. Her last letter was 22./VI. Please give her 50 RM¹ for her birthday in my name or use the money as contribution toward a present that you buy her. How is it going with the new *Kasseninstitut*? Do you still have so much to do? I hope that you were able to take a vacation for a couple of weeks. I will stay over in Princeton the summer. It may very well be a horrid heat but never more than a couple of days then it is very cool again. I think I already wrote you that the Institute has a large new building in which I have an enormous office all to myself. It is called “Fuld Hall.” So it is better if you sent the letters addressed to me there (instead of to Fine Hall) or to my private address: 245 Nassau Street. I am quite anxious to hear word from you two again and hope that only the mail is to blame for the long silence. How is A[unt] Pauline²?

Warm regards from

Your Kurt

P.S. Many greetings also from Adele

¹ 50 RM (Reichsmarks) equaled \$20 in 1940, or roughly \$360 in 2020 dollars

² Pauline Handschuh, older sister of KG’s mother, who lived with her in the family villa in Brünn until her death during the war in 1942

Princeton, 15./IX. 1940.

Dear Rudi!

I received both your letters of 11. and 24./VIII. Nothing of the items you forwarded to me at the start has arrived. From a letter from Mama I gleaned that you also wrote me in June; that must be based on a misunderstanding? Pity, that you received almost none of those packages, perhaps some will yet arrive later. I will continue to send coffee and fruit now and then, for that costs very little here. My local phone number I sent to Mama 14 days ago. It is: 1 2 4 5 W. Don't forget to say Princeton, New Jersey, since there are a number of places in America with the name Princeton. It would be nice if we could converse across the ocean. It would be best if you call before 8:30 in the morning (that means in your time there before 2:30 in the afternoon) and write the day to me beforehand, so I do not end up happening to be in New York (for which though the likelihood is very small). Airmail letters do take 14 days fairly regularly. The maximum to date was 3 weeks. I am glad that now at least your practice is going well and that you have the opportunity to recuperate in Baden frequently. Your weight of 50 kg is scandalous, however. As a doctor I assume you must be able to get your hands on Ovomaltine? Otherwise I can send you some from here which is more likely to get through as foodstuff. Did you really never have anything to do with war injuries in your practice?

That Redlich¹ once again reduced Mama's pension by half I find unbelievable. Do you really think the factory is doing so poorly? Is no work being done for the State? There certainly cannot be any unemployment in Germany any longer now. It is good that under the current circumstances 500 Kč (=50 RM) is not unduly much money any more. I am happy to contribute 25 RM, as long as my circumstances permit. How does it stand with my tax matters, actually? What one should do about the tax return for 1940 I absolutely do not know. Regarding our apartment², we already wrote to Adele's relatives if they couldn't perhaps find a tenant. As for giving notice I

¹ Friedrich (Fritz) Redlich (1893–1944), son of the older Friedrich Redlich (1866–1923) who was the employer and then partner of KG's father at the Friedrich Redlich Feintuch- und Schafwollwaren Fabrik Brünn. Fritz, who inherited the family's textile business, was killed at Auschwitz in 1944 (see also introductory remarks below, p. 20)

² At Hegelgasse 5, where KG and Adele lived during their final months in Vienna from November 1939 to January 1940, and on which he still held the lease

would prefer to wait a bit. Now the business of the Institute starts back up in a week. Then, especially for Adele, there will be many social responsibilities with visits and counter-visits.

Warm regards and best wishes that you continue to endure the war well

Your Kurt

[*in Adele's hand:*] Warm regards Adele

Princeton, 6./X. 1940.

Dear Rudi!

Three days ago your letter of 15/IX. arrived and I was glad that some of the packages did arrive after all. I was very astonished that I was being inquired about by the Military Command. After all, I requested an extension of my leave of absence back at the end of April and they told me at the local consulate that it had been reported to the Vienna authorities and that the matter was completely in order. About my renewal “*in absentia*” I was just as surprised. Until May 1941 I will stay here at any rate, for I did accept this position and have drawn part of the salary. By the way, it would interest me very much whether any salary (and in what amount) would be associated with my Vienna position? Could you not find that out? According to the new laws, all *Dozents* are to be paid. If you speak to the people at the university can you tell them too that I submitted an application for extension of leave of absence to the Vienna Rectorship and the Ministry for Science, Education and Culture via the local consulate, primarily with the justification that I 1) have no money* for the return trip and 2) have no money to live on in Vienna. They apparently know nothing of this request in Vienna, otherwise they would not ask me to appear in the upcoming days. Did you get my letter of 15./IX? I am very eager to see if you really will go ahead and call me. My number is 1 2 4 5 W, as I already wrote in 2 letters. As to our apartment, a niece of Adele (who is getting married) has expressed interest in it and we wrote her (or rather Adele's Papa) that we would like to possibly let them have the apartment including furniture for 70 RM monthly. [*sentence inserted in margin:*] At the time I of course did not know of the possibility of a swap. Naturally that still depends on the landlord. The things that are in the desk and changing table (that is, letters, statements, etc.) you would have to either get or somehow lock up (e.g., in the bookshelf).† The cost of housecleaning will of course still be

paid by us.[‡] If this solution should not prove possible, then I am completely in favor of a swap. Provided of course that the rent really is not significantly higher than 25 RM (sometimes all kinds of unexpected extra expenditure happen) and that the apartment does not end up in a thoroughly decrepit condition (bedbugs etc). Otherwise there is always the possibility of giving my furniture to Adele's father, who has a large and entirely unused studio in his apartment. You could take the large chest (taken apart) to your place and Adele's sister Grete would take a few pieces to her place. She would certainly also be prepared to oversee the move, which would be better than if Adele's mother did it, since she is already 73 and currently not entirely healthy. Adele's niece who is getting married is the sister of the girl with whom you once rode home to Grinzing. She is a very nice girl, but of course I do not know her husband. It is possible that she could lay some kind of claim to the apartment via the sublease. And you could be caused some other kinds of trouble by subletting that I do not want to subject you to, and so I leave it up to you as to whether you want to do it or not. In the case of an apartment swap the linoleum in the kitchen and the sink could go for 25 RM and 100 RM (we paid for the sink alone 150 RM with installation). If the new tenant was not in agreement, the sink should be removed and the old water basin that is now in the cellar should be reinstalled. Enclosed I am sending you a power of attorney. The period of notice of my apartment was expressly set for 3 months (at the standard terms). (Contract probably in the iron moneybox). I am sorry to have to take up your time with all these things, since you already have so much to do and I only hope that you do not have any further trouble with it all.

Many thanks and warm regards

Your Kurt

* no Dollars

† this applies also in the case of the furniture being stored at Adele's father or somewhere else

‡ mutual notice would be one month

[*enclosure:*]

Princeton, 9./X. 1940

Power of Attorney

I herewith authorize my brother, D^r Rudolf Gödel, Vienna VII

Lerchenfelderstrasse 81 to give notice, to swap, and to rent out or otherwise undertake any renovations at my apartment Vienna I, Hegelgasse 5.

D^r Kurt Gödel

currently: Princeton N.J. 245 Nassau Street U.S.A.

Princeton, 18./X. 1940

Dear Rudi!

Your letter of 28./IX. came a couple of days ago. It is the sixth from you but there must have been 3 to 4 letters from you that went missing to go by what you write; that is conspicuously many. From Mama I already have 20 letters and only one of them has gotten lost. Mine also all arrived up to this point with the exception of perhaps the one of 25./VIII. (to Mama) in which I wrote her my Tel N°. As to the apartment, I wrote you a week ago that we arranged to have Adele's niece (who's getting married) take it for 70 RM as sublet. At that time we of course did not know anything about the swap possibility. The subletting has its downsides of course.* Perhaps a claim on the apartment might come out of it, besides you could have trouble with it. For that reason I have no objections to the swap. The condition would naturally be that the little apartment really would not cost significantly more than 25 RM and that it would not have gone to ruin at the end (infested by bedbugs etc). Otherwise there is also still the possibility of giving my furniture to Adele's papa (who has a large unused studio) and in part to Adele's sister Grete (and the large chest to you). At any rate it would be good to have a new tenant who moves in immediately 1. due to the savings on rent until the notice deadline and 2. because the sink in the kitchen would have to be compensated† (it cost us with installation 150 RM). Otherwise it would have to be uninstalled and the old water basin that is now in the cellar would have to be reinstalled. The linoleum in the kitchen belongs to us, too (25 RM). In any case I ask you to either take the letters, statements, etc that are in my desk and in the changing table to your place or to lock them up somewhere (but not in my desk that has the American locking device that is not working). Adele's sister Grete wrote recently of a second interested party‡ (as sublet or poss. main tenant). One should not demand any less than 70 RM, I believe. Adele even wrote 80 RM to her niece but one could go down to 70 RM. I am enclosing a power of attorney for all eventualities and leave the final decision up to you. Is there anything new from the university and the military authorities? Mama writes to me that you are quite enthused about the new Radiology Institute. You have not written me anything about that yet at all. Another 3 packages were sent off by Adele just yesterday

Many regards and hearty thanks for your efforts on the apartment

Your Kurt

* needless to say the landlord would have to be asked

† also in the case of a swap

‡ She will at any rate send him to you

Princeton, 15./XII. 1940.

Dear Rudi!

Please give Mama 100 RM from me for Christmas! How do matters stand with the university and military authorities and with our apartment? I hope you have not had any trouble with it. I hope you have received both my letters with the powers of attorney in which I left everything to your discretion. I received nothing more from you since your letter of 28./IX., in which you write about the apartment swap and the favorable resolution of the Vienna *Dozent* position.

New Year's Cheers and warm regards
Your Kurt.

Princeton, 12./I. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

Your letter of 10./XII. arrived here on 8./I. (all the letters are now taking 3–4 weeks). Before that I have received nothing since your letter of 28./IX. So something must have gotten lost again. Supposedly the mail is now being held up in Bermuda and examined by the English. Mama's last letter is from 3./XII. (I already answered it.) A pity, nothing came of the telephone conversation, which I however quite expected to happen.

Did you get our packages sent for Christmas via telegram from Switzerland? and was the content worth anything? or were the earlier ones we sent from here better? There is a company in New York that specializes in sending custom-ordered packages from neutral countries to Germany. That is ca. two-three times as expensive* as the ones sent privately but do supposedly arrive safely. Via this company I sent the Christmas presents. We prefer to go back to the old method now. I am glad to hear that you two are doing so well so far and hope that that continues to remain so. Working is probably more pleasant for you at the new institute, too. With us everything is all fine too. It is now just a year ago that we departed from Vienna; unbelievable when you think about it. I never saw a year go by so quickly! Did you two get my telegram that I send on 22./XII. and my letter in which I wrote you to give Mama 100 RM for Christmas? What do you two hear from the Gödels? As to

the bedding, we have nothing against it being used if they have none of their own. Most of it belongs to Adele anyway by the way.

As I hear, Eva was in Vienna at Christmas. Did she have nothing interesting to tell?

Many thanks from us both for the trouble you have had with the apartment and warm regards from

Your Kurt [*in Adele's hand:*] & Adele.

* also the content not just the shipping costs

Princeton, 16./III. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

A week ago your letter of 12./I arrived, the one before that was from 10./XII. Mama's letters all arrived up to and including № 31. Hopefully you will have received some again from me in the meantime. Since the end of January however I have only written every 14 days. I now have quite a bit to do again since I am giving a lecture class and in addition am invited to give a talk¹; though in both cases the topic is my most recent work that I have not even put to paper for myself exactly. For next year (i.e., 1941/42) I am once again invited to the Institute for Advanced Study (with the same salary) but I am not exactly enthused about this year-to-year position, for in addition I am given to understand that the available funding is getting ever tighter (perhaps due to the war?)

Did you actually get both the Christmas packages (one with $\frac{1}{2}$ kg cocoa and one with $\frac{1}{2}$ kg green coffee and $\frac{1}{2}$ kg tea) that I had sent via "American Globe Trotter"? Mama writes nothing about that and I would like to request reimbursement if nothing arrived, since they guaranteed it. We will also send from here in the future.

Many thanks for getting the matter of both taxes and university done. I hope you have nothing more to do with it for another year. Naturally, I have to pay income taxes here and therefore hopefully not also in Vienna, too.

¹ KG gave a series of lectures in the spring of 1941 at IAS on the foundations of mathematics and an invited talk, "In What Sense is Intuitionistic Logic Constructive?" at Yale University on April 15 (reprinted in *Collected Works*, 3:189–200)

Here there are once again some social events and a dance evening once every 14 days where American folk dances are danced (similar to the quadrille). I of course do not go, but Adele is quite enthused.

I am glad that you and the practice are doing well and wish for you that it continues to remain so.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

P.S. Please send Adele's father (Joseph Porkert VII. Langeg. 67) 150.- RM.

Princeton 4./V. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your letter of 16./III. Oddly enough I wrote to you once again exactly on that very day! I am terribly sorry that you had troubles again due to my tax matter. Can the matter not be resolved by my having, after all, paid taxes here for 1939 and 1940? My income here does not count as a tax-free stipend any longer. If that 1000 RM per year really must be paid, soon nothing will remain of the hardship compensation. How much still remains? By the way, the Tax Office should really be obliged to name a representative for me (I mean a lawyer).

Here the semester is over now and I am glad that my lecture class is over; I only had 3 listeners left by the end. We also have trouble with the apartment now. The landlady is behaving scandalously and will not have anything fixed even though much would be very necessary. Supposedly landlords are all on their high horses because the demand for apartments, due to a few new institutes, is high. But in our case there must also be special reasons (unbeknownst to me) that exist, too.

Mama wrote me about Neyerle's offer; I would like to learn more details about it. Hopefully this building construction will not happen for a while. How does it stand with Redlich under the *kommissarischen Verwaltung*¹? That would keenly interest me. I am glad that you and your practice are doing well and wish for you that it continues to remain so. Mama is, to conclude from her

¹ Temporary managers appointed to operate businesses seized from Jews in the Nazi "protectorate" of occupied Czech territory

last letter, still in a quite good frame of mind. We will still send tea and coffee now and then. That is not expensive and will perhaps even sometimes get to you.

Warm regards from Adele and me
Your Kurt.

P.S. Did you receive my letter of 16./III. in which I asked you to give Adele's father 150.- RM?

Princeton, 25./V. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your letter of 26./IV. Mama's letter of 23./IV. (and of 7./V.) has also arrived. I am glad that Adele's father finds such acceptance in our family. Here his picture was admired by all, too. He really does look like an old scholar in it. We are doing quite fine, except for the weather, that is really somewhat too "American." The temperature changes from one day to another by 20–30°. We have already found a new apartment, it is even nicer than the previous one and the rent approximately the same. Recently I got a letter from Hochwald¹ (the chess player). He has been here since Dec. 40 and works at an institute of medicine in Boston. Dr Bondy and wife are also in New York and visited us recently in Princeton. Their son is in a camp in Canada.

I am glad that we apparently made the right choice with the tenants for our apartment. Were you ever actually there, and get to know the husband of Adele's niece?

Now to the matter of taxes. For 1939 I unfortunately cannot have a similar certification made as for 1938. For back then I was at Notre Dame as you know and there my position was a somewhat different one (although I didn't have any kind of clearly-defined teaching responsibility*). I can write to them but there is no prospect of achieving anything. However I am enclosing a certification for 1940. My salary for 1940 (after deduction of the trip and other expenses) would be stated as approximately 2700\$.

¹ Adolf Hochwald (1906–1958), a schoolfriend from Brünn

I hope that you and your practice continue to do quite well and wish you a lovely summer vacation in Kärnten.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

* Thus it was a stipend, too.

Princeton, 26./VI. 1941

Dear Rudi!

The last letter that I got from you is from 26./IV., the last from Mama of 20./V. so really quite a long while ago. Did you get my letter of 25./V. with the tax items? We are going on summer vacation in a few days now* to Maine in the far north of the U.S.A., there I hope to escape the horrible heat here. (Mail will of course be forwarded). The climate here is truly awful, in the daytime intolerably muggy and at nighttime sometimes so suddenly cold that one can get a chill. I truly am in urgent need of a multiple-month change of air. Before we leave there is still the move. We can put the furniture in the new apartment over the summer without paying rent, so that the summer vacation hopefully will not turn out to be too unduly expensive. As I already recently wrote to Mama, they gave me the prospect of a good position if I were to come back but due to the Russian war that will not be possibly any more. Mama wrote me that things are moving in the Schmeer matter; what is it? Did you or Mama actually ever get any of the 1941-dated packages? We sent a few more times. Adele's sister Grete had an operation and Adele is naturally desperate since letters arrive very seldomly now. You examined her once yourself, right? In closing I do want ask you to give Adele's father 150.- RM and to do that every quarter as long as there is money in Vienna. I will always still remind you, but one never knows if the letters arrive. Unfortunately, I have no overall sense of how much money there still is there.

I hope that you continue to do well and remain with warm regards and best wishes

Your Kurt.

Warm regards from Adele to you and Mama

* for two months

Brooklin, 30./VII. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

As you probably already heard from Mama, we have been here¹ in the N.E.-most corner of the U.S.A. since the beginning of July. Your letter of 17./VI. was forwarded to me here. I am glad that you (as I glean from Mama's letters) liked it in Velden. We made a very good choice of summer vacation here, too. There is even a swimming pool and sunbathing here; Adele is already as black as a tarbaby. I don't go out in the sun much because firstly it is unpleasant to me and secondly not healthy. The sun here is colossally strong, much stronger than at home, and I believe even than on the Adriatic. But swimming is good for me and the water is naturally very warm from the rays of the sun. One cannot bathe in the sea because it is too cold. There are also a lot of lovely woodland strolls here.

Our furniture is already installed in the new apartment. But it does not seem to have such a nice yard as the previous one did, merely a grassy area without trees; but I hope that I will not miss it very much because in the summer it is best to leave the Princeton area anyway. Summer 1940 was especially "mild" so that we noticed it less. The question of my return has presumably become moot via the war with Russia; I have not heard anything more.

I am curious what turns out regarding the estate of Schmeer. Did the sons even claim their inheritance? To go by the price of sand, Brünn must have become fairly expensive. Or does that only apply to certain articles? Here everything is gradually become more expensive, for the time being scarcely noticeable, but who knows what will come?

I hope you were also satisfied with your second summer trip to Zell and remain with warm regards also from Adele

Your Kurt.

¹ KG and Adele stayed for two months in the summer of 1941 at the Mountain Ash Inn in Brooklin, Maine

Princeton, 21./IX. 1941.

Dear Rudi!

A week ago your letter of 24./VIII arrived and I see that I now have not written you in 2 months. We have been back in Princeton since the beginning of September and very happy with the new apartment. It is completely renovated and therefore much easier to keep clean than the previous one (as Adele says). My state of health that you ask about was in fact not particularly good last year. I lost quite a bit of weight (and still have not got my normal weight). In addition, my heart issues were at times worse than usual. That probably is in part due to the climate here. For here it is (often already in May and up through Sept) at times so oppressively muggy that even mere walking is strenuous even for a healthy person. I did not perceive that as so unpleasant during the previous summer at all but the reaction came afterward. In my opinion, a further reason was (even though the doctors wanted to take no notice of it) the furnace in our apartment. It was supposedly a warm water heater (with circulating water), but it very often smelled of smoke in the rooms. The skilled craftsmen that I had come made fun of me of course but one of them actually admitted that perhaps some kind of fumes could be coming from the cellar through chinks in the walls or through the windows.* Be that as it may, in the current building everything is kept immaculate so I hope that something like that cannot occur, and will simply no longer spend the summer in Princeton: In Maine it was really unbelievably cool (although only 12 hours from here). The sea there is so cold due to a northern current that one cannot bathe and there is no summer heat at all. By the way, we also saw a northern light.

I am naturally very glad that my tax issues were cleared up so unexpectedly well. Probably they are accepting my residence abroad for the time of my absence. I sent a card from Brooklin to Eva. What does she have to tell from Berlin? Mama writes me that Pauline is getting Larostidin injections; is that a new kind of treatment? Now, I would like to make one big request of you: Could you order both the following books by L. E. J. Brouwer¹ at the used bookseller K.F. Koehler (Leipzig, Täubchenweg 21) for me?

1. Over de Grondslagen der Wiskunde
Katalog 115 № 487

¹ L. E. J. Brouwer (1881–1966), Dutch mathematician and philosopher, founder of the intuitionistic school of mathematical proof, which KG sharply disagreed with. The two works (in Dutch, which KG could read) were “On the Foundations of Mathematics,” and “Mathematics, Truth, Reality”

2. Wiskunde, Waarheid, Werkelijkheid Groningen 1919

They are small books that will cost only a couple of marks. I am told that German booksellers have no issues with sending books to foreign addresses (prob. at the risk of the recipient) if they are ordered and paid for by someone inside Germany. On the other hand, one can order nothing from Germany through booksellers here. Naturally I mean order only if the books are on hand. To search for them would turn out to be too expensive. I will try to send the package with soap. I hope it works. Supposedly the regulations have been changed in the past few months.

Warm regards also from Adele

Your Kurt

* I also told the people at the Institute. I didn't have any headaches.

* * *

Gödel's letters resuming contact with his family following the German surrender in March 1945 offer a vivid snapshot of life in postwar Vienna, where food shortages, political uncertainty, and destruction wrought by Allied bombers in the final months of the war made life exceedingly fraught. The frequent references to food parcels and Care-Packages Gödel is arranging to be sent his mother, brother, and other relatives back home capture the starkness of life there, where even staples like cooking oil, flour, and rice were hard to come by. As reflected by the designation of food parcels by the number of calories they contain, the most urgent necessity was simply getting enough sustenance to survive.

Potentially even more worrisome was the unresolved nationality of Gödel's mother. Gödel's family had lived before the war in Brünn (present day Brno, in the Czech Republic), where Gödel himself was born when it was still part of the Austrian Empire. Following World War I and the breakup of the empire, German-speaking Austrians in Brünn and other parts of the new Czechoslovak state received automatic Czech citizenship. The seizure of Czechoslovakia by the Nazis, and the subsequent expulsion of all German speaking residents at the end of the war in a wave of anti-German furor, left the status of Gödel's mother, who had never received either Austrian or German citizenship, uncertain. (She had lived with her sons in Vienna following her husband's death in 1929, but

moved back to the family villa in Brünn in 1937, where she remained until 1944.) The alarming development Rudi conveys in his letter of 21 January 1946, that the Soviet military had begun sending all Czech Germans in its zone of occupation in Vienna to displaced-persons camps, underscores the precariousness of her situation. The efforts by the family that Gödel frequently mentions to receive compensation from the Czech government for the Brünn villa, which had been built by his father in 1914, were destined never to succeed.

Another tragic undercurrent is the news that slowly begins to filter back of the fate of his Jewish friends and acquaintances. Gödel's difficulty accepting the fact that Fritz Redlich, the son of his father's business partner and a boyhood acquaintance from Brünn, had been murdered in the Holocaust is both poignant and unsettling, revealing Gödel's penchant to deal with difficult news by deriving comforting logical deductions from invented premises: he repeatedly insists that there *must* be some other explanation for Redlich's arrest and death than the Nazis' extermination of Jews, since Fritz Redlich was only a "half-Jew." Redlich, tragically, was not the only German or Austrian of Jewish descent who mistakenly believed that his family's conversion to Protestantism, his decorated military service in World War I, and his prominent position in his community would protect him from the Nazi gas chambers. After fleeing to Paris with his sister Steffi at the time of the German invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939, he returned later that year to Brünn to look after his family's textile factory, confident he would be safe; within months his villa was seized for the use of the local German army commander, the factory was "Aryanized," and in April 1942 he was transported to the Nazi concentration camp at Terezin. Two years later he was sent to Auschwitz, and on his arrival there directly to the gas chamber.

But Gödel saw clearly the abject failure of his fellow Austrians to take responsibility for their actions in the Hitler years, especially the refusal of the University of Vienna to reinstate any of the approximately 100 professors and lecturers on the Philosophy Faculty (which included Mathematics) who had been purged for their Jewish ancestry or liberal politics. As he wrote his mother:

That the Austrians today often do not want to give their colleagues abroad what is due them is probably true, and in part is motivated by material reasons. For in fact, since the current Austrian government clearly views the Hitler regime as unlawful despotism, it ought to be obliged to rescind all firings from the universities. In most of the cases the victim

would likely forego returning, but clearly the offer has not even been made them.¹

He was no doubt thinking in particular of Menger, who was especially shabbily treated; the university decided that since he had “voluntarily” resigned his position in 1938, he could not “strictly speaking” be considered a victim of the Nazi regime and was thus not eligible for reinstatement.

A more tragicomic leitmotif of these years is Gödel’s recurring promise to visit his mother in Vienna, followed by the inevitable (and over time increasingly elaborate) excuses he offers for putting off the trip. Not until many years have gone by, and many promises broken, does he finally hint that the trauma of having been nearly trapped in Austria during the war has left him with an insurmountable fear of ever returning again: “I was plagued for a time by nightmares that I went to Vienna and couldn’t get back. Now, nightmares are certainly no valid reason and so I planned to make the journey nonetheless, but the unpleasant feeling remains.”²

Adele, who was much more eager to revisit her family and homeland—and who found life in Princeton during her first 10 years there especially difficult to adapt to (“Adele does not share my enthusiasm for this country at all. She complains about everything and especially about the sanitary conditions”³)—was however determined to make the trip back to Vienna at the first opportunity, and did so in May 1947. She repeated the journey several times in the following years, each the occasion of considerable family drama and recriminations from Gödel’s mother over how much money Adele was spending on herself and how she was “abandoning”⁴ her husband. Gödel never failed to defend her against these accusations, pointing out that he did just fine alone, that Adele was justifiably concerned about her family, and that he had all the money to spend on himself he needed.

By the end of 1948 both the situation in Vienna and the Gödels’ life in Princeton had noticeably become less strained; as Gödel notes with satisfaction of Adele, “I think she feels more and more like an American now,”⁵ growing comfortable enough to take part in regular social events at the Institute and in Princeton and making friends with several fellow German-speaking neighbors. His letters from this year round out a picture of their increasingly settled life in

¹ Letter, 11 December 1946

² Letter, 12 November 1951

³ Letter, 16 June 1946

⁴ Letter, 25 March 1953

⁵ Letter, 9 June 1948

their new home: his abiding friendship with Einstein, whom he would join most days to walk to or from the Institute; the ceremony conferring their American citizenship; and their celebration of their tenth wedding anniversary atop the Empire State Building.

* * *

Princeton, Sept 7, 1945

1.

Dear Mama¹ and dear Rudi!

I am happy to hear again from you in more detail after such a long time and to know that you have managed to survive the past months. Up to this point I have received 2 letters since the end of the war (from 9./VI. and 17./VIII.). We will of course send packages right away as soon as it is possible which hopefully will not be much longer. I wrote to you for a year now (counting the answers to your letters) ca. every two months via the Red Cross and am surprised that you have not received anything. You don't have to worry about us. We are doing well and we just returned a few days ago from our summer vacation at the seaside. Might it be possible as early as next summer for us to come visit in Vienna? Hopefully conditions will improve quickly and that we hear from you very soon. We send you a thousand *Bussis*² and wish you both the best from the heart for your wellbeing.

ever Your Kurt

[ple]ase give my warm [*torn-off corner*] to your sister

¹ KG's brother made a point of noting that both sons enjoyed a close relationship with their mother, although they pronounced "Mama" in the "formal way"—presumably with the accent on the second syllable

² "Kisses" or "pecks on the cheek"

Princeton, 22.I. 1946.

2.

Dear Mama and dear Rudi!

We were so glad to have heard from you again via your letter of 29./IX., even if the description of the conditions over there is quite distressing. We already sent you seven 2 kg food packages (via Sister Schön) and three larger (at 5, 5, 12 kg) via New York companies; aside from that 3 large packages to Uncle Carl¹ and 4 to Porkerts and hope that some of that has arrived.

Hopefully the conditions have already improved. Just now I heard to this effect from an acquaintance whose family is also in Vienna. You two write very little about yourselves, unfortunately, how it has been for you the whole time. Rudi will certainly have had enormous amounts to do during the war? We would so love to hear more details. Is the confiscation of half of the villa really a permanent matter? And how is it going for our German acquaintances and relatives in Czechoslovakia? Did they really all have to leave? How are Eva and A[unt] Pauline? Now to answering your questions: health-wise I am doing quite well, even though my stomach has worsened compared to Vienna. For summer vacation we've always gone to the seaside in the past years to a spot that is only 1½ hours from Princeton and while not as elegant as the Mountain Ash Inn, nonetheless has good opportunities for swimming. I have changed apartments three times because I could not tolerate the bad air from the central heating. In my current apartment (i.e. for ca. 2½ yrs) I am more or less satisfied in this regard. My position at the Institute was recently made permanent. So it looks as if I will not be coming back to Vienna any more (except for a visit); I am not yet an Amer. citizen. The Vienna apartment could be given up, in particular if it is still going to cost money due to a differential in rent. One could lease out the furniture for a fee. Does Adele's niece live with her husband (alone?) there still? and did the difference between her rent and ours remain the same? How are things with the value of money, as expressed in prices and salaries in Vienna? Here, one hears only contradictory news. I assume that my limited money in Vienna (incl. the papers) has already been used up for rent, support of Porkerts etc. I would like to write "see you soon" but it will probably be some time until traveling is possible and affordable. The rest of the questions I will answer soon.

Thousand *Bussis*

Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele

¹ Carl Gödel, first cousin of KG's father, a noted landscape painter

Princeton, 18./II. 1946.

3.

Dear Rudi!

I hope you received my telegram in which I gave you the name of the American Lieut. Colonel A.W. Marget, Chief of Finance Division, to whom you can turn in Mama's matter and mention the name of Prof. Oskar Morgenstern¹ from Princeton. Morgenstern, who himself comes from Vienna, is connected to several members of the American military authorities in Vienna to whom he had already sent your name some months ago. He had asked me whether I could perhaps name someone in Vienna who possibly could be of some kind of help in the reorganization of Austria and in turn would enjoy certain advantages (in procuring foodstuffs etc.); in reply I gave him your and Uncle Carl's names among others. Veblen², with whom I also spoke regarding Mama's matter (since currently the director of the Institute is unfortunately away from Princeton for several months now of all times and at present is in England) believes that more important than the past action of the State Department (= Ministry of Foreign Affairs) is my current permanent employment here, whose confirmation I am therefore enclosing. Aside from that I wrote to Director Aydelotte³ in England and it would not be impossible that he might be able to do something from there. Furthermore, Veblen does not believe that similar draconian measures could be taken in the American Zone. Regarding R.D. they told me at the post office that no packages could be received at this address. I would have to have an Army Post Office address and also provide a letter stating that she wished to have any kind of mail. This "request-letter" can be very short. Hopefully you received my letter of the 22./I. via El. in which I answered most of the questions of your previous letters. I am enclosing a letter to Mama, which you can possibly show at the American Consulate if need be. For Adele the news of the death of her father was a very great shock and she is also very unhappy about hearing nothing

¹ Oskar Morgenstern (1902–1977), renowned Austrian economist, resigned his position at the University of Vienna after the Anschluss and joined the faculty at Princeton, where he collaborated with Johnny von Neumann in founding the field of game theory; see also Introduction above

² Oswald Veblen (1880–1960), mathematician and one of the organizers and first professors of the Institute for Advanced Study; he had attended a lecture by KG at the Mathematical Colloquium in Vienna in 1933 that resulted in KG's first invitation to IAS

³ Frank Aydelotte (1880–1956), president of Swarthmore College 1921–1940 and second director of IAS, 1940–1947

from her people aside from those few lines in your letter. Why don't they write? What does one hear from all of our acquaintances and relatives?

Warm regards

Your Kurt

We have already sent a number of packages

[in Adele's hand:] Warm regards and *Bussis* to you dear Mama and Rudi

From Rudolf Gödel, 21 January 1946

Vienna, Kärntnerstr. 32

Dear Kurtl!

I add a few more lines to this letter on a very important matter. Since yesterday Volksdeutsch¹ in Vienna are being taken from the Russian Zone to collection camps in Western Austria, indeed fairly suddenly and unexpectedly. Mama is for the time being also a Volksdeutsch as she has not yet received Austrian citizenship (no one has yet). The order was made by the Russian Military Authorities. We are in the Americ. Zone but it is easily possible that a similar order for this zone could come soon. Since the Austrian government in this case is apparently not relevant, but rather the military government, it would be very important if I could emphatically point to your position in Princeton to be able to keep Mama here. So if it is at all possible for you, send me as soon as possible a notarized copy of your then-invitation from the American Government in which it designated you as a VIP of the first rank, and before the German Government (1939) demanded your return. If it were possible for you to get from the authorities at Princeton University a letter in which the local military government is requested out of regard for your position to make an exception here for Frau M. Gödel, that naturally would be an even better possibility. The expulsion from here has nothing to do with the [Nazi] Party, but rather affects all Volksdeutschen from the CSR [Czechoslovak Republic], thus even Mama who was not a Party member! I will here naturally also put all levers in motion to keep Mama here, especially with the point that she lived for many years at the time in Vienna, though for the American authorities the above mentioned documents would likely be more

¹ Nazi-era term for ethnic Germans from Eastern European countries, like KG's mother

decisive. If you can get something from the Univ. do not send the original but a legal copy. It would be good if you sent the two in two separate letters as it is uncertain if all letters arrive. I hope that in this matter a humane resolution will be possible, as it is impossible to really imagine Mama in a camp. That I will put everything in motion to prevent that you can believe!

Your Rudi

*Send letters to: MRS ROBINIA DEAN R.A.F. MALCOLM CLUBS
HOTEL ASTORIA WIEN, KÄRNTNER STR. 32*

Princeton, 18. Feb. 1946. 4.

Dear Mama!

I am very shocked about Rudi's news that your residency permit in Vienna is in danger and on the other hand that you cannot return to Brünn. I do believe, though, that similar measures as those Rudi describes for the Russian Zone are scarcely to be feared for the American, but should you have any difficulties contrary to expectations you are course always free to come here to us. My position at the Institute has now been made permanent and also my salary has been increased so that I would be in a position to care for you here; but probably even a temporary stay until the conditions in Europe improve would suffice. So don't worry about your future.

Thousand kisses

Your Kurt

Princeton, 6./IV. 1946 6.

Dear Mama!

Today your letters N° 8 and 9 arrived (N° 7 seems to have gone missing) and I thank you and also Rudi heartily for writing so diligently. Rudi's first direct airmail letter of 28./III. has also arrived already. Oddly, it is not yet possible to write airmail from here, but I expect it any day. Today, Adele

finally also got a letter (the second) from home (from Friede Metz) and with it learned of another 3 deaths in her family, all of them of young people. What you wrote me about the “valley of death” is also very sad, but don’t you believe that some people among those thought to be dead will turn up again? What does one hear of Family Wengefeld and both of the Trudes? The thing that made me particularly glad is that up to this point some packages did arrive unscathed and that you both are happy with the contents. I was always afraid that the things that one did not pack with one’s own hands would not be quite as first-rate and therefore am doubly glad that that is not the case. The dream about us that you describe sounds quite spooky, like the dreams that one sometimes has and that seem to come from some primal depths. During the war I also often had such dreams about you two, namely that I went to visit and then (always with the greatest of difficulties) came back again, so that these dreams always succeeded one another, ~~so that I~~ Also that you and Rudi came to New York and that you took an apartment there is something I’ve often dreamed. It is unbelievable that 6 years ~~has~~ have already passed since my departure. And time passes quicker and quicker so that a week seems to me to like 3 days used to feel. I am glad that you at least have good plays in Vienna as a diversion. We never go to the theater here, but we do go all the more to the movies, which is a good substitute here for that, for there are really a number of good ones. Another thing that is unquestionably better here than at home is the music on the radio (i.e., the light music, the other kind I am not able to judge) and so I frequently listen to it with pleasure.

Thousand *Bussis*

Your Kurt

Princeton, 28./IV. 1946

7.

Dear Mamerl!

Most of all I send you many *Bussis* for all the many letters I’ve received from you lately. N° 7 arrived belatedly after all, aside from that N° 10, 12, 13 and yesterday N° 14. You and Rudi’s letters arrive now via air mail very rapidly (they take ca. 10 days), but oddly enough one cannot write yet from here by air mail. I thank you both warmly too for the telegraphed birthday greetings that arrived yesterday; they made me enormously happy. So now I have happily turned forty years old, so older than Papa when the First World

War broke out. It is scarcely imaginable and yet time passes ever quicker. The news that Aunt Pauline is no more made me very sad and I thought wistfully back to when I always accompanied her home in the evenings to her apartment in Bischofsgasse.

Regarding my life here you have been updated in my earlier letters more or less. At any rate, I do feel very at home here in this country and envy Thirring¹ his position not a bit, and would not go back to Vienna even in the event that I was offered something. Aside from all personal circumstances, I find the country and the people here 10 times more appealing than at home. Our current apartment is very nice and I like it actually much better than the one on Chambers Terrace that I sent you the floor plan of back then. It has two very lovely large rooms with lots of windows, and also a very nice "Study" and a "Hall," everything in a very pleasant design. Adele has an ongoing skirmish with the landlord regarding the condition of the apartment but now that the kitchen, 2 rooms and the hall have been freshly papered (in return for us contributing \$50) and also all the floors have been polished I believe she has really no grounds any longer. The fact that we had a dog for a year is something I think I have not written you about. It was a blond "Cocker-Spaniel" with long broad dangling ears and a fluffy coat, a particularly adorable animal. Adele bought him while very small and raised him with a bottle. Sadly he was run over by a car and was dead on the spot. Currently there is a great apartment shortage, so that apartments are only available by swapping, and there is also a law protecting tenants. Prior to moving in here we lived in a large old schoolhouse for a year that had been made into a couple of apartments by joining several adjacent bedrooms for the pupils and which otherwise was quite empty, but oddly enough Adele liked it much better there than here. Now I have written you some more about our experiences here and would like to hear some details about yours but unfortunately you are rather reticent in that regard.

Thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

¹ Hans Thirring (1888–1976), theoretical physicist, socialist, pacifist, forcibly "retired" from his position at the University of Vienna after the Anschluss and reinstated after the war

29./IV. 1946.

8.

Dear Rudi!

12 days ago I sent you a detailed letter. Send me if possible a complete list of the contents of the large stolen package; I need it for the insurance. I sent 3 more packages to you two in March and April (at 3, 5, 5 kg) and 3 to Uncle Karl (at 3, 3, 5 kg), the large ones via Denmark the small ones via P. Besides that I ordered a 15 kg package (with 40 000 cal content) from a state-authorized company. Regarding the 1000\$ check from the year 1939 I have here a letter of 2.I. 1940 from the bank (Josefstadt branch) that clarifies the matter.* The 1000\$ made up my entire account back then, which I had to turn in. If you seriously intend to emigrate to the U.S.A., it would be good if you would send me exact dates of your work to date and your employment and positions (I only know approximately) and an offprint of your job or jobs at that point in time.

With warm regards
Your Kurt

* Aside from that also from the main post office on 2./X. 1939 [. . .]

PS Also wrote you several times, that if any of your American friends wish for me to send them something, I need a “request letter.”

Princeton, 17./V. 1946.

9.

Dear Mama and dear Rudi!

For a few days now one can finally write via airmail from here. So I am hurrying to do so and first, thank you both heartily for your letter N° 15 with the cute Easter card as well as for Rudi's letter of 20./VI. I hope you two and Uncle Carl have received several packages by now. Some time ago we sent a large one of ca. 35 kg via a new and I hope secure route to the Porkerts ~~sent~~, half of which is for you two (also a few stockings, garters and a slip for you and 3 shaving soaps and razorblades for Rudi). It should be there ca. 14 days from today. Out of that please perhaps reimburse Uncle Carl for anything you have received from him, if you've gotten anything from him. As for sending packages from here, there are still some difficulties as you know from my previous letters. I hope you have also received the 3 letters I sent in April. Today is a terribly humid day here and just now there was a thunderstorm, but

in general Spring is really lovely here. Everywhere there are trees in bloom and the area around Princeton is like a large park. The Institute is somewhat on the outskirts and I take a lovely daily walk of ca. ½ hour there in the midst of blooming trees and bushes behind which houses with their large front yards are hidden. Your pneumonia must have been really bad, but you don't write how long the entire business actually lasted? I hope to hear from you again soon (we've now gone 3 weeks without news from Vienna) and with a thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

Your Kurt

P.S. Many warm regards also from Adele. She is very concerned about her mother and has lost a lot of weight over it.

Princeton, 2./VI. 1946.

10.

Dear Mama!

Now 14 days have again passed since my last letter and in the interim I have received another 4 letters from you (Nº 16–19) and a letter from Rudi of 4./V. 14 days go by faster than one thinks. I am always immensely glad to hear from you two, but I often do not manage to reply quickly. Regarding the looting of the apartment I have received no letter from Rudi. Who did the looting? Two copies have come only of one letter, namely the one with the list of received packages. I sent you a quite some time ago a package with 3 kg of noodles, 1 kg of flour, ½ kg marmalade etc. Did that ever actually arrive? The entire large package (i.e., the crate) I referred to in my last airmail letter, will have probably arrived 14 days later than I wrote (i.e., therefore mid-June). Also, Adele told me that miscellaneous items were added after the fact so that is probably will be a lot heavier. At any rate half of the food is for you two (as Adele already wrote repeatedly to her people). As to clothes, I did not know at that time that you needed them so urgently and therefore only sent what was mentioned in my last letter (among them garters and elastic). Hopefully this crate will get there properly. A week ago I also sent 2 more 5 kg packages via Denmark with 1 kg powdered milk and another one of the 40 000 cal packages crates, about which I wrote Rudi in my letter of 28./IV. (and the same kind to Uncle Carl). There things should be arriving in Vienna very soon. I am glad

that you have good news from Uncle Karl and Aunt Mizzi¹. How long has she been in that camp in Upper Bavaria? Menger² was in Princeton only a couple of months ago. He still has that ashen color to his face and is already the father of 4 children. Regarding the 3 cities, where I gave lectures, I cannot tell you anything interesting, except that I only have a vague memory of them. We have had really crazy weather here (though it is normal for here). Yesterday it was more humid than in the hottest August and today one can only exist at all next to an electric heating lamp. Yesterday a letter from Uncle Carl of 5./V. arrived in which he wrote that you two looked significantly better, something that honestly made me glad.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 16./VI. 1946

11.

Dear Mama!

Yesterday your letter N° 20 arrived at the same time as a letter from Uncle Carl of 29./V. I have not heard anything more from Rudi since his letter of 4./V. The letter about the looting of my apartment that you wrote about in your last letter, which I have received in the meantime, has not yet arrived. I hope that you all have received some of the packages which I wrote about in my earlier letters. I definitely believe that what was sent (with the possible exception of the small 3 kg package to Porg.) will arrive, even if sometimes delays occur. In your last letter you also finally wrote in more detail about the experience all of you had during the war. But I can still hardly imagine some of it properly. Did you actually have to spend the night in a bomb shelter sometimes or did the air raids last only a short time? Here one only heard of a few air raids on Vienna. The worst must have been the conquest by the Russians? The only good thing was that you found acquaintances in that time

¹ Karl Handschuh, brother of KG's mother, and Mizzi Handschuh, wife of her other brother, Gustav

² Karl Menger (1902–1985), mathematician, member of Vienna Circle, founder of Mathematical Colloquium, important mentor of KG; see also the prefatory remarks to Part 1 above

with whom you get along so well. Who is the author of the play “Die Kleine Stadt”¹? I, too, would like to read it after your description. There is not much new here. This year is an abnormally cold Spring, something I am happy about, however. Adele’s appendix operation went smoothly, but for ca. ½ year she has been complaining of heartburn and eating less too, though before she was proud of having the “stomach of a horse.” Of course it could have completely other causes. She has also lost quite a bit of weight but that can probably be explained by the bad news from home. Adele unfortunately does not share my enthusiasm for this country at all. She complains about everything and especially about the sanitary conditions. To wit: rats once appeared in our apartment, of which we caught 3. But the hole in the wall which they had come through was closed over, the situation stopped immediately and I do not believe one has to view it so drastically as she does. Today she is invited to a wedding and I am eager to hear what she has to say about it.

Thousand *Bussis* and much love
Your Kurt

P.S. As I wrote in my last letter I sent you all two 5 kg packages (also “Care”) and a 15 kg package to Uncle Carl
[in margin:] Just now Rudi’s letter of 27./V. and Uncle Carl’s of 4./VI. arrived

Princeton, 3./VII. 1946.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your comprehensive letters of 27./V. 14./VI and 23./VI, in which you write in detail about the looting of the apartment. That my Vienna account still exists and also the papers are still in existence is a pleasant surprise for me. Did you actually hear anything else about the income tax? My income during the war was, after all, the same kind as 1938, about which you once wrote me that they had not recognized it as taxable. But I fear however I

¹ *The Little City*, a 1909 novel by Heinrich Mann (1871–1950), brother of the more-renowned writer Thomas Mann

could (if I come to Vienna or any other occasion) have trouble since I never unregistered myself in Vienna. Regarding the check that is why I wrote at such length to you because I feared it could make trouble due to currency regulations if one e.g. believed it to be an amount that I should have turned in back then but never did. Is it clear from any kind of stamp that it isn't valid any longer? If it is not possible to store the furniture somewhere at Metz's and if in addition the rent is covered, I am naturally for keeping the apartment: but will that even work in the long run? As to a car, I currently have no intention of buying one for I am not in favor of immediately spending an increase in earnings, quite aside from the fact that for many years now I have not been a big lover of cars and the prices here continue to rise. Mama writes in her last letter it seems to her that I do not want to come to Vienna at all. There is some truth to that inasmuch as while of course I would dearly like to see you two again, what I hear from you and otherwise about the conditions in Vienna does not exactly make a trip there appealing, all the more since my health is not so great and one apparently cannot be sure when one could return, since means of transportation in this direction are very overcrowded. One barely gets an exit visa except when one wants to leave American permanently. That travel visits from Vienna might already be possible (except perhaps for quite exceptional reasons) would surprise me greatly. The Pat. of which you write, are probably émigrés. The fact that your entire building is occupied is something you have told me nothing in detail about, as you seem to infer. So the Selbs do not live there anymore? I have sent to date two Care-packages at 15 kg each to you two. From Mama, letters N° 21 and 22 have arrived. I send her thousand *Bussis* and will write soon.

Warm regards and much love

Your Kurt

P.S. I will send nothing more to Po. since Uncle C[arl] wrote me that he will leave Vienna soon and will not be receiving any more deliveries.

Princeton, 21./VII. 1946

12.

Dear Mamerl!

A couple of days ago your letter № 23 and Rudi's letter from Purkersdorf¹. I am very glad that you had the opportunity to go to a sanatorium despite all the poor conditions in Austria, and hope that you are recuperating well there, too. You are certainly among the chosen few to have that opportunity. Your account of the bomb raids on Vienna interested me very much and I eagerly await what else you will write to me. So they must have been primarily Russian raids? Did you not have any inkling who lives in the villa currently? It can scarcely be assumed that the photo albums, letters and books, etc. would have all disappeared. Nobody is interested in them after all except for the owners. The fact that Adele wants to come to Vienna at all costs for 2–3 months after having heard that there is even the slightest possibility is something you will have gleaned from her letters to her mother. I can scarcely forbid her (even though it would mean a substantial blow to my coffers), for her mother is nearly 78 and ~~she would want~~ Adele fears it could transpire with her mother the way it did with her father. It is however not at all certain if she even will be able to travel. As a preliminary, she had to fill out a questionnaire with 25 questions with five copies and with double notarization and send it in. The primary concern is apparently getting permission from the American military officials which, as they wrote to her, is generally not given for personal reasons. But she is very confident and is looking forward to seeing her mother and it is quite possible that she will be successful. In one regard this trip would really do her good and she would perhaps get out of the habit of being discontent with the circumstances here. Ca. 14 days ago we sent an 11 kg package to you all, aside from that also a 15 kg Care-Package (that makes the third one to you two). Now a package service of regular mail to Austria (max. weight 5 kg) has been started up and I will send some items to you via this route soon, too. Regarding emigration of doctors I have heard something favorable: in certain states (including New York) one can establish oneself after ca. 1 year and the exams are the same as every doctor here (after already obtaining the title of Doctor) has to do before setting up a practice. Einstein is currently living only with his sister and a female secretary. He is divorced from his first wife and his second one died ca. 1936. I have only been to his house 2 or 3 times on the occasion of scient. discussions. I think in general it only happens rarely that someone is invited to his house ~~at all~~. That

¹ Sanatorium just outside of Vienna, where KG himself stayed during his nervous breakdowns in 1934 and 1936

he enjoys sailing is true, but that does not seem to be a completely safe sport. Once last year for example all of those in his boat ended up in the water (I was not there).

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. How is Rudi doing with his gallbladder?

[vertically in margin:] Have you heard anything about Papa's sisters and Richard Svedik?

[in Adele's hand vertically in margin:] Many *Bussis* and much love from your Adele. Letter follows.

Princeton, 28./VII. 1946.

13.

Dear Mama!

Last week your letter № 24 and Rudi's letter of 11./VII. arrived. I was of course enormously glad that 2 packages have finally arrived after all and hope, too, that the others are not lost, especially also the rather large crate and the 3 Care-Packages of 15 kg each. I am also very glad to hear that the sanatorium Purkersdorf is doing you such good. I still remember very well that park whose trees you write about rustling in their melancholy way. I always liked it very much and it always felt like a "castle grounds" to me. Hopefully the foot pain you write about has improved. Nothing yet is going to come of a trip to Vienna this year for me, unfortunately. It is very doubtful that I would get an entrance and exit permit; but even if I did, the difficulties are still so large (completely aside from the large costs) that I could scarcely get away before (or only shortly before the start of the next semester). But I think it is otherwise quite good that I not travel this year. The food available now over there would not be good for my stomach and as I already wrote, one doesn't even know due to overcrowded transportation when one can return. I really believe that the money would be put to better use if you two could come to us. I am not yet an American citizen, which would significantly complicate the trip. Inflation here is not yet as perilous yet and I believe definitely that the kind of debacle that happened in Europe after the last war is quite out of the question here, even if the cost of living did perhaps increase a further 30 or 50%. This year it has been an especially cool summer up to now and so I have

no desire whatsoever to take a summer vacation. There is even a swimming pool quite close to Princeton that is said to be very attractive (I have not been yet). What you write about Trudl sounds very romantic, but she obviously prefers something less romantic. What does one hear about Hilde Techet, actually? De-Wald¹ is a close acquaintance of Morgenstern's. He was in Princeton shortly after his return (but I do not know him). I think I have not told you much about Morgenstern. He is an internationally very famous political economist who also published a journal in Vienna and a leading member in a commission in the UN. That is the reason for his good connections.

Thousand *Bussis* and many greetings to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S did Rudi ever get the colored ribbon and the shoe strings that I sent in letters?

[in Adele's hand vertically in margin:] Very warm regards & *Bussis* Your Adele.

Princeton, 8./VIII. 1946.

14.

Dear Rudi!

My comment that my state of health was not so great, was in reference to nothing more than my standard stomach issues. The Viennese fare would, to go by your descriptions, be very bad for me and to what degree arranging for food provision from here would be possible is really doubtful. My current stomach complaints are roughly as follows: pain (never very severe*) on the right back at the level of the stomach if I eat more than usual (and you know that "usual" is not much in my case) and besides that, with certain foods e.g. sour cream, black bread, strongly spiced things, some canned goods (e.g. severe in the case of candied fruits), meat that is not very tender, coffee that is too strong or tea, etc. Besides which I have my standard persistent

¹ Ernest DeWald (1891–1968), professor in the Department of Art and Archeology at Princeton

constipation, so that I have to keep taking laxatives (magnesium, Kurella¹, lactose) and if I take too much I get sick from the laxatives, of course. This whole thing leads of course to constantly being underweight. In the past years I've never gotten above 54 kg. The doctor I saw advised me to eat more frequent and smaller meals and not many raw vegetables, but to eat a lot of butter and sugar. How is it going with Mama's intestinal issue and generally health-wise? She wrote to me that her low weight had nothing to do with the lack of food in Vienna. And what is your gall bladder up to? Mama's letter N° 25 with the newspaper clipping about Schlick² arrived several days ago. I hope you have received some packages by now. Regarding Adele nothing has been decided. She is quite desperate because it has been another six weeks without a letter from home (except a short one from Frieda Metz).

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

* if the pain gets worse I have to stick to a diet for a couple of days or else it just gets worse and worse

P.S. Have you not heard anything from a Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Sawyer? He was in Princeton for a while and has been in Vienna for some weeks now. I don't know him personally, but Adele got to know his wife and she wanted to get in contact with you two in Vienna. He is also an acquaintance of Morgenstern's.

Princeton, 15./VIII. 1946.

15.

Dear Mama!

Now I have not heard from you two for quite a while again. The last letter I received from you is N° 25, of 23./VII., and from Rudi I have not heard anything since his letter of 11./VII., though in it he promises to soon send more supplementary information regarding my questions. Adele has not had

¹ A patent-medicine brand name for *Pulvis glycyrrhizae compositus*, a popular laxative made of licorice root, senna, sulphur, and fennel seeds or oil

² Moritz Schlick (1882–1936), physicist and philosopher, a founder of logical positivism, leader of the Vienna Circle; shot and killed in June 1936 by a mentally unbalanced former student who had been stalking him for years

anything even from her mother and Liese¹ for an entire seven weeks and is naturally quite desperate over it. The last she learned was that her mother was going to Amstetten with Liesl for a couple of weeks. Haven't you two heard anything more from them? I am glad you gained 2–3 kg in Purkersdorf; I think that is not a bad outcome for not even a full 4 weeks. So you certainly cannot complain about the sanatorium. What sort of doctors are there now? Did they take good care of you? We recently sent off another 5 kg package to you both, this time via regular mail service. And a package has already been sent to Mizzi Handschuh, too. This summer I will most probably not go anywhere. It is so cool this year, unlike I've ever experienced here, and one is more likely to yearn for a hot water bottle than for a dip in the ocean. Recently there were the most amazing northern lights to be seen but I unfortunately missed it. Nothing has been decided regarding Adele's trip to Vienna and it will probably not transpire as soon as she imagines. She has not had any kind of reply to her application, even though the agencies here otherwise function quite promptly. (That is also one of the things that are 10 x 10 x . . . better than at home.) Adele is now doing much better with her stomach, since the last few of the teeth in her lower jaw were replaced by a false set. So it is possible that her ailments came from the fact that she swallowed everything unchewed. The article about Schlick got here fine and interested me very much. The fact that I am not mentioned in it should not surprise you. I was not a particularly active member of the Schlick circle and in some regard even in direct opposition to the predominant views there. When I wrote you recently about Einstein, I completely forgot that he also has a daughter who usually, even if not always, lives there. His sister and daughter both seem to be ill frequently. Einstein was born in the same year as you, by the way. Did you know that? There is now quite a cult following around him again because he contributed much to the invention of the atom bomb (indirectly via his earlier work). There are already a number of private airplanes here. If you drive out to the flatter countryside you see them in garages next to some fancy houses (although only a very few), just like it used to be with private cars.

Thousand *Bussis* and many greetings to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

¹ Adele's sister

Princeton, 26./VIII. 1946.

16.

Dear Mama!

Most of all, all the best and love to you on your birthday from both of us. Adele sewed a dress for you, but unfortunately didn't get done with it on time. So I will send it at the same time as some other things that I believe you will be able to use. I only hope that the dress will fit you, but Adele maintains that she remembers your figure. Dear Ma, do not be sad that I am not coming now; you act as if it were something irretrievable, whereas it is really only the case of a couple of months. For next Spring (the Institute closes at the beginning of May already) traveling in both directions will surely be substantially easier. Even in the case of Adele it is quite uncertain as to when she will actually be able to travel. She has not received any answer yet to her application and therefore cannot travel as intended on the 31./VIII. Tomorrow I am going to attempt to do something about the matter and maybe she will have to travel to Washington. You needn't worry that I won't be able to manage in her absence on the subject of food. The restaurants here are very different from home where you can at most count on ruining your stomach at them. I remember quite clearly how I gained several kilos here in the year 1933/34 from restaurant fare and my digestive tract issue back then continually improved. The current condition of my stomach which you have asked after several times is not anything to be concerned about. If I am cautious with my eating I have actually no trouble at all. I am simply very sensitive to anything that is not quite digestible (e.g. meat that is not completely tender, or black bread, or something that is heavily seasoned, etc.). Whenever I eat something along those lines I don't feel well and lose my appetite and for that reason I believe that a change for the worse regarding food would have a particularly deleterious effect on me. The doctor I saw didn't prescribe any particular diet but instead simply advised me to eat a lot of butter and sugar along with not too many raw vegetables. I am glad that you two finally got your two Care-Packages. As I hear from a reliable source, they only take 8 days from the day they are ordered, because they are already stockpiled in Vienna and the order is sent over via airmail. Will it not in fact still be necessary for me to send you a few more via this route in the future? Here one hears nothing of an improvement of the food situation on your end and I am not so bad off financially after all that I couldn't send you enough should you need it. Adele sent another (not Care) package of 20 kg to you both a couple of days ago, but

that will probably take longer. The book “Goethe” by Chamberlain¹ that you write about carries with it any number of youthful memories for me. I read it (oddly enough exactly 25 years ago) in Marienbad² and see before me still today the strangely purple-colored flowers that everything was covered in. It is unbelievable how something like that leaves an impression on you. I believe I already had written in 1941 from Mountain Ash Inn, that I had found the very same flowers there and how strangely it moved me. This Goethe book was the beginning of my interest with Goethe’s science of colors and his argument with Newton and thus indirectly led to my choice of profession. Thus curious threads spin themselves through life that one doesn’t discover until one grows older. You write that Rudi has amassed a large library of books but nothing about the kind of books. Does he have a specific area that especially interests him, or does he go by age or value of the books, or by what else? Your yearning for Disney Films you could satisfy here to your heart’s content. There is scarcely a movie shown that does not have a Disney movie preceding it. Of course as a result of this quantity there are also many bad ones among them but there are always things that a person can find to talk and laugh about. Adele has been given a bust of her father that looks was modelled on a photogr. in recognition to her of her war aid (she sewed clothes for European orphans). It looks quite fabulous* and Adele is very pleased with it. In the meantime the letters № 26-28 from you have arrived and from Rudi 2 letters.

I send you thousand *Bussis* and an extra large one for the charming four leaf clover (where did you manage to get ahold of that?)

ever Your Kurt

* the resemblance is another thing altogether

Princeton, 19./IX. 1946.

17.

¹ Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927), British-born German writer, whose subsequent pseudoscientific racial theories and virulent anti-Semitism deeply influenced Hitler

² Spa town in the mountains of western Bohemia (now Mariánské Lázně in the Czech Republic)

Dear Ma!

I thank you warmly for both your letters № 29 and 30 and for the newspaper clipping. However did you come up with the strange idea that you could be writing me too much? I would of course be glad to hear from you both every day, only the answers would probably be in short supply; I am usually so deep in my work that it is hard for me to concentrate on anything else further than is necessary to write a letter. I found the article about the Salzkammergut region very interesting and also very well written, particularly the description of the splendid colors is very realistic. We laughed a lot about the “consequences of a modern temporary home.” Here such things will probably become a necessity soon too. Great dissatisfaction abounds, especially among those returning home from war, due to the fact that these numerous young married couples are not in a position to acquire suitable housing. There is said to be a booming business with foreclosures etc., which I do not however know from personal experience. Adele’s trip has been cancelled indefinitely for the time being. It turned out that the difficulty stems not at all from the American but rather from the Austrian officials. She needs a permit from the Austrian Interior Ministry and the Allied Control Commission in Vienna and several questionnaires have to be filled out by her for this purpose so they can be sent to Vienna and processed there. Up to now she was not even able to get her hands on these questionnaires. In the course of the past 14 days she called the Aust. Mission in Washington 4 times on the phone and they keep putting her off from one day to the next without giving any sensible reason for it. One notices immediately that one is once again dealing with those dear agencies of the homeland. Now she is waiting a couple more days and then wants to personally speak to the people at the Aust. Mission herself. For American citizens the difficulties appear to be even greater. Apparently it is completely impossible to travel for private reasons, and difficult even for business. We already sent a food package to Uncle Karl Handschuh. We recently got a letter from Aunt Paula¹ that indicated they were apparently not very satisfied with the Care-Package. One hears so many contradictory things about it that I would like to know more details about the contents from you two. To go by the brochure there is supposed to be a lot of sugar, butter, jelly, powdered milk, cocoa in it (but is that even correct?). What could be bad about any of that? Your advice not to eat canned food is very hard to follow here; there are many that are better than the fresh items and that have not had any ill-effects on my stomach, e.g. a concentrated beef soup that is better than all the similar things I have seen up to now. In the past weeks Adele has often

¹ Wife of KG’s “Uncle” (actually, his father’s first cousin) Carl Gödel

made me plum dumplings which set very well with me and that I think have caused me to gain some weight. What 3 other people are supposed to take up residence in our apartment? If it weren't for the question of storing the furniture I would naturally prefer to give up the apartment. How long has the Techet family been missing? Might not they have emigrated to Russia? Engineers are easily employed there and he always had connections there. Just now I notice that the "Consequences of a Temporary Home" is in fact from America. I have not heard anything about temporary homes yet, but have heard about apartments in which everything (walls, furnishings, flooring, steps) is made of glass. Adele had a look at one in New York. Wasn't that the idea you had years ago? I will close for today and remain with a thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

P.S. Warm regards to Rudi. His letter of 7 Sept. arrived and I will be writing him soon. Adele took another small postal package for you two to the post office today

Princeton, 6./X. 1946.

18.

Dear Ma!

I found your letter N° 31 upon my return from Washington, where I had gone with Adele about her travel permit. We went to not only the American but also the Austrian agencies. At the former they told us that they would be able to issue the permit immediately as soon as Adele has the entry permit for Austria; an additional military permit is no longer necessary. At the Austrian Mission it cost us a long struggle to even get the necessary forms, but we finally succeeded at 4 o'clock, after we had already been there once at 9.30 in the morning in vain. They wouldn't accept an application for a passport because it supposedly would take months. Instead Adele is supposed to use an identity card signed before a notary and verified by the Aust. Mission. In addition, her application has to be approved by the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna and by a commission of all four occupying powers. We will send it off tomorrow and they promised us to send it on via airmail or to telegraph it. If Adele were already an American, she would probably have had even more difficulties. A Prof. here, for example, was not able to get a ~~military~~ entry

permit for Germany, even though he was invited to go there and give (mathem.) lectures. Adele has more or less given up going via airplane due to all the many crashes*. The trip to Washington was a pleasant change of pace. I was there once 12 years ago but did not have the right frame of mind to sightsee, since I had a lecture to give and was always with colleagues. It is really an especially lovely city laid out with an unbelievable waste of space. The “Capitol” (that is the American Parliament building of which you doubtless have seen pictures) and “Washington’s Monument” (that is an obelisk approximately the height of the Eiffel Tower) stand a distance of 2 km opposite one another, and between them are parklike spaces with a series of splendid buildings, especially museums. We had a look at the interior of these (the “National Gallery of Art” that was built only a couple of years ago). It looks very impressive. If you stand at the center of the building, over you is a tremendous dome borne by enormous black columns and between the columns is a fountain. Adele was also very taken with Washington and said she would like to only live there if she had a choice. Here the summer seems to finally be starting; there were a couple awfully hot days.

A thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

[*in Adele's hand:*] Warm regards and much love also from Adele

* and due to the high prices

Princeton, 28./X. 1946.

19.

Dear Rudi!

Please excuse my having not written for so long. In the meantime several letters have arrived from you (the last, of 12./X.), in which you confirm also the receipt of several packages. We already had sent you 400 saccharin tablets (of which, as Adele tells me, 200 arrived in the 20 kg package). For a couple of weeks now they are not to be had anywhere (at least in Princeton). The newspaper clipping with the Thirring essay was very interesting to me. I will always be glad whenever you send newspaper clippings that properly illuminate the current state of affairs in Austria. Procuring books unfortunately

would not be so easy. In the Dorotheum¹ there might be something now and then that could interest me and otherwise be only very hard to obtain, but would the books be displayed long enough for you to write me in the meantime and wait for my reply? But I thank you for your thoughtfulness and will possibly take you up on it sometime later. Aside from that I would like at some point to have my books sent to me here. The post office should be able to provide information about whether that is possible yet and how expensive that would be. Recently a letter arrived from Rosenberg in which he requests I send him my "*Heimatrolle*"². I will attempt to get it from the Aust. Mission, but to go by my prior experience there I don't hold out much hope for it. Couldn't you get it quicker at City Hall in Vienna?

With many warm regards, also from Adele
Your Kurt.

Dear Mama!

Your last letter is № 32 (of 3./X.) and I see that I have not written to you for quite a while. Adele's travel permit continues to drag on. After receipt of her application they did write from the Aust. Miss. that they will telegraph it to Vienna but that has been 14 days now and the rude remarks that Adele from time to time addresses to them over the phone seem not to help at all either. Besides that Adele wants to go by ship now, which will further delay the matter. The transatlantic flights really do not seem so very safe yet compared to those over land. You both have probably heard about the many accidents. The content of the Care-Packages as you describe it does not quite tally with the brochures here. In particular, more sugar is supposed be in them, also 1 kg of dried vegetables and fruit, $\frac{1}{4}$ kg of cheese, 1 kg of flour or oats or something similar. It would not occur to me of course to hold it against A[unt] Paula for complaining about it. On the contrary, I would really like to know what would be better to send. In your last letter, Hilde's address had been partially cut out with scissors. Please say hello from me when you write to her. Up to now we have not heard at all from A[unt] Mizzi. Our package thus seems to have gotten lost. I sent Mosings a Care-Package. In our apartment the final thing was re-papering the bedroom and so now floors and walls in all the rooms are freshly done. Adele would like have pictures taken of the apartment again but now it is all so expensive and the prices continue to go up. It is now

¹ Well-known long-established Viennese auction house

² Registration of residence in a particular Austrian municipality, a system of citizenship and right to local services dating back to the Austrian empire and used until 1939; replaced by Austrian state citizenship in 1945

ten-thirty in the evening and I am home alone. Adele went to the movies to see a ~~operetta~~ comedy called "Scandal in Paris." It probably isn't worth anything but Adele is an enormous movie buff. Recently, a play by Shaw "Caesar and Cleopatra" was filmed with unrevised Shaw dialogue, but I prefer to read that sort of thing. Just now I heard the Barcarolle on the radio. That is the sort of light music that I like. Aside from that one often hears very good Spanish dance music. This is called "Latin-American music" (= South Amer. music) here. I fear this letter is somewhat rambling. Sometime I'll tell you more and in a better frame of mind.

Thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele. She fears you will take her to task over the dress

Princeton, 18./XI. 1946.

20.

Dear Rudi!

The Aust. Mission has informed me that they can issue me my certificate of Aust. citizenship if I can prove through a residency certificate or other document that on the cut-off date, i.e. 13./III. 1938, I was an Aust. citizen. So I am sending you a power of attorney to procure the residency certificate or some similar document. It is also possible that among my papers left behind in Vienna (in one of the iron strongboxes) is a proof of origin. In that case could you please send it to me registered (assuming that it makes clear that I was currently in Vienna on the abovementioned cut-off date). Unfortunately I have nothing like that in my papers here and also do not know exactly what Viennese agency I would have to contact from here. It is unlikely that I will be an American citizen within the next six months. As to Adele's travel permit there is nothing new. It was supposedly telegraphed to Vienna several weeks ago but there has not been any answer yet. In the course of the past weeks Adele sent off 2 postal packages to you at 5 kg apiece. Besides that we also have now received good news about the large package and hope that it will reach you soon. A few days ago I was in New York and stocked up on the brand of powdered milk you asked for. In Princeton something like that is rarely to be had and in fact the stores seem to be getting emptier and emptier. E.g. a couple of weeks ago there were no kinds of fat and oils to be had. I am

surprised that you have not replied at all to my letter in which I wrote you about the state of my health and asked about your and Mama's state of health. Or has that letter from you gotten lost? From Mama, letters № 33, 34 (with Mizzi's letter and the newspaper clipping about the goals of America in Austr.) arrived. I send her many *Bussis* and will write more in the next few days

Many warm regards, also from Adele
Your Kurt

Princeton, 22./XI. 1946.

21.

Dear Mamene!

I was completely astonished that you went off to Pötzleinsdorf for your rest cure. Where did you stay there? Is there also a sanatorium? Hopefully you managed to get a good rest in those fourteen days. The two newspaper clippings about the goals of America in Austria and the condition of the Burgtheater were very interesting. But I don't understand how a building can completely burn inside without much being noticeable from the outside. Normally the heat created would make cracks in the walls, which would then ultimately collapse. Do you have any idea who wrote the other article (about the goals of America..)? In its style it seemed very "Thirring-ish" to me, which occurred to me while comparing it to the one you sent previously. You probably will have read about the "landslide" which the elections here 14 days ago resulted in. So now (for the first time since 1933) the Republicans (i.e., the reactionaries) are in power again. Developments have indeed been going in this direction ever since Roosevelt's death and I have the feeling (as unbelievable as it may sound) that it is already visible in various ways in daily life. E.g., in the course of the last few years, the movies have gotten decidedly worse. At Princeton University now (over several months) the 200th anniversary of its founding has been being celebrated. Oddly, it is coupled with an immense secretiveness. E.g. the scientific lectures and discussions are mainly for invited guests only and if something is public then if at all possible only banalities are spoken of, or a speaker is chosen who speaks so unclearly that no one understands him. It is just laughable. Science all in all (mainly due to the atom bomb*) is turning into secret science here. In your last letter you write about Else Biermann, but you never ever wrote a word to me about the

widely scattered Lev family. Einstein has not left his house for 14 days and is mainly in bed. There does not seem to be anything seriously wrong with him. When I visited him recently he was as peppy and cheerful as ever. He is also continuing his work as usual and merely says he feels somewhat weak in the feet. I haven't even written you yet that our apartment is right near the train. One hears the trains passing, which for some reason dormant in my subconscious I quite like. Since most of the trains are run electrically and there are none at all after 12 o'clock at night, there are no real disadvantages. Adele complains of course of not living in a good neighborhood; but since the largest and most elegant hotel in town is directly across from us, it is scarcely justified. Today I sent off another two 5 kg postal packages with 3 containers of Klim powdered milk for you two. I believe that the content is better for your stomachs than the Care-Packages. I hope you both will receive the big crate soon.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* and other military-technological innovations

P.S. Did Rudi get my letter of 18./IX?

Princeton, 11./XII. 1946. 22.

Dear Mamene!

Most of all I wish you and Rudi a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year. Hopefully the entire world will be steer itself back into a normal path again; after all, the war has been over now almost two years. I don't know why the enclosed Christmas card appealed to me so very much; it must have to do with some childhood memories, but I believe it also has a certain artistic value. Don't you think so? In the interim, letters № 35, 36 have arrived, also Rudi's letter of the 30./XI. and a card from Uncle Karl H. On Rudi's letter there was no return address and a note from the censor's office was included indicating that letters without a return address will not be delivered any longer. In regards to Adele's trip there is nothing new, but supposedly soon an Aust. Consul will come to New York, who then will prob. be issuing passports and visas independently. I am sorry that you did not gain any weight in Pötzleinsdorf. How much do you actually weigh now? You don't have to worry on my

account. My digestive tract has been in a fairly stable condition for years now, in fact. I do not exactly shine in the area of weight, but I believe I have looked worse at times in Vienna. The picture sent to Mizzi was one from 1940 that you also have. So you see how unnecessarily you worry your little head about such things. Those couple of amateur pictures taken of me in the past years are unfortunately all so bad that I am barely recognizable. If you absolutely want me to I can have another one taken just for you of course but you would barely find any particular difference from previous pictures; the few grey hairs I already have would not be visible in the photo. I have not yet heard any details from Rudi about the content of the large box and about my registration papers. Was what Rudi managed to get enough for Rosenberg? For Christmas we of course sent a few more (3) packages with food, fabric, etc. for you to (by mail). Aside from that I ordered a Care-Package for Gitti.¹ Adele is very content with her false teeth. She never takes them out (not even at night) except to clean them and says she can't feel a thing and can bite bones, whereas she was quickly unable to use the replacements she had previously. I will send you an exact layout of our apartment soon, from which you can see the extent of the rooms. In the summer the water is heated with gas, in the winter by the central heating furnace; also the gas furnace is in the cellar. Here almost all the buildings have their hot water generated (in reserve) in the cellar so that in the apartments you only have to turn the tap. The bread is excellent here, and as a matter of fact not only the dark bread (which I never eat however) but also the light, which otherwise often tastes bland, but not at all here. I don't know what to attribute the good flavor to. The "vitamins" that are added, according to the description, cannot be the cause. Vitamins, as you probably know, are a particularly American fad and you can find on all sorts of foodstuffs the words "vitamin-enriched" on the label. Einstein recently told me about an interesting project that sounds very Münchhausenian but nowadays does already lie in the realm of technical possibility. They plan to build a rocket plane that flies so fast (7 km per sec) and can climb so high that it stays up all of its own accord and circles the Earth like the Moon (which is why it is also called an "artificial moon"). From such a plan one could view entire continents like on a map. Einstein seems to be very skeptical regarding the practicability. Einstein, by the way, is still not going out, but does feel a bit

¹ Gitti was the daughter of a chance acquaintance Rudi and Marianne made near the end of the war, an elderly woman from Brünn whom they met while taking cover in an air-raid shelter during the Allied bombing of Vienna. She turned out to be the sister of a business friend of KG's father. Gitti "later was taken up by our family as a sister, and remains my best friend," Rudi wrote in 1992: Köhler et al., eds., *Kurt Gödel: Warheit und Beweisbarkeit*, 1:60

stronger now, which you can hear by his voice. In New York there is supposed to be a German movie theater, but I have never been there. There have always been good American films, and of the foreign ones the French have (with certain justification) the reputation here for having the greatest artistic value. That the Austs. today often do not want to give their colleagues abroad what is due them is probably true, and in part is motivated by material reasons. For in fact, since the current Austrian government clearly views the Hitler regime as unlawful despotism, it ought to be obliged to rescind all firings from the universities. In most of the cases the victim would likely forego returning, but clearly the offer has not even been made them. You write about the ingratitude of the German people toward Bismarck; but is it really so certain that removing him meant the German people were on the side of Wilhelm II? So, I have ranted enough for one day.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. The things for you both were brought by someone from here who was moving to Vienna.

From Adele all the best and much love at Christmas and New Year. She is glad that Rudi praised her little packages.

Princeton, 5.I. 1947.

23.

Dear Mama!

Enclosed I am sending you the promised layout of our apartment, in a scale of 1:100, i.e., 1 centimeter of the drawing corresponds to one meter. As you see, the apartment takes up the entire upper floor of the building, so that it has windows on every side. That is very pleasant here in the summer; in a room without cross-draft you can scarcely exist in this muggy heat. The steps lead down into the hall, which is 2 x 4 m in size. At the upper end of the steps is no door. The little niche at the right below in the studio was originally also a closet, but we had the door taken out and treat it as part of the room, mainly so that I can use the window to air out the room.

The last letter I have from you is N° 38. N° 37 has not arrived to date. Or did you just get the numbering wrong? Adele already received her book. She devoured it, reading day and night, in 3 days. She thought it was excellent,

especially the fact that heroine was just as discontent with the situation here. She is in the process of writing Rudi a letter. I haven't received my book yet. Did you send them off at the same time? Morgenstern recently showed me a newly released book about Vienna in which the events during the war and also the destruction from bombings were described in detail. Except there is one notable exception: not a word about the number of people who died in them. Are any figures known? I hope you have by now at least received some of the Christmas packages. A pity that the flour sent in May had partially gone moldy. Adele sent 5 kg by mail in Sept. Did that at least get to you all right? In Dec. I ordered another Care-Package for you two and will put another package with Klim powdered milk among other things in the mail to you. What kind of affiliation does the sanatorium in Pötzleinsdorf have? does it have something to do with a church or a religious order? Einstein has been coming to the Institute again now for a week and is also otherwise entirely himself again. When I visited him at home, sometimes he did make quite a weakened impression on me, so that I was quite concerned about him. If you say it is good that the Americans possess the power, I would sign off on that unconditionally only in the case of Roosevelt's America. The fact that Roosevelt was no longer able to influence the peace talks and the foundation of the new league of nations truly belongs to the most distressing facts of our century. But one can, if one knows the details of the circumstances surrounding his death, not resist the feeling that there may be some unsolved mystery behind it. He died just a week before he was supposed to open the first meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco, without his doctors fearing any inkling of something dire. It is quite telling, too, the telegram that his wife sent to her sons at the front: "He did his duty to the last moment, which he would expect of you too, that you do yours." Even more strange is that an opposing newspaper would feature an essay about the "Roosevelt Era" in which it was treated as something past, and also on the front page a slightly caricatured picture of Roosevelt with an ornamental decoration that looked like a heavenly wreath of rays. Even if his death occurred from natural causes, the impression remains as if a secret power had taken issue with his further plans and declared: This far and no further. Roosevelt would have surely had the opportunity to influence world history in a decisive fashion during the peace negotiations. If you stand before the Capitol in Washington you really get the feeling that this is the place from which the world is governed or at least could be governed. And Roosevelt was surely the man to forge new pathways in international relations. He placed the economy in America on entirely new foundations and was (as you perhaps know) the only president to date who was elected 4 times, i.e. for 16 years. (Prior to him no one had lasted

longer than 2 elections.) So, now I have written enough about politics for today.

Here in Princeton the Institute now has built buildings with 38 apartments; mainly for the temporary members who come here for 1 or 2 semesters, because it is otherwise scarcely possible any more to find available apartments. The funny thing about it is that these are wooden buildings that stood in another city before, and were brought here in their component parts and then put back together again. Adele hears nearly nothing from home anymore, so that she doesn't even know anymore what to think.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. Just now your letter N° 39 arrived. No trace of 37.

Princeton, 19./I. 1947.

24.

Dear Mama!

Today is Sunday once again and it is now 14 days since I last wrote you. I hope you got that letter with the layout of the apartment and am quite curious what you will have to say about it. Our Sundays always take very much the same course. We get up about noon and after we eat I do the weekly accounting and read the paper. I only subscribed to the Sunday paper (the New York Times) by the way and find even that to be almost too much. The Sunday edition is especially full. It is made up of 9 "Sections" and due to the gigantic format of newspapers here you can easily calculate that the contexts of a single Sunday edition would fill a book of some 500 pages of standard format. But it only costs 10 cents. An overview of the events of the week is of course always part of it. It is now 9:30 in the evening and I just read your letter N° 39 (N° 37 still hasn't arrived yet) again and want to first answer your questions. For Christmas, Morgenstern was at our place, who is by the way the only one we see frequently. The Christmas tree stood in the living room in the semi-circular section between the windows. The tree was unfortunately not completely symmetrical but Adele had the good idea of putting so much tinsel on it that the lack of symmetry disappeared. This immense amount of tinsel with the colorful electric "candles" beneath it also had a completely new kind of lighting effect that wasn't half bad. On New Year's Eve we thought of you

at 6 pm (when it was midnight for you). As far as my stomach goes, you don't have to be afraid that I am eating too little; I think it is more like too much (which by the way is a constant source of contention between me and Adele). Anyway, I believe that many more illnesses are caused by overeating than by undereating, and my opinion is confirmed by the mortality rates that demonstrate the average lifespan decreases with increasing weight. If you write that at times of greatest deprivation your stomach fared the best, that seems to prove the same thing, for it scarcely could have been caused by worse food but rather less. It would probably be the healthiest if one always stopped eating before being completely full (but I do not do that). For breakfast I have coffee with white bread, butter, and jelly. I also get enough exercise because I walk to and from the Institute every day, which is $\frac{1}{2}$ hour each way, and besides that often to the University in the afternoon or into town, which is $\frac{1}{2}$ hour at least each way. Enclosed I am sending you a picture of the building the Institute is in, which is quite far outside the town where it is green. My office looks out to the back of the building and it is very lovely, even bigger than our living room and also has a very nice view onto a huge meadow with the edge of the woods on the horizon. But I believe I wrote you that 5 years ago and already sent you a picture of the Institute. Asking about my *Dozentur* in Vienna doesn't make much sense since I have accepted a permanent position here and a position in Vienna is not compatible with a residence abroad. Up till now we have not had a single line from Aunt Mizzi directly. She surely would have written to us when she received the package. The newspaper clipping that you sent me in the last letter was very interesting. Here you hear all sorts of different things about "Denazification." The continuing threats of famine probably have more a political than actual reason behind them.

I will close for today and remain with 1000 *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele

Many regards to Rudi. I will write to him in the next few days.

Princeton, 4. Feb. 1947.

To Herrn
D^r Rudolf Gödel
Vienna VII. Lerchenfelderstrasse 81.

Dear Rudi!

I would be very grateful to you if you could intercede regarding my wife's entrance visa by presenting the enclosed letter of the Austrian Mission in Washington, D.C. to the Viennese authorities. The purpose of her intended journey to Vienna is, as you know, to visit her mother, who is nearly 80 years old and, as is indicated in a physician's statement issued in Vienna, in a grave state of health. A prompt settling of the matter would therefore be urgently desired. My wife is an Austrian citizen and submitted her request for issuance of a visa utilizing the required forms in septuplicate already on 8 Oct. 1946 at the Austrian Mission in Washington.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

Princeton, 16./II. 1947.

25.

Dear Mama!

In the past weeks I wrote 2 times to Rudi and you were somewhat neglected as a result. Since my last letter to you, 3 letters from you have arrived (Nº 40, 41, 42). I just sorted all your letters and see that they already comprise quite an impressive volume. Nº 37 seems to have been lost for good and in your last letter there had been yet again 2 lines cut out with scissors. Apparently in it you had complained about the poor supply of food. I don't exactly know if one should believe that this mutilation is by the censor. This kind of censorship is certainly quite new to me anyway. I hope you have received the third Christmas package (to Rudi with butter and oatmeal) and Gitti the Care-Package. My order blank cannot have gone missing because Care always sends a confirmation; though recently it is often 14 days or longer after the order has been submitted. That is the reason the date on your receipt is different by exactly that much from that of the actual order; but at any rate the package to Gitti should definitely arrive during February (according to

information that Care itself sent me) and the two to you at latest the beginning of March or the end of March. I have also heard a great deal here about your shortage of coal. I also believe that is the result of poor organization, as Rudi alluded to in his last letter. You will probably have heard that even in England large coal and electricity shortages abound, which cannot be due to economic necessity there. How is it looking there with Austrian petroleum sources? At any rate I am happy that in your apartment there is good heating. I am sorry that Carl Gödel has become so frail. You would not guess it by his handwriting. I was also quite surprised that he is already so old; I would have guessed him to be approximately 70. When and why did Wessely¹ end up in a mental hospital? Won't she resume her theatrical career in the near future? What kind of a person is this Havelka you write about? He must be quite nice if you still socialize with him though no further "business connections" exist between you. Now to your questions. The small hall of our apartment is for us alone, otherwise it wouldn't work without a door up at the top of the stairs. The building we live does not exactly give a villa-like impression. It does have a large veranda at the entrance, but a flat roof; but with protection from the rays of the sun so that our apartment still isn't overly warm in the summer (insofar as that is even possible.) The relocating of houses is an American specialty. The university is now constructing a new library and the house that stood in that spot (a wooden house not much smaller than the one in which we live) was simply moved just as it was about 100 m away. In December the mathematical part of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the university took place. I also gave a lecture² during it and then a picture of every (i.e. ca. 100) mathematicians from all parts of the country who had taken part was photographed. Unfortunately I cannot send the picture to you because it is 50 x 30 cm in size. The things that Adele doesn't like about this country I will possibly write to you sometime soon. This letter would otherwise get to be too long. I am curious to find out what Rudi will hear from the Viennese agencies. It would be particularly interesting to find out if Adele's forms have arrived and what is up with the telegram that the Austrian Mission acts as if were the only thing required (without the forms) by itself. Today (17.II.) your letter N° 43 arrived, which I will answer at length soon. I am sorry that I totally forgot

¹ Paula Wessely, popular Austrian stage and screen actress. She supported the Nazi regime and in 1942 appeared in an anti-Polish Nazi propaganda film, for which she was briefly banned by the Allies after the war

² "Remarks before the Princeton Bicentennial Conference on Problems in Mathematics," 17 December 1946, *Collected Works*, 2:150–53

Rudi's birthday and I wish him belatedly all the best. How is it going with his gall bladder? Another postal package will be sent off very soon.

Thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt
[in Adele's hand, vertically in margin:] Warm regards from the
Hausdrachen.¹

Princeton, 16./III. 1947.

26.

Dear Mama!

A few days ago your letter № 44 arrived; we are already anxious what we will hear from Rudi about Adele's visa. His letter to Adele got here too, but the second book for her has not yet. I got the book about Vienna and thank him heartily for it. Of Thirring's books none have arrived yet. You will have hopefully already received the Care-Packages. I ordered Rudi's two requested Tracont-packages (P.u.L.) 14 days ago. This company makes a very good impression on me. I hope that these packages will go quicker, and also the content is especially well suited to someone (like all of us) who does not have a particularly good digestive system. Since my last letter we sent off another 5 kg postal package. Adele hopes that she will be able to get another 1 m of your fabric, even though it is no longer in stock at the store when she bought it. Don't worry about the cost of the packages we send. That is a given, nothing more. Einstein has now fully recovered his health. The state of weakness he experienced for a time was apparently not so much the consequence of any illness so much as it was due to the doctor's examination. He had to consume so much water at one time and down all kinds of concoctions for X-rays. I have not heard a thing regarding a Konetzung-Lorenz affair and could not find out anything from anyone else either. What is it all about? Regarding Rudi's coming here I was told that that is probably most easily accomplished via an exchange, i.e., that someone here would simultaneously get a position at a Viennese institute. There is an organization just for that purpose here that arranges those kind of exchanges. But before I contact them it would be good if Rudi could give me more detailed materials (regarding his current and former positions and about the job possibility that someone from here would

¹ Literally, "house dragon," humorous term for "battle-ax" or "nagging wife"

have over there). This sort of things, however, will likely not be possible before there is a treaty with Austria, but that is supposed to soon come to pass. The Institute of Medicine at Princeton is more generally biological and concerns itself primarily with research on viruses, so it would scarcely be suitable for Rudi. What Adele doesn't like about here is first and foremost the apartment; she would just like to be in a brand-new or recently built building, but she also has a particular aversion to the building where we live. Aside from that she hates life in a small town and the fact that Trenton is only a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour from here and New York only 1 hour is no compensation for her. The main reason for her discontent may well be that she is separated from her people with whom she spent all her time in Vienna. She finds it very difficult to connect with people here. Her main pleasure is dressmaking. Today she spent her Sunday, e.g., making an old evening gown into a new spring frock that (as always) turned out astonishingly chic. By the way, she now has a new vanity with a round mirror of 1 m in diameter with which she will be "happy" for a while. It is terrible how many people I already have to write and I am just not getting around to it. Carl Gödel is among them. But I have to write a contribution for a book¹ that has to be done in the next few weeks. For some time now I have done a lot of preparing for it, but the subject interests me very much.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards also from Adele
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Many regards to Rudi from Adele and me. She is already looking forward to the book and will write soon. Please ask Rudi to send the letter from the Austrian Mission back, if he doesn't need it any longer.

¹ A revised version of the paper he presented at the Princeton bicentennial conference on 17 December 1946 on mathematical provability; the planned volume of the proceedings was never published and Gödel's paper did not appear in print until 1964

Princeton, 27./III. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed I send you the desired Meinl-voucher¹ as well as Kontroll-Coupon. Did you get both the packages sent via Tracont?

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

Princeton, 10./IV., 1947. 26a.

Dear Mama!

Don't be mad if I write only a few lines to you today. Many thanks for your letters N° 45, 46, 47 and the Easter card. I hope I will get around to replying to them in detail soon. Currently there is a telephone strike here which further complicates planning for Adele's trip. Perhaps we will have to travel to Washington again.

With thousand *Bussis*

Your Kurt.

Princeton, 10./IV. 1947. 26b.

Dear Rudi!

Above all Adele and I thank you heartily for your intervention in the matter of her visa. Hopefully you did not have too much trouble with it. Adele now has her passport and the Austrian entry permit and even the French and the Swiss transit visa. She has also reserved her ticket for the ship already. However, it is not a particularly good ship, but one on a passenger steamer that was retrofitted from a troop transport ship (Marine Flasher), but these are

¹ Meinl was a well-known Viennese supplier of coffee and fine foods, and had also established an international banking business. The Meinl vouchers ("Meinl-Bon") KG refers to were certificates denominated in dollars that could be used in Vienna to order food parcels dispatched from America

currently the only ships on which you can get a ticket quickly. In the case of the large passenger steamers you have to wait till July or September. The ship departs on 18./IV. from here and is supposed to be in Havre on the 27./IV. Adele has already sent ahead the bulk of her luggage with Ostraco (to her mother). All she needs now is the exit- (and re-entry) permit for her, about which they told us back in Washington that she could get immediately after issuance of her passport and the other visas. We wrote about it 8 days ago, but have not received any answer yet. For the time being, I unfortunately cannot accompany her. All the regrettable reasons that I told you about last Fall are still the case. As I can glean from Mama's letters, you both have no great desire to come here either. I can understand that, because it would certainly be a very expensive enterprise, even if living here (as long as you remained in Princeton) wouldn't cost you two anything.* Now I at any rate would like to see first how Adele's trip goes, and can decide all the rest accordingly.

I thank you heartily for your letters of 12./II, 13./III. and 15./III. as well as the book of Thirring's about the atom bomb and the booklet about the destruction in Vienna. Strange, that in the latter the worst-damaged buildings are shown only in pre-war photos. Adele says to say a hearty thank you for the book as well, she already read it and liked it very much indeed. As I can see from Mama's letters, the Tracont-packages really did arrive very quickly. How did you two like the content?† The Meini-l-voucher I ordered immediately after receiving your letter. It arrived within 2 days and I sent it on the 1./IV. via airmail, registered mail to you. I already got a very nice thank you letter from Gitti. How is it looking with the villa and with our apartment?

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

* and I could also poss. contribute something to the travel costs

† If you want me to I can send a few more.

PS. We were very surprised how promptly your intervention had an effect. You must have a special patent on how to deal with Austrian officials.

Princeton, 27./IV. 1947.

27.

Dear Mama!

Now 4 letters have already piled up here from you (Nº 45–48), which I will now all answer at the same time. Above all hearty thanks for your and Rudi's

birthday congratulation. The year since my last birthday has once again passed astonishingly quickly. It does not seem that terribly long to me since I left home, even though it is actually going on eight years. I hope that the current trip.. and other “conditions” will not last that much longer now. The continuing postponements of Adele’s departure are really quite a strange thing. Every few days we get a telegram from the shipping line* that the departure of the ship has been further delayed. Currently it is supposed to leave on 2 May. It was (supposedly) damaged en route to her in a storm and has to be repaired. I do hope however that it does not drag out interminably; if only due to the telegram fees, that after all [*half of line cut out by censor*]. These army ships are also infamous for their prices. They are more expensive (for female passengers, who clearly want to be a little more comfortable) than tourist class on an elegant passenger steamer, and if one questions the reason, you get the reply: because you can leave immediately at any time (as one sees). The fact that not a single one of the Care-Packages from 14 April has arrived yet is also really scandalous. Do you actually prefer Meinl-certificates or the Swiss packages or our self-packed packages? Adele recently sent off a postal package to you both. She also sent in advance quite a bit of food for herself. The telephone strike here continues. The papers for Adele’s exit visa we had to arrange for one after another in New York. Therefore we were in New York very often lately, which had its advantages, if not for our pocketbook. Due to the exit visa we had to take another trip to Washington, where we did manage to get it immediately. How are you doing, health-wise? In your last letters you complained of a variety of things. My stomach has made itself noticed again recently in an unpleasant fashion. Einstein appeared in a movie here once and one sees many pictures of him in illustrated magazines, but mostly they are not good likenesses of him. It can scarcely be possible that he would be coming to Vienna. What would he do there of all places? The Moscow negotiations have unfortunately come to a sad end [*half of line cut by censor*] of the government here is truly disgusting. The play of which you sent me a critique I imagine to be very interesting in content but this attempt at exaggerated satirical portrayal is generally not something I like. I tend to prefer some “futuristic” (meaning here, surrealist) movies with abstract symbolism. But one sees them very seldomly. Don’t be mad that I haven’t written to you in so long, I hope that the letter to Rudi made it up to you somewhat.

Thousand *Bussis* and much love
ever Your Kurt

* the last was the fourth

Princeton, 12./V. 1947.

28.

Dear Mama!

When this letter arrives, at least I hope, Adele will have long since happily arrived. The ship "Marine Flasher" did leave on 2 May after 5 cancellation telegrams; whether it arrived as scheduled is of course a different question. It left at the exact same time as a sister vessel, probably in case it should take a notion to sink. I am of course now very lonely; especially the Sundays are even lonelier than they already were. But I do have so much to do with my work so that not much time is left to dwell on it. Morgenstern is very nice and makes an effort to provide me with diversions. The day before yesterday he invited me to dinner in a nearby town with the funny name of "Cranbury" (i.e. red currant). But it is really a very charming little town and the whole region is very pleasant. There is a lot of agriculture there and you see large fields with crops, which is quite rare here. But the farmhouses are palatial compared to ours. The crops are naturally tended by tractors and everything looks very proper, like on a chess board; the furrows look as if they've been drawn with a ruler. The restaurant where we ate has been in existence for almost 200 years and is known for its good food. It was really quite excellent. Soon we want to take a daytrip to the seaside. Everything is all budded out in spring green and today it was really hot. Yesterday it was still so cold that you had to turn on the heat. The telephone strike here is still not over. It increases of course the already enormous difficulty in getting a servant. Up to now one was here who is very capable and nimble but who only has time now and then when she happens to be free. I think more than once a week really isn't necessary anyway. I usually eat in a restaurant and the little bit of dishes that I need I can wash up with hot water myself right after the meal and let dry on a rack; it does not take much time. Making beds is a healthy gymnastic exercise and I do not have anything else to do after all. Your and Rudi's letter of 20 and 21 April arrived. I already ordered the Care-Package and the two sugar packages. The former will probably take forever again, though. Adele had sent ahead a great deal of food for herself and taken along a handbag full, too. So she will be set for the first bit and in a few days I will send her another Meinl-voucher. I am quite curious what kind of an impression Vienna will make on her. You two have slowly gotten accustomed to the new conditions. I did not write you yet that a new director is at the Institute (that is, starting in the Fall). His name is Oppenheimer, a physicist and still relatively young and was instrumental in a leading position in the construction of the atom bomb. The previous director Aydelotte is already over 65.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 12./V. 1947.

28a.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your letter of 20./IV. I hope that the matter of our apartment has now been finally settled by Adele. At any rate, I gave her a power of attorney to take with her. I do not know if, in the case that the Metz couple moves out, you are interested in having the apartment (in order to possibly exchange for one for Mama) and if it is currently even possible to transfer it over to you.* In that case Adele would of course consider you above all others. I also wanted to ask you to please tell me how much is currently in my account. I think it would be indicated that Adele would use up these schillings before I send something from here. Regarding the expenses of a potential trip of yours to here, I am sure the necessary dollars (in exchange for schillings) could be made available to you if you came here via an exchange. I only fear that such an exchange is now scarcely possible any longer though I have been told that officially “intellectual collaborative work with Austr. has now already been reinstated to its full extent.” The book by Friedell¹ hasn’t arrived yet. I will write soon in more detail

With warm regards

Your Kurt

* I assume that, as long as the Metz’s are living there, that this would not be possible by any means.

Princeton, 26./V. 1947.

29.

Dear Mama!

Adele has been away 3½ weeks now and I still have no direct news from her, only Rudi’s telegram. I am really quite curious to learn something of her “travel impressions” in today’s Europe. You two probably have already heard details. Here there is not much that is new. This week a new servant is to come

¹ Egon Friedell (1878–1938), Viennese actor, theater critic, historian, and philosopher. He leapt to his death from an upper floor of his house a few days after the Anschluss, when he saw two SA men knocking on his door, and feared—incorrectly, as it turned out—that they had come to arrest him

who was recruited for me by the Institute. She made a very good impression on me on the phone. She only has time once a week, but wants to take on the job permanently. With my stomach I am feeling better already, since I was very careful about food in the past few weeks and often eat dairy dishes. Many thanks for your letter № 49. I don't understand Mother Porkert's being annoyed by Liesl going away. She has to live from something after all and supposedly also brings food and heating fuel with her when she comes back. Her daughter Hilda¹, who probably has a pension from her husband after all, can care for her just as well. Now Adele will probably be at her mother's, since that was the main reason for her trip after all. I also assume that she is living there, and so I will write to that Langeasse² address. So Rudi treated the wife of a high-up in the Ministry! But how could a granddaughter of Emperor Franz Joseph marry there? I did not know that Emperor Fr. J. had grandchildren; you need to explain it to me more closely. In New York we didn't do anything unusual, just saw a couple good movies (among them 2 French ones), that never came to Princeton. We never go to the theater. There are often movie versions of good novellas and plays, sometimes even with exactly matching dialogue. By the way it is also quite interesting and exciting just to take a walk in New York. Everything, not just the buildings, is colossal. Adele frequently spent entire days in the department stores just looking at all the things. That kind of department store is like a whole city and has hundreds of thousands of customers in one day. Regarding Adele's "bad mood" toward you, I must unfortunately say that Adele seems to be not quite normal in her relationship to other people. She is often deadly insulted about things that a normal person would not even take notice of or which are certainly not ill-intended, possibly even well-intended. Also her dislike towards the landlord of our apartment completely exceeds the boundaries of normalcy, even if she possibly does justifiably complain about some things. In general she often has, in my opinion, completely false ideas about other people, especially in the sense of some animosity directed toward her. Aside from that, here she has clearly shown symptoms of hysteria (in the sense of an illness, not just stubbornness) and probably belongs in the care of a doctor for nervous disorders if only it were not so expensive and success so uncertain. I certainly hope that being with her mother and sister will have a positive effect on her and merely wanted to inform you just in case. Please of course do not tell her

¹ Adele's niece, daughter of her sister Liese

² Langeasse 67, Adele's parents' apartment (where Adele had also lived after separating from her first husband); it was just across the street from the apartment at Langeasse 72 where KG lived from July 1928 to November 1929, when they presumably met

under any circumstances anything of what I am writing you here; that would only make matters worse.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 26./V. 1947.

29a.

Dear Rudi!

I thank you heartily for the telegram about Adele's arrival and the book about Friedell that arrived recently. I did not know at all that he had committed suicide. He doesn't look Jewish at all in the pictures by the way. The selection of his writings is, as far as I have seen at this point, very well done so that a person can get a very clear picture of him. He seems frequently to have determined his opinions according to the principle of the greatest absurdity. But in that, as we stand at the turning point of a new era, he may have been right.

With warm regards
Your Kurt.

P.S. The package with rice I will send off in the next few days.

Princeton, 8./VI. 1947.

30.

Dear Mama!

On your last letter you did once get the number wrong, because I got 2 letters N° 49. Also you dated it 19 April instead of May. I assume the sudden arrival of Adele was to blame for this confusion. What all did she tell you about the trip? She goes into so very little detail in her letters about it. She didn't even write about the fact that and how the cigarettes (and what else?) disappeared from her luggage. I only learned that (but also not exactly) via a letter that Morgenstern got from his people. The ship must have had 2 days' delay if she didn't arrive in Vienna until the 15th. We had figured in one day

for the seat reservation in the train. I am glad her things arrived; especially because of the food. I sent one of the Meinl-vouchers 14 days ago. Adele writes that Vienna made a terrible impression on her, but she found you two looking well and even her mother in a good state, which after all is the main thing. How did you get along with Morgenstern's relatives? He flew from New York yesterday but will stay in Paris a week first and a week in Switzerland (or maybe Germany). On the way back he wants to travel around all of Europe (from Italy to Denmark). Our apartment is naturally not as elegantly appointed as Rudi's. We did not even know at first that we would be permanently staying here and so bought many things secondhand and piecemeal just as we needed them. Then we once had bad luck with a new bedroom set. I could not stand the smell of the varnish and the wood, so Adele sold it again. The only elegant furnishings are in the living room. I am sending you 600 cigarettes today. I sent off a package to Adele already a week ago. Today is Sunday again. Outside it is very gloomy and it keeps raining; but so cold that I had to heat the apartment with the kitchen gas stove. Just now I also hear the central heating clanking that hasn't been in use for weeks. Yesterday a person could have stood a fur coat. The new servant stood me up, but the old one was here again. In the restaurant where I always eat now, everything tastes excellent to me. Yesterday I had a really exquisite pork roast with spinach. Today I had beef soup out of a can at home and some canned chicken broth that were both as good (or better) than fresh. On Sundays the menu everywhere costs twice as much and the places are usually overcrowded.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 8./VI. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

I am very anxious to see what will become of our apartment. Adele writes me that she gave notice to Metz. How is that even possible at present? The book by Colerus is very entertainingly written and he seems to have a good eye for the overarching interrelations, although in individual areas much is wrong. The Thirring book about the atom bomb is, as was to be expected, very well laid out and clear. As to your question what kind of books I like to read, I just wanted to tell you that I am especially interested in Leibniz. If you happen to see something biographical about him that has appeared in the last few years (except for Kuno Fischer and Colerus, which I know) do please send it to me. I also wanted to ask you if it would be acceptable if I sent you (possibly along with Porkerts) 50 kg of flour. That is unfortunately the smallest quantity

that one can have sent already packaged up* (even by telegram, a lot of it is already stockpiled in Vienna). It costs as much as 1½ Care-Packages or 3 5-kg sugar packages. It is a good idea of yours to talk to Morgenstern about a possible trip here.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

* I believe that is preferable due to the risk of it being broken open due to rain or by some other cause.

Princeton, 4./VII. 1947.

31.

Dear Mama!

Now for the longest time I have not had news from either you or from Rudi (your last letter is № 51 and Rudi's last is a page of your letter № 50 of the 25 May). I surmise that something has gone missing, because I had actually been expecting Adele's visit would have given you material for writing. I also don't know what kind of packages to send you. The 4 that Rudi mentioned to me in May have long been sent off of course. Regarding the Meinl-vouchers he wrote I should not send any for the time being. I also don't know if you want to have the 50 kg of (white) flour that I wrote about in my last letter. So today I am sending another Care-Package and a package from the "Standard Exchange Co" (who also sends the flour). The latter should not take much longer than this letter since these packages are already stockpiled in Vienna and are ordered by airmail. As to the rest I will await your message. I assume that Morgenstern has been in Vienna a while by now and am curious what you will learn from him. From Adele I finally got two detailed letters and was highly astonished about the conditions on the ship that she wrote about. I really wouldn't have thought that possible on an American ship. I have the impression that Adele is quite happy in Vienna in some regards and not in others, and so she writes that in no case does she want to stay ½ a year. But she does not give me any exact date, so for the time being I cannot arrange anything for her return trip. Here there is not much that is new. For the last 14 days I finally have a consistent servant, whom the landlord got me, and who apparently is good and reliable in every regard. Einstein is currently doing a multi-week course of bedrest that the doctor recommended to him, even

though he feels quite well. So I am now all alone and rarely speak privately to anyone at all. It is not true that Hochwald is a cancer researcher. He seems to primarily have worked on the treatment of pneumonia and hereditary allergic disease. In the matter of the villa, which Rudi promised to write me about, I have not heard any more details. Please do not be angry that I still have not sent you a fountain pen. It is really bad luck with that. One that I ordered was sent back again because I did not pick it up right away, then they sent the wrong one. In New York I was recently in three department stores where they only have really cheap ones and really expensive ones. I will be going to New York again very soon and will go to a special store.

Thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to you and Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. The Standard packages are delivered to your doorstep for free

Princeton, 27./VII. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed I am sending you both the desired coupons. Unfortunately there is a fee subtracted on the Tracont-voucher of two dollars that I knew nothing about, and the Meinl branch office in error sent 20\$ for me instead of the 25\$ I ordered. I will balance it out next time. Did you receive the sugar package of Standard Exchange Co. sent on 4./VII.? Warm thanks for your two extensive letters of 4. and 17. July and for helping Adele out with money. I will send a Meinl-voucher to her for 40\$ at the same time. I sent her another for 30\$ on 10. July and hope that she has received some of the packages in the meantime. Mama's letter up to and including N° 54 and the card of the Rax arrived. I will write in detail soon.

With warm regards
Your Kurt.

P.S. Thousand *Bussi* to Mama.

Princeton, 31./VII. 1947

32.

Dear Mama!

Now 3 letters are once again lying here from you (Nº 52–54), whose replies I am finally getting around to. Above all I was happy that you two had such a nice summer vacation and am pleasantly surprised that outside of the big cities the consequences of the war are apparently scarcely to be felt anymore. Why doesn't Austria at last build back up its tourism? How were the prices, the visit, and the clientele? Were there also foreigners? The card from Kronichhof has not arrived yet, but the one from the Rax did. Yes these 16 years have flown by, but nothing up there has changed much in this time at all? It is after all a good sign that once again there is enough coal to run the Rax Train. How is it going in this regard with the elevators in Vienna buildings? It surprises me that no bomb damage was caused to the Rax, since there has to have been an observation station there. Do Kobenzl and Kahlenberg also look peace-like now again? Rudi's (or rather Rosenberg's) letter regarding the villa was something I found particularly encouraging. I did say right from the beginning that this confiscation of your share would not possibly end up being anything final. One gets from the brief and precise kind of writing of Rosenberg the impression that the matter is in good hands. I assume that Rosenberg's bills are also relatively low. Re Adele's return trip I have not heard anything specific, but Morgenstern spoke in detail about this question with her and informed her of the possibilities; so I hope to hear something soon. I believe that she does actually not want to come all that soon (primarily because of her mother). She writes nothing about the family disputes that you alluded to; but this matter with Herr Mötz does seem to be somewhat mysterious. Above all I do not understand how the divorce proceedings of the Mötz couple stand and if and how it has to do with the possibility of being given notice. Please write me if you know anything about it. I am glad that you both get along with Morgenstern so well and am completely of your opinion that he really is an especially likeable person. Perhaps you could have some nice social interaction with his people. How is his mother doing? I hope you got the two checks from Meinl and Tracont that I sent on 28./VII. and also sent Adele hers on the same day. I don't understand why neither your nor Adele's cigarettes have arrived (after 2 months). I visit Einstein every week, he looks good and is continuing his work as usual but is

not going away this year. But I would maybe yet try to go to the seaside in August.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Many regards to Rudi whom I will write to in detail in the next few days

Princeton, 3./VIII. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your two letters of 4. and 17./VII. So now I am finally somewhat oriented about the situation with the matter of the villa. What Rosenberg writes (that the state cannot acquire any larger rights than Mama possesses) seems sensible to me and therefore I believe that the matters do not stand so unfavorably. Why the entire rents went for repairs, without the taxes having been paid, is incomprehensible to me. Or are there also inflation rates in the Č.S.R.? I am as ever absolutely against selling the villa before the currency conditions are stabilized; for today one cannot know what becomes of the money received in a sale and indeed I am against a sale as a matter of principle as long as there are no really decisive reasons exist for doing so. What actually became of the remainder of the money that Mama still had in Brünn?

As to the food packages to you, it is naturally incomparably preferable to me to send Mama 20–25\$ in vouchers than to send food packages. Because one never knows exactly what you two need and whether the things are even good, and the things we package up ourselves cost time in addition that I currently have a hard time sacrificing since I already am losing a great deal of time during Adele's absence. I have sent Adele in the past 3 weeks 70\$ in checks and will continue doing so as you advised me. I do not know whether Adele (given her spending that you write of) will soon be in the position to pay her debts but you have to be a better judge of that.

The foreword to the Thirring political book that you wrote about on 6 April, which you said you were sending me, did not arrive. Do not go to any trouble for a book about Leibniz. I expressly wrote you, only in the case that you happen across something. The things that are available in bookstores or are easy to get will (with the exception of what has appeared since 1941)

likely be known to me. The only thing you could perhaps do would be to see, in a bookstore where you are a customer and can look into the annually released lists, if something and what about or by Leibniz has appeared since 1941. Here oddly enough the books and book lists from this time period are only to be had very incompletely. I am curious if Morgenstern might not have something positive to suggest about a trip here after all.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

P.S. Why are the new Care-Packages worse? Unfortunately I sent another in July but assume you will easily find someone to take it off your hands. The flour for Mama I already ordered.

P.S. It occurs to me that 1000 RM “hardship compensation” (in form of federal bonds) still exist that came during my absence. Of these, half belongs to me if (as I believe) an appreciation in value of the \$ federal bond occurred. Are these notes currently negotiable? and at what price?

Princeton, 24./VIII. 1947.

33.

Dear Mama!

Happy Birthday and I wish you all the best for the coming year in which we, I definitely hope, will indeed finally see each other again. It's been a very long time since I had any word from you. Your last letter is N° 55; I realize however that I have also written to you very little lately. That is due to the fact that now I often write to Adele and once last week a long one to Morgenstern week and once to Rudi. This on top of the correspondence about Adele's checks where often something goes wrong so that one has to request a refund etc. Also my work has tied me up more than usual in the last few weeks. Also I haven't heard from Adele in a whole 14 days and am worried that the dispute with her sisters she wrote me about or some other disagreements over the apartment in Hegelgasse are to blame. I hate every kind of litigiousness and what is going on in Hegelgasse is nothing but that. The fact that the apartment in Langegasse was so decrepit had to have been largely due to damages from the war? Have you still not received the 600 cigarettes that I sent you in June? and Adele hasn't got hers? I am still sitting here in Princeton. My work, that has been getting particularly interesting lately, has kept me from going

anywhere. Yesterday Oppenheim¹ (an acquaintance whom Adele has likely already told you about) drove me out to the seaside and I am quite tanned from that one day. The sun here is so hot like at home only in southern Italy and for that reason it is probably really better to go to the seaside in September; at least I hear from various quarters that that is most pleasant month for bathing, but I myself have not yet put it to the test. I don't know if you can imagine what bathing in the ocean is like; far different from in the Adriatic, in a certain sense more enjoyable but only for someone who has no fear of water. The surf is so strong that one has to constantly fight against the wave in order not to be pulled off one's feet. Yesterday it was particularly funny. The waves were 1–2 m high, each rolling in bigger than the one before. But one feels very refreshed after such a bathe. Except there is little occasion for actual swimming; except for further out but that is not permitted. When I tried it once 6 years ago I was immediately whistled back by a beach guard and do not do it anymore since then. Strangely enough one notices the waves scarcely at all further out; they only get that high near the coast. Because I like to swim, for the most part I prefer the salt water pools that all the larger bathing resorts have for this purpose. Actually the entire coast is one single enormous "bathing resort." Hundreds of kilometers long one town adjoins another without any recognizable border. You ask if a book about Ludwig II and Wagner would interest me. Yes, various things interest me but it is unfortunately impossible to find the time for so many and so diverse things. How did Rudi find the American food? Did you torment him with "Ice-cream" that as a matter of course belongs to any sizeable "dinner"? or with raw tomato juice that also tastes so excellent. The buildings in "Badhausgasse" that you write about finding depressing I found very picturesque (as far as I can recall). I like the angular architecture of such old buildings. A fountain pen will be sent off to you in the next few days. Hopefully the flour has arrived and is in accordance with your wishes.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

¹ Paul Oppenheim (1885–1977), German chemist and philosopher of science and a close friend of Einstein's in Princeton; he and his wife were well known for the Sunday lunches they hosted for local and visiting intellectuals and for his aid to German emigré scientists

Princeton, 28./IX. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed I am sending you a Meinl-voucher for \$35.-. The Tracont check will be sent to you by the company itself. It does not work any other way.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

P.S. By the way, I will send also you the copy of the Tracont checks just in case.

Princeton, 28./IX. 1947.

34.

Dearest Mama!

Can you believe it, your letter N° 56 finally did arrive with a four week delay. There was a note from the censor in it that the letter was kept so long because no return address was written on it. The newspaper clipping about Schrödinger and the Vienna University interested me very much. Your letters N° 57 and 58 also have arrived. Don't worry about me being in a bad mood or sick. I am fine, as always. Merely some horrific neuralgia on my scalp a day long; probably from a draft. Beyond that I finally finished off the manuscript of my latest work and because of that scarcely got around to anything else. I also turned down an invitation to a two-day car excursion with Morgenstern to the Pocono Mountains, north of New York.

I should not have sent you the copy of the Tracont check; it was meant only as a confirmation for me. But I had believed erroneously that the procedure is the same with the Meinl-vouchers. The new Meinl-voucher in the amount of \$35 is already here and I will send it tomorrow by registered mail. I wrote to Tracont already regarding the other one. The packages for U[ncle] Karl and A[unt] Mizzi I ordered in the beginning of Sept., but still haven't gotten any confirmation about them. I got a letter from Adele of the 20./IX. from Baden, about which I was very surprised as she only intended to stay there 14 days. Do you or Rudi know the Hotel Bristol? Regarding her return trip she only told me that she already has the ticket for the ship but not yet the visas. I am pleasantly surprised that she managed in August to get a spot for Nov. and on such a good ship, too. When we tried to get information here in April, all the spots on this ship were taken until December. That is quite

paradoxical. Einstein is completely his old self once again and comes to the Institute daily just like he used to. To say that the Princeton library is the largest in the world is slightly exaggerated, since here in the U.S.A. there are a number of libraries with over 2 mil. volumes, and three even with 5 mil. or more. Adele wrote something about you wanting to go to Pötzleinsdorf for rest. Are you not feeling well? I would not let unwritten letters cause you sleepless nights if I were you. If I did that I would never sleep again. Such superficialities are not what matters in the end, and those affected must realize that a person is not always in the mood for letter writing; just like you would realize it if the shoe were on the other foot. What is currently going on with Fritz Redlich, actually? Have you ~~actually~~ heard anything more specific about Wengefelds and Techet? And what is happening with Schreyer, e.g.? I still like to think back to those Wednesday evenings, even if it is so very long ago. Yes, when one gets older the childhood memories return with greater clarity.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. Many regards to Rudi and warm thanks for his letter of the 7./IX. and the list of the Leibniz books

Princeton, 21./X. 1947.

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed a Meinl voucher for \$30.– . Tracont informed me that they currently cannot give out vouchers; I don't know why. I had to write twice to get an answer though, hence the delay.

With warm regards
Your Kurt
Thousand *Bussis* to Mama

Princeton, 7./XI. 1947.

35.

Dearest Mama!

It is truly fathomless how long it has been since I have written to you. It has to do with the fact that I discovered in reading through my work, which I wrote to you about being finished with, that I was able to add a good deal, or say it better. The fact is that this time it is more a philosophical than a mathematical matter, namely the relationship of Kant to the Einsteinian theory of relativity, which is of course not all so clear and unequivocal as in pure mathematics. I chose this topic myself when I was asked to author a contribution to a collected volume¹ about the philosophical significance of Einstein and this theory; I could not very well decline. I am also not at all sorry that I accepted and chose this particular topic, for this question had interested me all along and its thorough examination also led to pure mathematical results, which I want to publish afterward; or maybe beforehand, for it is dependent on the editor when the Einstein volume will appear. A different pure mathematical work of mine (however only a synopsis of not very great significance) is currently in press right now². I wanted to write you this about my research work that you often ask about. Incidentally, I hope that Adele's return will mean some change of pace will enter my existence. You can imagine that I am hugely anticipating all she will tell me about. She doesn't write a thing, unfortunately; her last letter is from the 3./X. For that reason I also do not know how her preparations for travel have fared, but I hope that she arrives as per the itinerary. The fact that the matter of the apartment has not had a final resolution I am not at all happy with. How long is that going to drag out?? In your last letters there were unfortunately many more death notices, above all Techet's death. And yet he had such a happy marriage with Hilde. Was the piece of iron that came flying through the air really simply a coincidence? or perhaps the result of some political activity? Why Schreier died in a fall wasn't quite clear to me. You often said of him that he tended toward Communism and Czechdom, and now it's the Czech Communists who are coming to power. I remember now that you had once written about him and about Redlich but these things didn't stick in my memory because I couldn't quite believe it. Redlich was a half-Jew after all

¹ "A Remark about the Relationship between Relativity Theory and Idealistic Philosophy," for the volume on Einstein in the "Living Philosophers" series, reprinted in *Collected Works* 2:202–7; see also introductory remarks to Part 2 below, p. 97

² "What is Cantor's Continuum Problem," KG's contribution to a series of explanatory articles published in the *American Mathematical Monthly*; reprinted in *Collected Works*, 2:176–87

and I scarcely believe that there were gas chambers for them (they were also even conscriptable), quite aside from the fact that he had enough money and was intelligent. I think you have too poor an opinion of Rosenberg, and Bitschovsky would scarcely be the right one to represent our matter under these circumstances. That you've owed Else Biermann a letter since January isn't anything at all. The oldest letter that I owe an answer to arrived ca. 7 years ago. My head neuralgia wasn't due to mental overexertion but most likely due to the fact that I had had a window opened and the heat turned on (in the night) so that warm and cold air alternated. How is it going with your Austrian naturalization? Won't that be done soon? I will close for today and now intend not to let such long breaks occur in our correspondence. Your letters N° 59–62 all arrived. Many thanks for the newspaper clippings about Planck and Schrödinger about which I will write something more soon.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

Dear Rudi!

Heartfelt thanks for the book about Leibniz that arrived recently. Could you perhaps please get the two following books from the list of newly-released titles* about Leibniz: Holzer Hermann, Mathematik u. Philosophie bei Leibniz u. Descartes (1942) Diss., Jandl Ernst, Leibniz u. Kant (1943). I mean of course only if they are easy to procure. How is it going with the political book of Thirring's that should have appeared a long time ago? Many thanks for your letter of 7./IX. Unfortunately I did not get around yet to reply at length. My second Meinl-voucher has hopefully arrived.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

* This list was really very interesting for me.

Princeton, 9./XII. 1947.

36.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters of 10. and 22. Nov., which both are numbered 63. The censor unfortunately did not let the report of Uncle Karl's through. The fact that Adele got home fine with a week's delay you will have heard via our telegram to Mama Porkert. That was really an odd bit of bad luck that in that very moment unrest broke out in France. Luckily the passengers on the America could be taken via bus to Calais and then via ship to Dover and then by train to Southampton where they went on board the America. A further stroke of luck was Adele making a nice trip acquaintanceship on the train to Paris. She (or he) helped her out with advice, assistance, and money. So the actual full extent of the damage was merely the expensive stay in Paris (the Grand Hotel was apparently the only one where rooms were to be had), assuming the large bag that stayed behind in Paris will really be coming on the next ship on 19./XII. as Adele was promised. By the way I do not at all think that Adele looks bad, but that (if at all) she has changed for the better. She says that the weight she lost in Paris she was able to gain back on the ship but the loss cannot have been very great. Now she is already again working industriously in the apartment and fussing with equal fervor about the servant that I had.

I am sending you thousand *Bussis* for the nice alarm clock, that I always liked so well.* I am surprised how you can guess my wishes at such a great distance, and am only worried that you might be missing it. The case of Redl[ich] is now somewhat clearer to me after the report in your last letter. Clearly the company had cheated the government in taxes or some other way and was found out. Who knows who all had a hand in it. That does not seem like R. to me, but rather more like B[londiaux]. I do think you have a rather overly high opinion of B. Papa held him in high esteem in some regard, certainly rightfully so. But that was a completely different relationship after all. He clearly made a good profit from that company and therefore had every reason to put himself out, besides that he was supervised by Papa. Deference to Papa can surely not make up for that. I also do not believe at all that we need a particularly clever lawyer on our case, for that would help very little under these circumstances and could actually lead to ruining everything. Rather we need a lawyer who is in good standing with the current government and besides that has a certain level of decency and in this sense Rosenberg is exactly the right man. For Blondiaux was a true businessman and would not have given his daughter to a crook and also not to an idiot, because Blondiaux is not a stupid person; and a love match that certainly wasn't. I would therefore absolutely stay with Rosenberg, even aside from the fact that

changing lawyers has as little benefit generally as changing doctors. By the way, probably in a couple of months I will be a Citizen.

I wish you and Rudi a merry Christmas and a happy New Year and remain with thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

* and the charming Christmas card

P.S. The Christmas packages will probably arrive somewhat late.

Dear Rudi!

Heartfelt thanks for the book about Newton, which seems to be very good and thorough. Adele brought me two pictures of you in which you look wonderful. No trace of starvation visible. How do things stand with the villa? I am still against selling it. What is your opinion about Rosenberg? The conditions regarding electricity and other aids for your work that you write about are quite sad, but things must certainly be slowly improving by now. I was surprised that Adele was able to pay for the trip as far as Paris with schillings. Maybe one can soon do the same for ship's tickets and you two could come visit us here. I am enclosing a Meinl-voucher as Christmas present.

With warm Christmas greetings
Your Kurt.

From Adele Gödel to Rudolf Gödel

Princeton 3/I 1948

Dear Rudi!

I think it is time that I finally write you a few lines. I thank you for the charming New Year's card and hope that you received our telegram in time. Our Christmas and New Year's celebrations were lovelier this year than ever

and we hope that was also the case with you. My presents from Kurti this year made me very happy, as they are help in my housekeeping that I went without for a long time. The washing machine is colossal fun for me and I put in it everything possible for me to put in it, naturally. I always have to think about Ma whenever I do laundry, and I can already see her running it, and so a sigh always escapes me and I think to myself, ah if only you were already here. Ever since I got back to Princeton, we got only one single letter from my people. And that the cash finally got there we only know through a letter from Ma. So I am watching of course with bated breath for a letter from home. What all sort of things will there be to tell? My large suitcase also arrived fine, thank goodness, and in the next few days I will find out here about what that certain book costs and let you know then in my next letter. Certainly it will make you and M glad if I tell you that Kurti, since I have begun cooking for him again, has gained well on 3 Pound. Kurtl is by the way much tidier than before. I think the marriage-vacation brought that on. I myself also have managed to get all my curves back (unfortunately). I will have to fast for a while or otherwise stick to some kind of a diet otherwise I do not know where that will lead. Yesterday we were up until 2 in the morning and that is why Kurtl has been in the little nest all day today lazing about. He is right!

Dear Rudi, I too have my examination for my forthcoming U.S.A. citizenship happily behind me and so will become a citizen here at the same time as Kurti. Recently you two were with Herr Prof. Mstern. I hope that you took along for Miss M. her book that I asked you to return to her. The title is (*Drei in Amerika*). Please also convey greetings from me and I will let her hear from me quite soon. I hope Frau Morgenstern is doing better by now. Unfortunately I ultimately did not get around to anything more and I am of course very sorry too that I also could not manage a visit to Miss Gitti's dear Mama, for I was quite worn out by the end and nervous, even if I did not let anyone notice. Thankfully I did arrive here fine. That involuntary stay in Paris I did not find tragic and it was really fortunate that I had enough Dollars. Unfortunately, they are gone but I did in the end enjoy it some and therefore do not regret it at all. My rail ticket Paris-Cherburg I sent back to my Mama and asked her to bring it over to Cooks on the Ring. I think that she will get a reimbursement since I could not use the ticket due to the strike in Paris. Went from Paris by bus to Calais and from there by boat to Dover. Only there did I get on board the S.S. America. This detour cost me 1900 Francs. The S.S. America is a dream ship! You have to take no other ship. I tell you, she is sooooo lovely and elegant. This luxury defies description and the cuisine first-class sophisticated! On New Year's Eve evening we had ham, butter and Punch. – Later there was wine and little pastries. On the next day we had

sauerkraut, ham and dumplings. Kurterl claims it was a poem. In the evening Kurterl had porridge and milk. Every day at a quarter to 10 pm we listen to Mystery-Stories on the radio and afterward some music until circa 11 o'clock. Then we creep into our little nests and chat a bit about you all. So we often and often think of you all.

For today dear Rudi I will close. If you want to know anything more from us, just ask me in your next letter. So now many fond and very warm regards and kisses to Ma and you

Ever your Adele and Kurti.

*N.B. Also very warm regards and kisses to my Mammerl
[in KG's hand:] Warm regards and thousand Bussis to Mama. That we are already American citizens is an exaggeration. Your Kurt*

Princeton, 11.I. 1948.

37.

Dearest Mama!

Today it's Sunday again (4 in the afternoon) and we have just finished our midday meal. It was a wonderful roast chicken with rice and tomato salad and before that a soup with chicken liver. So you see that Adele takes good care of me. She has also baked countless Striezel and Gugelhups and all of them disappear at an unbelievable pace, and she doesn't skimp on the whipped cream. That's why I have already gained 2½ kg since her return. That obviously has the simple cause that I ate substantially less during her absence (thus for 7 months) than usual, especially the evening meal, usually just milk dishes. In that fashion my stomach-intestinal tract recovered to the extent that I can now eat almost any amount without any symptoms to speak of. But I managed to keep my weight fairly constant during the "diet period" so that all in all a significant increase resulted. If I repeat this regimen often I could would thus get fatter and fatter. Yes, one learns things all the time. Adele is now happier with her housework since our household has modernized a lot. We have a new vacuum cleaner that has ½ horsepower in strength that constantly sucks up mountains of dust from all corners, carpets and upholstered furnishings, so that one is surprised that something like that is even possible. Aside from that Adele also has a new electric washing machine that not only washes the laundry but also spins out the water in a rotating drum

so that she is spared both the trouble and the wringing-out. I only hope that the vibration doesn't cause the building to be damaged over time. Adele's bag has arrived (unharmed) and I was very happy with the Leibniz book that Rudi was so thoughtful as to give Adele from my library to take with her. We are not yet American citizens but we hope to be so in a few months, since we have the "exam" that one has to take about the American constitution and history behind us. Einstein and Morgenstern were (for me) the two witnesses who had to swear that the person in question had lived in America for the last five years and is "morally" suited to be an American citizen. You are right that Adele really did sail around the world. So between her departure from and return to Vienna she experienced one day more than those remaining behind in Vienna during the same time, which also proves a kind of relativity of time; however not the Einsteinian but certainly something similar. Adele fears that Rudi has lost a great deal of money through the currency regulation. But how was that actually; were the prices not also lowered accordingly? We spent Christmas alone this time and had a very large and lovely tree; but the real Christmas atmosphere isn't achievable if one is getting older for one and has no children in the house. As for R[edlich] and B[londiaux], I did not mean to say that B. had betrayed R. but rather only that he had provided the government with a reason (perhaps a remnant from back then) to intercede via some tax matters. I scarcely believe that anyone would have set their sights so draconically on a half-Jew without any reason. From Care I received some time ago a check for \$10, because supposedly the package to Gitti did not arrive; which I do not understand. From Miki I got a book about Vienna as a Christmas present. Adele told me that she was at your house sometimes. We got the letter of Aunt Mizzi's. Today a long letter from Uncle Carl (Gödel) came. How is Rudi? From Liesl we heard recently that he wasn't doing so well health-wise. Hopefully it was only one of his usual gallbladder attacks. How is Paula Wessely? Is she acting again?

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Enclosed a Meinl-voucher for \$25. Did you already get both the Christmas packages and the cigarettes? and did the rice*, which I sent in June, ever even get there? * ca. 4 kg.

Princeton, 24./I. 1948

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed I am sending you the Meinl-voucher for January. How does it stand with your Paris trip? The 25\$ I wired apparently is still in Paris.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

P.S. Many greetings also to Mama. Did the Sw. Fr. voucher that I ordered* on 18 Nov. from here arrive? * at Wikopharm, Zurich

Princeton, 17./II. 1948.

38.

Dearest Mama!

Apparently it is a kind of destiny that I write you not more often than once a month. Now I had on top of everything also a minor case of the gripe. It lasted only a couple of days but I still feel somewhat fatigued from it. Here there has been very abnormally cold weather this year and one day there was even fine powdery snow in the air that one swallowed right down into one's throat while breathing, and that is probably how I caught cold. As I glean from your last letters N° 66 and 67, the health of neither of you was tiptop either lately, unfortunately. Hopefully Rudi's gallbladder attack and eczema and your sprained foot were soon over. We had here a few occasions of quite nasty black ice and here they put down¹ next to nothing at all. I am always surprised about Einstein that he goes by foot to the Institute in such weather. But he apparently could match your lack of good sense in this regard. I managed to properly flop down myself recently but that's no danger for me. Though my hair is quite grey and getting greyer, my youthful elasticity has not diminished up to now; and when I fall I bounce back up like a rubber ball right back onto my feet. That is probably a remnant of my gymnastic limberness. Adele got a letter from Gitti but there isn't anything particularly heartening in it. She writes almost exclusively about the sad condition of her mother. And Adele gets nothing but complaining letters from her people, even though she really does much for them. Hilda is back in the hospital with a "lung dilation" (what is that, anyway?). The newspaper clipping about the situation in Germany was

¹ i.e., sand or cinders on the roads

very interesting and I was sorry it was so mutilated, and apparently right in the most interesting section. The depiction in the press of the current German conditions though ~~is not true~~ does not apply to the press here. It is more like the opinion of the author of the article. You write that Hilde's daughter is perhaps gifted. In what sense, for instance? I believe I once heard that differences of opinion have come up between Hilde and Techet because of her. Or am I wrong? How was Hilde's marriage, anyway? Did it stay as happy till the end as it was at the beginning? As for F[ritz] R[edlich], I can't believe that everything was taken away from the half-Jews too. If that had been the case, F.R. would have certainly known himself and would have gone abroad. And was old Redlich full Jewish? He certainly did not look it. I never saw Jordan here again. For Aunt Mizzi I will order a Care-Package at the same time as this letter. Enclosed a Meinl-voucher. Why do you say that I have changed drastically here?

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for your l[ast] letter of 20./I. The two books by Thirring have not arrived yet. I would not say that one cannot polemicize against Nietzsche. But it should be a poet or a man of similar ilk who does it. Please don't go to any effort or cost regarding the two works about Leibniz. Those things will probably end up in libraries here over time. I of course thought that one could order books which appeared not too many years ago just like that from the publisher. Is it possible that scientific treatises about such specialized questions are so quickly sold out? What do you hear about the matter of the villa? I hope that you are doing much better again health-wise and remain with warm regards

Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele.

Princeton, 16./III. 1948.

39.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 68, 69 and the enclosed newspaper clippings. There is surely much truth to what is said in the article about Einstein. I also believe that his fame is not only due to his scientific works. He

told me himself that oddly enough very simple folk from among commoners know his name and have a kind of superstitious reverence for him. He frequently even gets letters from children too. But talking to Einstein himself about the article I would view as rather indiscreet. Whose business is the inner life of a person? He apparently received the prize of the “undivided world” for his efforts to turn the new league of nations into a kind of “world government.” Regarding this question, there was recently a discussion between him and some Russian scholars in a magazine here, in which Einstein spoke with a downright delightful openness about the current conditions.

I am glad that Rudi is doing better again; but why did your sprained foot take so long in healing? That must have been quite the injury. With my gripe I only had a fever of 37.3 [99.1 F], but I had a bad sore throat. I did not lose much weight from it and since Adele’s return I have gained a total of 4–4½ kg. The coup in Czechosl. doesn’t necessarily have to turn out to be disadvantageous for matters of the villa. The modern Communists only confiscate large capital. I also believe that your worry over the possibility that correspondence with America could cease is unfounded. Provoking a second war so soon after the end of the first is not that easy. I haven’t heard anything more regarding the matter of our citizenship, but expect to be summoned very soon now. Just now your letter N° 70 arrived and I of course was very glad about a bit of gossip. The book about Einstein will probably not appear until his 70th birthday (i.e., March 1949). You don’t have to be worried about my gripe, as you can see from the above. That 10,000 Brünn inhabitants were suddenly given the opportunity to all travel to Munich is definitely a good sign of conditions there (regarding apartments, train connections, willingness to help on the part of the locals etc.) You never told me anything about the marriage of Grete with Singale. Adele told me only that her husband had been shot to death before her very eyes. Is Liese also in Vienna now? Didn’t she used to be in Graz.

Here a series of old movies (between 1926 and 1939) is forthcoming by a newly founded society for support of all kinds of art. We recently saw the German movie “M” (the story of the child murderer Kuerten), that we had seen 16 years ago in Vienna. I find the idea of showing old, good movies to be a good one, actually. For it is truly grotesque when you think about how much money and work is invested in the hundreds upon hundreds of continuously appearing crap movies that play to half-empty movie theaters and disappear once again after a couple of days, though there is a large number of excellent movies that at least half of the movie viewers today haven’t seen. One prerequisite would naturally have to be that the selection be good, but even in the case of occasional reappearance of old movies in movie theaters there is

much (or everything) left to be desired. That is one of those cases where the absurdity of today's circumstances is demonstrated; for even the movie theater owners would have a considered interest since good movies always bring sold-out houses. The package to Gitti that I got 10\$ back for was the only one that I sent her and whose delivery had actually been confirmed to me by her herself. Enclosed a Meinl-voucher for \$20.

Adele has eaten herself into such a state of fatness again here that she is too lazy to even write.

With thousand *Bussis* always

Your Kurt

Warm regards from Adele, too

Dear Rudi!

I am anxious for the four books that you both sent me. The circumstances in the book trade that you write of are certainly hair raising and also quite incomprehensible. Why can one not order any new releases from German publishers? Despite all excuses it is also highly odd that nearly no books published in Germany since 1941 have been imported to here. Morgenstern got your New Year's card.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

P.S. Just now Adele tells me that she will be writing soon. Whatever is or is not written about me in Viennese newspapers is pretty much all the same to me.

Princeton, 10./V. 1948.

40.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you and Rudi heartily for the birthday wishes and you most especially for the delightful book "Mein buntes Jahr."¹ The illustrations in it are really the sweetest that I have ever seen of this type. In each picture there

¹ "My Colorful Year: A Cheerful Reflective Walk from Spring to Spring" by Anna Lachmann, illustrated with sentimental, fairy-talelike watercolors

is something appealing and every time one looks at it one discovers something new and charming that one missed before. I think something like that can only appear immediately after a war. After rain comes sunshine. Who is this Anna Lachmann? Did she publish any other books? I have also had a look at the Thirring books that Rudi sent and find them to be very inspiringly written even if the views they inspire to aren't always those represented within them. I didn't have the opportunity to look at the books more closely until the last few days. Over the previous weeks I was capable of nothing else of that kind, because a problem swirled in my head over and over. Now and then I would like to have interrupted the work, but it simply was not possible. Even at the movies or radio I could only listen with half an ear. That is also the reason why I haven't written to you in so long. Now I have finished the thing to the extent that I can sleep soundly once again. I glean from one of the newspaper clipping you sent me that recently a big "Austrian Day" took place in Philadelphia where a number of Austrians living here met for all sorts of events (dance performances etc). Odd that I should have to hear about it circuitously via Vienna, even though Philadelphia is only an hour away by train from here. I am happy to hear that in Vienna things are clearly looking up. The conversion rate of 100 S to 13 Kč however, is still quite disadvantageous for Austria; it used to be 100 S = 500 Kč. What are people saying there about Masaryk's suicide¹? What is going on now with Rosenberg? Do you not get any reply at all when you two write to him? And how is it looking with the possibility yourselves traveling there? I am sorry I had to disappoint you both so much regarding your trip here but unfortunately that is how it is. I believe by the way that nowadays visitors from Austria or Germany are really extremely rare. Regarding the international Philosophers' Conference I recently spoke to the president of the organizational committee. He did not know yet if some kind of collective trip could be arranged, but promised to let me know about it. When I think about the fact that I have been here 8 years and during this time a new war and a new post-war era in Austria have come and gone, it gives me an eerie feeling. I believe though, that we have not aged any more than is normally the case in such times. At least that is the impression I have of you. How old is A[unt] Mizzi, actually? Regarding our oath of Citizenship there isn't much to tell. It was taken collectively by ca. 10 candidates sworn in. The official who took our oath was an extremely

¹ Jan Masaryk, Czech foreign minister, whose reported suicide in March 1948 was widely believed to have been a murder carried out by the new Communist regime

likeable person, a judge¹ and personal friend of Einstein's. Afterward he gave a speech of ca. 1 hour which by its sheer simplicity and naturalness really did not entirely miss its mark. He told of current and past conditions in this country and one went home with the impression that American citizenship really meant something in contrast to most others. I would have more to write about to you but I think it's better if I write you again soon so that this letter does not get to be too long. I send you much love belatedly for Mother's Day, because to my shame I admit I forgot it on the actual day this year.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt.

Much love from Adele, too.

P.S. Enclosed a Meinl-voucher. Please don't be mad that is arriving late this time. I will send the next one earlier to make up for it. Your letters N° 70–73 and Rudi's of the I./V. have arrived.

Princeton, 9./VI. 1948.

41.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 74 and 75 and the card from Knappenhof. I still precisely recall the excursion we took together once to there. At the top we met the lady (whose name I have forgotten) who recommended the "Diary" to me as a piece of political reading. That was long long ago. I am glad that you two liked it up there so well and that there is nothing more to be felt of the after-effects of the war. Except why should Rudi have a gallbladder attack there of all places I don't understand. He must have soon managed to recover in the good air. Here the weather is apparently the opposite this year to yours. It was icy cold up to now and one had to heat till around the end of May.

Lately there have been several social events here. The new director seems to love that kind of event more than the old one. So recently there were two dance evenings. I was only at one, Adele at both. Since I don't dance something like that doesn't have much point for me of course, even more so

¹ Federal District Judge Phillip Forman, who had administered the oath of citizenship to Einstein in 1940

because these things usually go on until 3 in the morning. Since her return from Europe, Adele has naturally pounced immediately on the food she was long deprived of and consequently gained weight correspondingly. Now the poor thing is on a regimen to lose weight. That is, she mainly subsists on orange juice, black coffee, and lettuce; at least in my presence, but due to the minimal success I have some doubts regarding her abstemiousness.* Why she is so lazy about writing I don't know. I think she feels more and more like an American now and thinks less of her old home.

Recently I also had to go to the dentist and got six fillings. They drilled several teeth at the same time so that it didn't take long but the bill wasn't any smaller as a result. My teeth had held up to this point uncommonly well. Since I have been here only one had to be pulled (a wisdom tooth).

In the past months there are, for the first time in years, a few really good movies again, among them 2 with Charles Boyer. Have you seen it yet? I like him hugely not only as an actor but also a person. He makes a very likeable impression. There was also a wonderful nature film in color that showed the creation of a new volcano in Mexico about which you may have read. The huge glowing-red sheaves of fire along with the subterranean roaring really gives quite the imposing spectacle. Morgenstern departed yesterday by plane. He got married shortly before he left, a very nice girl of the Brausewetter variety. Please don't tell his people, perhaps he wants to surprise them. He drove us out in the surrounding countryside this year less because the weather was so bad. Besides that, we invited him over more frequently to thank him for the many feasts I had with him during Adele's absence. This year once again nothing seems to be coming of my trip to Europe. I haven't heard anything regarding travel arrangements from the international conference. The reasons, why I would at any rate not like to travel, are still the same. I am so happy to have escaped from lovely Europe, so that under no circumstances would I want to put myself at risk of not being able to come back here for any reason. I believe that this danger does actually exist under the current conditions, especially if one has to undertake the trip via airplane, but also completely aside from that. It is a different matter with Morgenstern. He emigrated the regular way in the year 1937 etc. Besides which, his trip is not of a purely private nature. It wouldn't even be certain in my case if I even would get a visa to Austria. Rudi seems to believe that traveling will be even more difficult next year. But I am convinced that it won't come to a second war, and think rather that the conditions will gradually normalize. Here, the political horizon seems to be getting less dark. Perhaps you heard of the great successes that Henry Wallace, a close colleague of Roosevelt's, had on his propaganda tour. That seems at least to prove that the country is not as

reactionary as the present government. It still remains very doubtful if he will get enough votes to become President.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* She did though already lose 2½ kg
Enclosed a Meinl-voucher

Princeton, 12./VII. 1948.

42.

Dearest Mama!

Now it's been endlessly long since I have had any word from you. Your letter № 76 (of 10./VI.) arrived but since then nothing else. Morgenstern is likely in Vienna now and will tell you about us. I am anxious to hear what you will write about his wife. Enclosed I am sending you the promised color photo of me. Unfortunately it was taken at a time when I was pretty thin, and therefore I hesitated to send it to you. Now I look much better. All in all I'm doing surprisingly well with my stomach, knock wood. It's been years since I've had so little trouble. In Vienna it must be going full steam ahead from what you write. How is it actually with procuring food compared to a year ago? (I mean of course the ones on cards). At any rate it must be much better in Vienna than in Germany, where apparently one has yet to notice any improvement. That Mizzi is at last getting her pension paid out is yet another proof that one doesn't have to always be so pessimistic as you tend to be, e.g. also in regard to the villa and similarly the political development in the upcoming years. Regarding the rent on the villa, Rudi wrote me that it was used for repairs. After all that is not so astonishing given post-war prices. You surely don't think Rosenberg is pocketing something? The *reichsdeutsche*¹ lady whom we got to know at Knappenhof, was most certainly no mathematician (how did you come to that conclusion?), I think more likely a political person. Of course I remember that we stayed not at Kronich but at Knappenhof, but we did have an excursion to Kronichhof where we happened to meet said lady. I still remember it clearly. I think, by the way, that her joke

¹ I.e., a German from the Reich proper, rather than an ethnic German from countries annexed or occupied by the Nazis

about the cricket was not meanspirited but rather flattering of you (which by the way I said to you at the time). Here a real heatwave has set in. I apparently spoke badly of the weather in my last letter. I hope we can go to the seaside in August. Everything is so overcrowded at the moment. I see Einstein almost daily. He is very spry for his age. One doesn't notice by looking at him that he is now almost seventy and he seems to be feeling quite tiptop health-wise again now. That he is politically active or at least lends his name to it, you will already have heard. In particular he is also the chair of a committee of atomic scientists who are working towards the establishment of a "world government," i.e. a league of nations equipped with military power. They feel duty-bound, after having put the atom bomb into the world, to do something about its never being used to destroy humankind. That the Vienna newspapers constantly stress that Hlawka¹ is the first Austrian mathematician to come to this Institute is really quite immaterial, but it does give the impression that there is some kind of intent behind it. Apparently they want to prove that I do not exist and have never existed. It is a comfort that I share this fate with at least 2 other Austrian mathematicians, of whom one has even been here permanently since 1933. By the way I hear these days that Hlawka is not planning to come here at all; at least not next year. I have not heard from Rudi for an endlessly long time now. I hope a little letter will arrive soon from you
 and remain with thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
 ever Your Kurt

Enclosed a Meinl-voucher

P.S. Regarding Pancreon, I have not looked into that here. There are various ones with supplements here (Pepsin etc). The pure ones were not in stock. I also do not know what kind you were taking. One does not need a prescription here but it would be good if Rudi could write me exactly what you need. Hopefully you are already doing well with your intestine again. Another thousand *Bussis* Your Kurt

¹ Edmund Hlawka (1916–2009), Austrian mathematician, put off the planned visit to IAS that the Vienna newspapers reported until 1959

Princeton, 22./VIII. 1948

43.

Dearest Mama!

Thousand *Bussis* and all the best on your birthday. A package is on its way; there are also Pancreon* in it, ordered directly from the factory, because no one can say how long something like that has been lying around in a Princeton pharmacy. It will probably surprise you that this letter is not from some summer vacation place. I let it fall by the wayside again this year. By the way Einstein is now spending his second summer in Princeton. There was so little summer heat here in the past few years that one has little desire to go away or to bathe. Beyond that, this year we also had a look at an open-air pool that is quite close to Princeton and discovered that it is really quite nice and in some ways even more pleasant than the ocean. The weather is downright "cow-warm," as warm as I haven't found it to be anywhere since Bleder Lake, and you will recall how good the bathing did me there. Another Princeton attraction is something I have just enjoyed with Adele for the first time after being here eight years: the Princeton Theater. It was a thrilling horror drama, not bad, but I found no essential difference to a movie theater. By the way, theaters are showing almost exclusively comedies now, which I hate, in movie theaters as well as on the stage. I don't know Charles Boyer personally but one does get an impression of whether someone is likable from their acting and appearance. Also, I have heard him speak on the radio for charitable causes or some such campaigns. I am quite surprised that you have just now gotten around to seeing the Snow White movie. I saw it ten years ago for the first time and have seen it 3 times now. Especially in regards to the dwarves, I agree with you completely, but as regards the rest, I think it aligns very well with the German sense of fairy tale, especially Snow White herself. The most charming part was the little deer, I thought, that is in it. Later, they gave it the name "Bambi" and portrayed its biography in its own *Mickymaus* movie. The stepmother scenes I found particularly good. I am glad that you have taken such a shine to Morgenstern, we also like him very much. I don't know Ottakringerbräu. I am surprised that you didn't notice the similarity between Morgenstern's wife and Liese Brausewetter; I think it is positively striking. It is a slight exaggeration that I would already want to build a house here for myself. I am completely of your opinion that one should not rely entirely on a loan. Besides which the houses are particularly expensive now and perhaps there will be some long-term cheap loans in a several years again, with which paying off with interest will be less than then rent of a normal apartment. Of course the disadvantage remains despite everything that one [would] still have to live far out of the city, which is quite unpleasant for someone without a car. I really can barely wait to see pictures of you two, especially of you. You

never did send me any. To say that we are fostering a strange child is not really the case. Adele has not sent anything for years and I hope that the poor foster child is not dependent on her alone; otherwise the child would have starved by now. Horrible, that new misfortune of Wengefeld's. Does that have political underpinnings? Else's letter did not arrive. Did you forget to enclose it? Why are you feeling bad about Eva just now. Do you think that the Russian-American conflicts are making themselves noticeable for the Berliners now in any particularly unpleasant sense? The provisioning by airplane seems to be working well and anyway the whole thing will hopefully be over soon, since neither of the parties wants a war after all. Your last letter (Nº 78) arrived in a fairly mutilated condition. The things you said about Mizzi's pension and about the villa had been cut out. Morgenstern is supposed to arrive here 4. Sept. and I am very eager to hear what he has to tell.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

* without anything additional

P.S. Rudi's letter arrived and I was very glad to hear at length from him after such a long time. Will reply soon. "Wikopharm" Inc. apparently has no branch in New York. I would have to write directly to Zurich. The prices would be actually be according to the official currency rate of the franc ca. half that of Meinl's but I don't know if one could actually get the francs at this exchange rate.* Enclosed a Meinl-voucher * will look into it more closely

Princeton, 3./X. 1948.

44.

Dearest Mama!

Yesterday your letter Nº 82 arrived. I am glad that the birthday package arrived fine. Hopefully the things fit you. In Pötzleinsdorf it must be really nice, to gauge by your descriptions and also a very exclusive crowd. Probably today only a small circle of select people have the opportunity to go there. If you live in a big city all year, that kind of relaxation in the country can be quite pleasant. In my case, it is the exact opposite. I would love to spend a couple months in a big city to recuperate from the country life here. Recently, Princeton's monotony was interrupted by an interesting incident, by the way. Just at the entrance gates of the Princeton-Inn, the largest hotel in town, 50 m

from our house, someone was murdered. We heard the shots, but they were so muted that we didn't suspect anything bad. The murder victim lay in his car for an hour before he was discovered by a passerby. Apparently no one paid any notice to the shots, even though all hotel guests and employees must have heard them. The murderer killed himself the next day. They were 2 rich business men, colleagues at a firm who were taking each other to court. Its wealth seems to have had a less than solid foundation.

We were at Morgenstern's 14 days ago. He apparently has less time, probably because of his wife's claims on him. He hasn't told us a lot about you two (yet), but the color photos of you both really turned out well. You in particular took a good picture and it is completely unbelievable that you are supposedly all of 69 years old. I think you have not changed at all since my departure. Also Rudi looks more like 36 than 46. I will send you both some copies as soon as I can. I am ordering a Care-Package each for Trudl and Mizzi today and will write about cigarettes. I couldn't tell for sure from your letter whether the vouchers for Sw. Fr. that I ordered on 8./IX. at Wikipharm in Zurich have arrived. How many Sw. Fr. did you actually get for that? Enclosed I am sending you Else's letter back. I don't understand how one can let such a little fellow play along a river without any accompanying adult. By the political underpinnings that something like that could have I meant of course it could have perhaps been an act of revenge. Wasn't Grete Blondiaux once married? I vaguely recall something like that. And how is Walter Fink? Why don't you send me the "Letter from a Young Scientist About Princeton." It would really interest me very much. Also those newspaper clippings about the Thirring book were very interesting for me, as were the treatise about mental telepathy that was on the reverse side and which you obviously hadn't even seen. Recently we had our 10th anniversary. To mark the occasion we went up the "Empire State Building" again (i.e. the highest skyscraper). Up at the top you can have your voice recorded onto a record for 50 cents (ca. 150 words). So Adele did that as a memento. You will probably have heard that, near the end of the war, an airplane flew into one of the uppermost floors of this skyscraper. The damage to the building was surprisingly minimal. From below you could only see a small mark. As for the crickets, I can only repeat that the context in question would not make anyone think of the characteristic of crickets you write of, and so you are certainly doing the poor *reichsdeutsche* politician lady a disservice. There is now a movie "The Lovelife of Hitler and Eva Braun," probably a farce. Here, prices are still climbing, but up to now that only meant that the business economy thrived. At times, traffic in New York is downright unbelievable. Getting anywhere by cab is virtually impossible (at certain hours) because you don't move forward

to speak of at all. That is mainly due to a huge number of new cars have come onto the market.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. Recently, I noticed that I have gained ca. 5 kg since a year ago. Your letters № 80–82 arrived.

Dear Rudi!

Hearty thanks for your detailed letter of August. Hopefully the upswing in Vienna is lasting and there are not just nice products but also people who can buy them. I hope I can write to you in detail soon.

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

Many regards from Adele. Enclosed some pictures she took.

Princeton, Nov. 14, 1948.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your l[ast] letter of 1./VIII and the notification of Uncle Carl's death. We were very sorry that yet again one of the people with whom we got along so well has passed from us. 79 years is however a high enough age, after all, but I can imagine nonetheless what this will mean for Aunt Paula. What kind of "small procedure" was it that you write of, by the way, that his heart did not withstand? This year seems to be a particular year of misfortune: In the past few months there were three deaths one after another in the circle of Princeton mathematicians. We get together with Morgenstern seldom, i.e. at least with his wife. Him I see frequently and do not believe that anything in his relationship to me has changed. (Mama made an allusion to this in one of her letters.) What kind of cable was that from him Mama writes of? Enclosed the color photos. Two of them are really quite excellent. In the third* the lighting is not good; but the film was better in this regard than the copy. The technique of copying still apparently leaves something to be desired, as I have commented before. In the picture from Schönbrunn that you sent Mama looks very good, except you are scowling a bit.

In Vienna things must really be improving apace if one can send gift parcels from there to other countries. You write that they want to implement socialization measures regarding health care. But how is that actually possible? I thought that everything already went through the national health agencies. According to your calculations, each person in Vienna could now afford only half as much as before the war. The same would be the case (as a result of price increases and tax increases) here too, if the revenue in \$ were to have stayed the same. But the circle of people for whom that applies seems to be very small. The revenue in the case of business people has surely far more than doubled. The increase in pay among the workers seems also to exceed inflation. The worst off are the civil servants, university professors, teachers, etc. There it depends on the particular institute where they are employed; but on average the revenues, gauged by material assets, seem to have significantly dropped. After the Truman election some people expect that prices will fall. Truman is by the way very unpopular here and the results of the election therefore completely unexpected and in contradiction of every prediction. We voted for the first time here this year as you know. It is quite different than at home. One does not vote for parties but for an individual person† and in addition one is asked certain "Public questions," e.g. whether a certain state debt should be incurred or not. One must therefore fill out an entire questionnaire behind the folding screen. Getting a confirmation of my citizenship that I can provide in the ČSR is also not so easy. Transcriptions or photocopies of the original certificate are forbidden by law. One can have one's own document issued but in the application for it there is a question: "Which official (of the country in question, therefore in this case the ČSR) has requested the proof of American citizenship." Name and address of the official must be given and then in addition the entire thing then has to be affirmed by oath. I scarcely believe by the way that my current citizenship is of importance for this matter (certainly not for the shares of you two). If so, then someone would have to intervene via the American Consulate, I believe; or in fact a Czech authority (whose name you could then write to me) would have to request the certificate in the course of the matter. Does Rosenberg actually represent our matter or not? Does he not reply when you write to him? or how does it stand? I could possibly try to write him from here.

Adele recently bought me a typewriter. I find learning to type very entertaining; however I am only up to now writing only in English, which is much more pleasant due to the lower case initial letters of nouns.

Mama wrote recently that she had a cramp in her ankle again. Is that still from the tumble in the winter?

I tried to send Trudl cigarettes but it is unfortunately forbidden (for Germany).

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

* I am not even sending it along

† to be precise, at the same time for the county representation, municipality representation, the United States and perhaps the individual state in which one resides

P.S. Enclosed a Meinl voucher. I am just in the process of ordering a Sw. Frs. check.

Dearest Mama!

I am sending you for the time being thousand *Bussis* and many thanks for your letters N° 83–85. I hope that the bonbons were really magical. Here good bonbons truly seem to be magical, in the sense that they are ceasing to exist any longer. Louis Sherry was always one of the best American brands; but now not only are the prices frequently going up but also the quality is going down. I will write more soon.

Ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 17./XII. 1948.

45.

Dearest Mama!

Above all we wish you two a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year and thank you both heartily for the lamp, which (along with its shade) arrived undamaged. It is really beautiful and gives such a “serene”¹ feeling that you can scarcely believe it comes from the age of electricity and the atom bomb. We accorded it a definitive spot in the living room. Our package will once again arrive late, but this time I at least have the comfort of knowing that it wouldn’t have arrived punctually even if we had sent it off in time, since there was another strike by shipping personnel. I sent Trudl a Care-Package in

¹ KG wrote “*traulich*,” which in his next letter (17 January 1949) he admits is a German word he must have made up

October but no cigarettes, since that is forbidden. We got a very sweet letter from Aunt Mizzi a couple of weeks ago and two postcards that show that she is nicely set up there at least regarding the dwelling and surroundings. The Morgensterns were recently here for supper. The fact that we saw each other less these days has a lot of special reasons. First, M^{rs} Morgenstern was ill (or not completely well). Then Adele had the grippe and I had a light cold. Finally Adele had a bothersome finger that had to be lanced. But it healed up surprisingly quickly, which Morgenstern attributed to the many sulfa drugs she took as a prophylactic against blood poisoning. But I believe it had more to do with her healthy constitution. Morgenstern also told us that his mother is not doing at well well with her heart. Your letters N° 86, 87 arrived, if somewhat trimmed. In the latest one you go on and on quite a bit, also about the villa. But conditions are such that one cannot say anything, even about whether the current government in the Č.S.R. will hold up over time. By the way, it seems to be less chauvinistic as a nation than the old one; as seen e.g. by the fact that A[unt] Mizzi is getting her pension again. Can one not get precise information from the Austrian Consulate about how the matter actually stands? Rosenberg is not of such fundamental importance. At any rate I will try to make some headway via the American Consulate, since the American officials in general are more efficient (or at least used to be) than the Austrian. A possible success of such an undertaking could also be of benefit to you two, inasmuch as it would get the ball rolling; or at least shed some light on the status of the case. The parts of your letter where you write about the villa were somewhat trimmed by the censor, by the way. You do not have to worry about me. We are doing well in every regard. I have never heard of the diaries of Eva Braun. What is the main content and why does one suspect that it is a forgery? I am particularly interested in forgeries.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards also from Adele.

Part 2

Einstein, Time, and Intuition

1949–1954

Gödel first met Albert Einstein in 1933, during his first visit to America. After Gödel settled permanently in Princeton in 1940, these two towering scientific intellects found themselves in each other's company with increasing frequency; Gödel mentions in the letters below their practice of joining one another on their daily walks to and from the Institute. During Einstein's final years before his death in 1955, Gödel was (according to the mathematician Ernst Straus, Einstein's assistant during the years 1944 to 1948) "certainly by far Einstein's best friend." Oskar Morgenstern recalled Einstein telling him that his own work no longer meant much to him, but he kept coming to his office each day for "the privilege of being permitted to walk home with Gödel."¹

As many of their acquaintances observed, they were a complete study in contrasts. In Straus's words,

They were very different in almost every personal way—Einstein gregarious, happy, full of laughter and common sense, and Gödel extremely solemn, very serious, quite solitary, and distrustful of common sense as a means of arriving at the truth. But they shared a fundamental quality: both went directly and wholeheartedly to the questions at the very center of things.²

Einstein's baggy sweaters and suspenders and love of heavy German food equally contrasted with Gödel's sharply creased trousers and immaculate suit and fedora and increasingly meagre diet of canned baby food and powdered

¹ Morgenstern to Bruno Kreisky, 25 October 1965, reprinted in Wang, *Reflections on Gödel*, 31

² Straus in Wolf, ed., *Strangeness in Proportion*, 422

milk. (Gödel nonetheless loyally defended Einstein's appearance to his mother, who had apparently expressed some disapproval of his “unaesthetic” suspenders, telling her, “Einstein looks like a good old grandpapa which there is no reason to object to.”¹)

On their walks they talked about philosophy, physics, politics. Gödel himself attributed Einstein's enjoyment of his company to the fact that he was the only one of Einstein's colleagues at Princeton who was not afraid to argue with him. Replying to an inquiry from Einstein's biographer Carl Seelig in 1955, Gödel wrote, “I have often pondered why Einstein took pleasure in his conversations with me, and I believe one of the causes is to be found in the fact that I frequently was of the contrary opinion and made no secret about it.”²

From their discussions of Einstein's general relativity theory and Gödel's own philosophical interest in the meaning of time, Gödel was inspired to come up with a novel solution to Einstein's equations that held some astonishing consequences for the construction of the universe. A number of solutions to the equations are possible, each implying a different model for the universe (the most accepted being the “Big Bang” model of an ever-expanding universe that began at a distinct moment in time, which among the solutions most closely agrees with the astronomical observation that the farthest galaxies are receding the fastest). Gödel's solution³, in which the universe is not expanding but everywhere locally rotating, has the remarkable consequence that there is no absolute measure of time anywhere in the universe. In a short philosophical paper⁴ accompanying the result that he contributed to a volume celebrating Einstein's work, Gödel explained that “by making a round trip on a rocket ship in a sufficiently wide curve, it is possible in these worlds to travel into any region of the past, present, and future, and back again.” His even more startling conclusion from this apparent “absurdity” is that the very notion of the objective lapse of time is an illusion.

There appears to have been more than a passing connection to Gödel between such ideas and his fascination with coincidences and occult phenomena. His belief that “nothing that happens is due to accident or

¹ Letter, 1 November 1950

² Gödel to Seelig, 7 September 1955, *Collected Works*, 5:249

³ Published in 1949 in *Review of Modern Physics*, and reprinted in *Collected Works*, 2:190–98

⁴ The Einstein volume, in honor of his 70th birthday, was part of the “Living Philosophers Series,” to which KG had earlier contributed an article for the volume dedicated to Bertrand Russell; his article for the Einstein book, “A Remark about the Relationship between Relativity Theory and Idealistic Philosophy,” is reprinted in *Collected Works*, 2:202–7

stupidity,” as Straus recalled, shows up in his frequent insistence in reading hidden meanings into historical events and coincidental occurrences in his life. “You may not know that serious science has begun lately to occupy itself with such things and has invented the lovely word ‘synchronicity’ for it,”¹ he wrote his mother in one letter, and maintained that the real consequence of fraudulent mediums is not “to feign genuine apparitions but to cover up genuine apparitions.”

Even Adele teased him about his remarkably deep interest in ghosts: George Kreisel remembered during one visit to their home when Adele went on at length about how Kurt was like a “Viennese washerwoman” with his longstanding interest in ghosts, and mercilessly made fun of him for all the books on the subject he had read. Kreisel was able to change the subject by countering that Viennese washerwomen probably did not rely on books for their information.²

Their purchase of a home at 129 (today 145) Linden Lane, Princeton, with the assistance of IAS (which provided both a mortgage and an \$3,500 advance on his salary for the down payment) added a new anchor of stability to their lives, and much happiness for Adele, who spent hours planting flowers and shrubs, tending the garden and yard, and making improvements to their home. Likewise, Gödel’s promotion from “permanent member” to professor in 1953 further secured his position and brought a substantial increase in salary (\$9,000, equal to about \$90,000 in 2020) that helped make it possible for Adele to travel again to Vienna and ultimately to pay for trips for his mother and brother to visit them in Princeton.

Gödel’s hypochondria and anxieties seem to have been present from a very early age; his brother Rudolf traced their start to a bout of rheumatic fever at age eight which left him convinced, without reason, that his heart had been permanently damaged. Gödel like most hypochondriacs was convinced that he knew better than his doctors, “which made him a very difficult patient,” Rudolf, himself a physician, said; even more difficult was that he was a hypochondriac with genuine and occasionally grave medical problems. In 1951 he was hospitalized and nearly died from a bleeding duodenal ulcer, which he describes in graphic detail in several of the letters here. It was from this point that his obsessional focus on foods and diet, particularly when under stress or physical discomfort, became notably more manifest. In late 1954 he suffered another serious psychological crisis which he first described as “four weeks heart

¹ Letter, 22 July 1952

² Kreisel in Weingartner and Schmetterer, eds., *Gödel Remembered*, 150

condition and depression,”¹ but then more specifically of experiencing “very strange mental states” with “the irresistible feeling”² that he was about to die, which left him unable to work. It appears to have been a severe hypochondriacal reaction to (most likely benign) irregular heartbeats that his anxieties reinforced.

The Gibbs Lecture³ that Gödel was invited to deliver on 26 December 1951 at the meeting of the American Mathematical Society at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island (and which becomes yet another excuse Gödel gives his mother for canceling a promised trip to Vienna) was his last public lecture, and the last mathematical conference he attended. In it he offered the clearest statement of his views of the philosophical implications of the incompleteness theorem. He emphatically rejected the view of the “constructivists” that mathematical objects are merely of our own creation, noting that even if the axioms are an act of creation by the human mind, they immediately impose restraints on everything that follows from them, strongly suggesting that they have “an objective reality” of their own. But he interpreted the incompleteness theorem not as a pessimistic limitation on human knowledge, but rather of proof that “the human mind infinitely surpasses the powers of any finite machine,” and human intuition will be an inexhaustible source of new mathematical discovery.

Gödel’s increasingly critical views of America’s hardline foreign policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union are another recurring theme in the letters from these years. His frank criticisms of his new country in fact led to a report being filed by U.S. Army Intelligence in Austria to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, quoting comments he made to his mother—and duly read by the military censor—in his letters of 1 November 1950 and 8 January 1951, in which he compared developments in the U.S. to Germany under Hitler and hoped “the Germans will not be so stupid as to let themselves be used as cannon fodder against the Russians.”

Yet he continued to admire and defend much about America, especially the efficiency of public and private business and the overall goodness of its people. In a typically Gödelean blend of the profound and the trivial, he observed in 1953:

Especially here (in contrast to Europe) one has the feeling of being surrounded by good people who are willing to help. That

¹ Telegram, 1 December 1954

² Letter, 10 December 1954

³ “Some Basic Theorems on the Foundations of Mathematics and their Implications,” *Collected Works*, 2:304–23

goes for whatever has to do with state and agencies in particular. While one has the impression in Europe that agencies are really only there to make people's lives sour it is the reverse here. This same sense is spoken to by the fact that there are so many downright "charming" things here, for instance the *Mickimaus* movies, the many cute little dogs, the nice knickknacks (that one often gets for a few cents) the many lovely flowers etc. Also the music (I mean the light kind, I do not listen to any other) I find much better here, at least in the best they have to offer if not exactly on average.¹

Although he had voted for Democrats since first becoming a citizen (he described the Republican Party to his mother as the "reactionaries" and expressed admiration for Henry Wallace's progressive third-party campaign for president in 1948)², his disenchantment with the renewed arms race under Truman led him to turn against the Democratic Party in the 1952 election. Straus recalled running into Einstein one day in 1953. "You know, Gödel has really gone completely crazy," Einstein told him.

Straus replied, "Well, what worse could he have done?"

"He voted for Eisenhower."³

* * *

Princeton, 17.I. 1949

46.

Dearest Mama!

Your two letters N° 88, 89, the two letters from Rudi and the book package arrived fine. We thank you warmly for the charming New Year's card and above all for the second Christmas package. The good-luck piggy is really incredibly sweet. If that does not bring luck, I really do not know what could

¹ Letter, 20 February 1953

² Letters, 22 November 1946, 9 June 1948

³ Straus, in Woolf, ed., *Some Strangeness in Proportion*, 485

bring luck. Among the pictures in the book by Čapek¹ some are also very charming. The book about the Krones naturally interested Adele hugely and she devoured it at once in two nights. Did you see the movie “Brüderlein fein”²? When was it actually released? What a pity that Rudi’s Paris trip came to nothing, and he must have really been annoyed about the matter as well. If he still wants to travel in February, the 25\$ I sent by telegram could simply be left in Paris. I have not got the money back yet, by the way. Morgenstern told me it would be much better for Rudi, if I were to send the money in \$-banknotes by registered mail sent in a letter. That is permitted and there are also absolutely no letter censors in France. So Rudi should write to me if this is acceptable to him. Morgenstern maintains that an air mail letter to Paris doesn’t take more than three days, which is plausible if there is no delay from the censors. I am surprised you haven’t written a word if the vouchers in Sw. Fr. that I ordered on 18 Nov. have arrived. The word “*traulich*” for the lamp is apparently one I actually invented. At least it is not in the dictionary. That’s how it goes when a person is away from home for almost 10 years. I wrote the State Department today regarding the villa and wonder what I will hear. Einstein seems to be doing quite well. At least that is what one of the doctors treating him told me. He has been back home for several days, but still has to take it easy of course and isn’t receiving any visitors. The operation was only 17 days ago and one can really not expect any more. By the way it was not supposed to have been a very serious operation (not a gallbladder operation, as was printed in the paper). Regarding a picture in which I was photographed with Einstein, I will speak to Morgenstern about it today and then, if possible, I will send a copy in the next letter. Recently a detailed letter from Trudl arrived in which she depicts her adventures since being expelled from the Č.S.R. and how she gradually found a foothold in Germany. From it you get the impression that the banished Sudeten-Germans did not feel all that affected by the matter. Then again there will always be great differences. I think you told me a year or more ago that Grete Blondiaux is to go to Australia; or am I wrong? How is old Blondiaux doing? and what is he doing in Vienna? Do you see him sometimes?

New Year’s Eve and Christmas we spent alone and at home; except that for half an hour on Christmas Eve we were visiting the people who live downstairs in the building. They had a Christmas tree that literally filled half

¹ Josef Čapek (1887–1945), Czech writer, editorial cartoonist, and artist, imprisoned for his anti-Nazi views at Bergen-Belsen, where he died one month before the German surrender

² 1942 Viennese film, a sentimentalized biography of the Austrian dramatist Ferdinand Raimund (1790–1836)

the room. Standing on the floor it touched the ceiling and was 3–4 m wide at the bottom. That seems to be a “hobby” (= *Steckenpferd*) of theirs, as the saying goes here. I really quite like the number of this year, 1949, and I also believe that the fear of war you write about is not justified. Humankind will not put up with everything after all. In one sense the fact that food prices are dropping there so much is very gratifying in one sense. That is probably an effect of the ERP (= European Recovery Program*, here there is a mania for calling everything by its first letters so that one almost needs a special dictionary to read the newspaper). To gauge by what you write you must have really had quite a bad bout of flu. I hope the nosebleeds mark the end of it. I remember that that was the case with me once. Here one reads that in Europe this year is the worst flu epidemic since 1918, but a harmless form; quite different than 1918 when 15 million people died of the flu, so almost as many as on the battlefield. The picture of the Konstantinhügel¹ is very charming but does it look like that in real life? Is the Konstant. Hügel open again already?

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi and once again many thanks for the sweet little piggy

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Warm regards also from Adele

* = Marshall Plan

P.S. I will be ordering a Meinl-voucher today and will send it, along with the oil, in a few days

Princeton, 26./II. 1949.

47.

Dearest Mama!

Recently I received Rudi's letter from Paris and I was happy that the trip did come to pass after all. He seems to have liked it very much in Paris. How many participants were there, actually? And were there also any kind of joint undertakings in Paris? On Rudi's birthday I of course again forgot, even though I had just sent him the money to Paris on the 7th! So I am sending all my best wishes belatedly. It seems to me that the time of the *Realgymnasium*²

¹ A café in Vienna's Prater park, built atop a small man-made hill.

² The name for academic secondary schools in Austria and Germany that emphasized science and modern languages, as opposed to the more-traditional *Gymnasium* with its classical curriculum of Latin and Greek

was not that long ago. Slowly I am taking my place among the older generations. The essay about the health insurance companies that you sent is very intelligently written. Who is this “Medicus”? Of course I cannot get an exact picture of the situation from it, though. To what degree do the insurance companies have more say-so, since one would rather assume that under the N.S. [National Socialists] everything would have been more mechanized and militarized?

Enclosed a picture with Einstein. I think it is really quite good, better than it looked on the screen, maybe because you can see the faces less clearly? I visited Einstein in the fourth week after his operation. You could scarcely notice anything about him at all, other than he was somewhat paler than normal. He went to Florida soon afterward and is supposed to be rapidly recovering there. Unfortunately he doesn't even want to stay 4 weeks there. It's scarcely worth the long trip there. But he apparently feels comfortable only in his familiar surroundings.

The title of the play “The Giacinda Smile” sounds so familiar to me. What is it about? About the Crown Prince Rudolf Affair there are ever more new films and plays. It would be more interesting if one of the authors of these plays would write about how (i.e. on the foundation of which sources) he came to his understanding of it. Did the movie “Brüderlein fein” come out during the war? I heard something about it but cannot recall what. We still have not ever been to the German movie theater in New York and otherwise one sees German movies hardly at all, Italian ones sometimes, French ones fairly frequently. Altmann & Kühne¹ came over here when it was driven out by Hitler from Vienna. I think it has managed to maintain its standard quite well. Is Frau Blondiaux still alive? And do you still see her sometimes? I wrote to the State Department a couple of weeks ago regarding the villa, but have not gotten any answer yet. Here, Spring began already in the middle of February, which does not preclude that it could turn to Winter again in March. The winter this year was the mildest (here in the East) it has been for years, by the way. On the other hand it snowed in places in the West where it was never seen before.

I will be ordering the Meinl-voucher for March today. There is a special reason why I had made such an issue of the confirmation of the francs-check. The Swiss company never confirmed my order and the receipt of my \$-check. It looks like they don't set much store by customers (or customers from America?), which probably also explains why you are not receiving good

¹ Upscale firm of Viennese chocolatiers, whose Jewish owners fled to New York and opened a store there in 1939

service from them in Vienna, as I glean from your letter. Liesl's doll is really quite charming, don't you think? The Christmas package to you was carefully wrapped with a lovely hemp cord, in a rather large box, because I was afraid that the hand-bag might get squashed. Adele tells me there were 2 pairs of silk stocking and 2 slips in it. Otherwise that's correct. Your letters N° 90–93 arrived. You numbered all of them, with the exception of 88. On 14 March is Einstein's seventieth birthday and I don't know what to give him. I know him well enough to know he doesn't like that sort of thing at all. Adele knitted him a wool vest (hand knitted items are very hard to get here), but then gave up the idea of giving it to him for his birthday, and instead gave it to him to take to Florida. He then sent her a delightful thank you note from there. What do you have to say about the lovely expressions addressed by Pres. Truman to his political opponents in public speeches? He did, in accordance with local custom, only say the first initials, S.O.B. (= son of a bitch). I wasn't able to get ahold of anything smaller than liter-bottles of oil, but I think it only keeps for an unlimited time, at least in the ice box.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards from Adele, too

Princeton, 21./III. 1949.

48.

Dearest Mama!

Enclosed the Meinl-check for March. Please do not be mad that I am sending it so late. I was once again very busy lately. Today your little letter N° 95 arrived, in which you answered all my questions in the greatest of detail. The flu this year here also has the characteristic of never going away (or returning several times) as I heard from acquaintances. Besides that, among our close friends there were 3 cases of people over 60 whose fever reached 39 [102 F] or more. The course is almost always harmless which however is perhaps attributable to modern treatment with penicillin. I hope you are now rid of your sore throat for good. Today Spring began, which does not prevent snow from remaining on the ground here.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

I'll write a longer letter soon

[vertically in margin:] Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 16./IV. 1949.

49.

Dearest Mama!

Several days ago your package of presents arrived in good shape and I thank you and Rudi heartily for the many lovely things. The ski-bunny and the two penguins are adorable. The iridescent tie is really pretty. The illustrations in the book about Schönbrunner are delightful. I am surprised about this new genre of book. I can't recall having seen ones like that before. I particularly liked the adjustable calendar. You hit the mark with that one, completely aside from the fact that it also looks nice and goes well on my desk. Today the cloth shawl for Adele arrived and she was enormously pleased with it. She will write you herself. After much searching I finally gave Einstein an etching¹ for his birthday. At the same time I saw oil paintings in New York and was horrified by the prices. Apparently nothing decent is to be had for under 500 \$. But around 600–1500 \$ I saw some really wonderful pictures, e.g. a Paris cityscape (on a rather foggy day) by Gagni; perhaps Rudi knows of it, I think it was the Place de la Concorde.

This year is a truly year of big occasions: Einstein's 70th birthday, your 70th birthday, 25th anniversary of my graduation, 20th of my doctoral exam, 10th of my immigration here (or actually, my emigration from Europe), 10th of the beginning of World War II and 35th of World War I. There is certainly more that is not occurring to me. There was a 25th class reunion planned but it looks like it will come to nothing. How many are even still alive? Hochwald, with whom I had contact for a while, was very pessimistic in this regard; I am less so. But it's been years since I heard anything from Hochwald himself. Is he perhaps back in the Č.S.R.? If you hear anything from Brünn about my former classmates, it would interest me very much. Most of the Aryan ones are probably in Germany and the non-Aryans dispersed throughout the entire world.

I glean from your summary of "The Gioconda Smile" that literally the same play was in the movie theaters here under the title "A woman's vengeance" (= *Rache einer Frau*). As a movie, it was also very good. Frequently, theatrical plays are made into movies with their entire original dialogue. There are already 3 Shakespeare plays that have been done that way. Recently Joan of Arc was made into a color movie with a fantastic production;

¹ "Quiet Hour," by the highly regarded American lithograph artist Stow Wengenroth; Gödel inscribed it on the back, *Mit den herzlichsten Glückwünschen zum 70. Geburtstag von Ihrem Kurt Gödel* ["With warmest good wishes on your 70th birthday. from your Kurt Gödel"]. It now hangs in the IAS director's office

but I was rather annoyed by it, especially because the main actress (Ingrid Bergmann), who was made to play that role, didn't really get her due in it. It almost looks intentional. A book about the Crown Prince with a bibliography would quite interest me. But I doubt that reliable sources even exist. The archives in the Hofburg are probably not accessible and in part have been carried off to Spain by the Habsburgs; and whatever else is being said can just as well have been made up to hide the truth. It seems very unlikely to me that all of it was limited to the private life of the Crown Prince. I find it more likely that the ultimate grounds (or indeed the entire affair) were of a political nature. I sometimes have a bit of homesickness for Vienna, but Adele tells me that everything (and particularly the nice little places like the city park and the Prater) is so changed that one feels as if one is in a different city. It would be lovely if we could meet in Paris. How is it going with your citizenship matter? Enclosed I am sending you a picture that characterizes the current conditions in the army here.¹ Regarding the villa, the State Department wrote me that they can do nothing, because I was not yet an American citizen at the decisive moment in time. Of course, that only means that someone in this agency or the entire agency is too lazy to take up the matter.* I have written you frequently, after all, that since Roosevelt's death the machinery of state here has gone downhill, but I hope it will not continue like this forever. Enclosed the Meinl-voucher for April. Hopefully the Care-Package for Eva works. With the "Airlift" you can't expect that it will arrive soon. It is quite unbelievable how long that has been going on now. By the way, a very sensible use of gasoline. The book about Einstein with my contribution has not appeared yet but is supposed to come out during his birthday year. I really would like to write in detail to Rudi, but first wanted to keep my promise to you. At least the "in detail" part I kept, the "soon" less so. Hopefully you two will spend a nice Easter Sunday. Here it has once again gotten very cold, so that one has to turn on the heat.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards to both of you from Adele, too.

*or that they currently don't want to do anything in such matters for polit. reasons

¹ KG enclosed from the April 3, 1949, *New York Times*, a clipping of an editorial cartoon with the caption "Like Birds in their Nest" depicting officers' hats of the U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Corps with the eagles on their emblems squabbling at one other

P.S. I received your letters N° 94–96 with the interesting newspaper clippings. I have never seen “Engel mit der Posaune” advertised here.¹ In contrast, “Mädchen in Uniform”² is run over and over. I would like to know why.

Princeton, 18./V. 1949

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed the first 25\$. It would interest me what the hotel and the meals cost per day in \$. I spoke on the phone with Prof. John ca. 4 weeks ago. He had had to travel to Washington for several weeks and promised to visit us after his return. That will presumably be in the next few days. With warm regards and best wishes for a pleasant stay in Paris.

Your Kurt

Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 28./V. 1949.

50.

Dearest Mama!

To my horror I notice that again I haven’t written to you in 5 weeks. This time along with the usual, a special reason for it existed, namely the fact that for the first time in quite a while I gave a lecture; here at the Institute, about something in connection with the theory of relativity. Incidentally time also passes so terribly fast that I can hardly keep up with setting the cute calendar. Your letters N° 97–99 got here in good shape. The next one therefore is N° 100. That should definitely have a particular meaning, just like the first dream

¹ “The Angel with the Trumpet,” a 1948 Austrian film based on the novel by Ernst Lothar of the same name, one of the first postwar films to grapple with Austria’s recent history. The Austrian actress Paula Wessely, whom KG mentions in several letters, played a half-Jewish woman in the film

² “Girls in Uniform,” a 1931 German film that became a controversial cult classic for its open depiction of a lesbian romance at a girls’ boarding school; it was banned as “decadent” by the Nazis

in a new dwelling. The number of my letters must be fairly sizable, even if I cannot compare myself to you. How many are there, anyway? I was sorry to hear that your Easter promenade was ruined by a turned ankle. I hope it (the ankle) will have gotten back to normal again soon. We did not do anything special on Easter. Our annual Spring promenade already took place this year some weeks ago. Every year we resolve on this occasion to get out and walk more; but then it usually takes till the next Spring again. This year the weather is odd. A couple of days ago we had to turn on the heat again. I still remember our walk on Leopoldsberg very well. It must have been in 1932. Because I still remember that I was busy preparing for a lecture for the Hahn seminar. The day before yesterday Dr John was at our house. He is also an especially likable person. Don't you think so? He told us much about Vienna and the conditions there, but unfortunately little about you two, for he has only a passing acquaintanceship with you. Hopefully Rudi had a pleasant stay in Paris and the money that I sent got there fine. When this letter arrives, you two will probably be at Kronichhof. We saw the Lassie movie here several years ago. It is good for its type, but I like seeing people in movies more than animals. You didn't answer my question about my classmates unfortunately. Didn't you ever happen to hear anything about Tauschinsky? The newspaper clippings that you sent me are very interesting. It gives the impression as if suddenly a kind of insanity had broken out. Adele put together the package with the oil. She would not have it any other way and insisted on putting in something else along with the oil. What was I do to? You don't write anything about your citizenship. Dr John said it could not be so difficult anymore, especially since you have lived in Vienna 5 years now. I haven't ever heard anything about the Viking trip of the 6 Norwegians.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Warm regards from Adele

Princeton, 12./VII. 1949.

51.

Dearest Mama!

Recently I have had all sorts of trouble with a house purchase (about which the Director of the Institute had his say and also provided the necessary

money). The business is not entirely settled yet. Besides that an intolerable heat prevails here, which quite paralyzes one. I was very happy about your letter N° 102. One can positively sense how much you liked being up on the Rax and so, I hope, you will also like being in the new apartment. Enclosed I am sending the Meinl-voucher for July. Please excuse my sending it so late. I hope I will soon get around to writing you a detailed letter.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 28./VII. 1949.

52.

Dearest Mama!

You will surely be curious to hear details about the house that we want to buy; so I will start by doing so. It is not big, has 4 rooms and a kitchen, everything at ground level; but it is solidly built from a kind of artificial stone that is called "cinderblock." It is almost new (built 3 years ago) and has all the modern comforts; especially an automatic oil furnace that doesn't require any tending at all, and a cooler that pumps the air from the cellar into the rooms. The Livingroom (= *Wohnzimmer*) is gigantic and has partial wood paneling, and the study is completely wood paneled. The house is fairly in the open in one of the parts of Princeton that are at a slightly higher elevation and should be noticeably cooler in the summer than our current apartment. Adele is completely taken with the house and wanted to have it at any price. The purchase price will be covered by $\frac{3}{4}$ through a mortgage and the rest through an advance on my salary by the Institute. This kind of financing appears somewhat unsound, but since the Director of the Inst. deemed it good, the Inst. is thus taking on the responsibility to a certain degree. An appraiser from the Institute viewed the house and found it to be a good value. The sale will close on 1 Aug. and we want to move on 1 Sep. Funny, that we both will be moving roughly the same time. Hopefully you are content with your new place. From your last letter I had the impression that you were happy with it. I warmly thank you for the flowers from the Rax, they are very charming. Your letters N° 100–102 all got here fine. Only the article about Einstein (which, as you write, Morgenstern's sister gave to you) was confiscated. Instead there was a note with the comment "Prohibited enclosure removed" in the letter. It is quite puzzling to me what the cause can have been. As always, I am in the company of Einstein almost daily. He is clearly doing better since the operation. He now

looks quite chipper and downright rejuvenated. This year is a terribly hot summer; the hottest one that I have experienced here to date. I often lie outdoors till 2 a.m. because it is impossible to sleep in the apartment. Since Adele's return things are going surprisingly well with my stomach. I also look much better and have certainly gained weight. Except lately I have probably lost some due to the summer heat, etc. What you wrote about Semmering I found very interesting and also made me rather sad; for it made me think of old times.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 15./VIII. 1949

Dear Rudi!

From the "Mail Order Service" I got the enclosed price list for packages. For Austria the prices are higher by ca 10%. As you see, there are also packages with only one or 2 things in it, which would possibly come into question for you as we would have to send anything not on the list to the two of you directly. As it is the same company that also issued the Meinl-vouchers, I do hope that the quality of the foodstuffs will be good. So please write to me what we should do.

You probably were surprised by the suddenness of the purchase of the house. That had, aside from Adelen's urging, also the reason that next March the "rent control" for our apartment stops and the landlord can then demand as much rent as he wants. Under today's circumstances one can brace oneself for it to be not a small amount.

Regarding the improvement of Frau Morgenstern's state of health (Mama wrote that she runs like a weasel) I was very surprised. Is something like that possible in a truly organic heart condition? I would like to have the chance to write in detail but as you see I have scarcely managed to write to Mama in the past months. I have stopped typing on a typewriter since I completed my last paper, and therefore have gotten out of practice again. Many thanks for the detailed information about the prices in Paris. I was very glad that your second stay there was also a success.

With warm regards
Your Kurt

P.S. My poor handwriting is explained due to the loss of my fountain pen and the new one is not worth anything since I wanted to be frugal and bought myself one for \$1.50. I lose my fountain pens from time to time and then am annoyed if they were expensive.

Princeton, 15./VIII. 1949

Dearest Mama!

I received your letters N° 103, 104 and thank you warmly for the best wishes on the purchase of the house. The sale closed on 1 Aug and Adele is already in the process of moving our furniture over in stages with the Institute vehicle, which does not cost anything. Only for the larger pieces do we need a mover. Getting to the Institute is substantially farther but since there are buses* I do hope that it will not be any additional bother. About 2 particular attractive features of the house I neglected to write: It has a lovely tiled bathroom and a very nice large cellar that is almost as clean as a room. The air that comes from below is of course filtered.

I am sorry that it seems things no longer suit you very well with your new apartment, but I believe the momentarily unfavorable conditions you write about are to blame. To go by your description, it must be an elegant and appealing apartment. I at least like views of rooftops very much. I think it hugely picturesque. One has the feeling of watching life as an impartial observer from above.

There can be no doubt but that I have gained weight. From time to time I confirmed it on the scales, but then weighing myself got to be too boring. "Kontiki" arrived and I thank you warmly for it. As I see the expedition was connected to some scientific premise about which I am really quite curious. The newspaper clipping about monosyllables prevailing in America is literally true and the examples are also well documented. In fact there is some truth about the American "tempo." I am quite free in my work and not pressured in any way at all and yet I sense the tempo somehow, similar to sensing a political atmosphere. Do you hear nothing directly about Hilde and Fritz Wengefeld?

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

* also one from the Institute.

RADIOGRAM

31. VIII. 49

[in English:] MRS GODEL VIENNA SEVEN LERCHENFELDERSTR 81
VIENNA = HAPPY BIRTHDAY FROM YOUR CHILDREN I AM BUSY
BUT STILL THINKING [sic] OF YOU MANY LOVE AND KISSES FROM =
KURT AND ADELE

Princeton, 28./X. 1949.

Dear Rudi!

I am simultaneously sending a letter to your home address in which I answer your letter from Paris. Now I merely wanted to ask you something re. the support for Mama. As I hear everything is now available for schillings in Vienna and some things even cheaper if one sends it from here. On the other hand you know from experience that moving, purchases, etc. usually cost more than planned. I therefore was thinking about whether I might take the support for Mama (or a portion of it) from the remainder of my holdings in Vienna for the foreseeable future. In Fall 1939, I still possessed the following from among the papers:

1. 1300 RM Fed. note
2. 330 RM bonds
3. My portion of the Zbirov and Simmeringen.

But my notes here seem to indicate that 1. and 2. were sold before my departure. Do you not also have notes about the disbursement when I departed? 3. is probably now worthless and there is likely no more cash in my account. There would only remain the possibility of selling my share of the stamp collection. But I do not know how the market for that is currently; and I do not want to awaken the impression in Mama that I was doing goodness knows how badly. That is also the reason why I am sending this letter to your practice.

After what I've stated you can imagine that it is currently not possibly for me to finance a trip of Mama's here. That could change, but I doubt it would then be a good idea (simply due to the strain of a twofold ship journey would mean for Mama). I think it would be more sensible for us to meet up in Paris.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

Princeton, 11./IX. 1949.

53.

Dearest Mama!

The move is happily over and everything is now set up perfectly here. One sees only now how lovely the place is. The fireplace nook (or actually, the fireplace wall) is really delightful. It is paneled all in wood and has to the left and the right a very charming little window. Above the fireplace between the two windows is a sill on which a few of our knickknacks are placed. To the left and the right of the fireplace are recliners and on one side a little table with your lamp, on the other side the radio, in the middle a low little smoking table. It looks very cozy and I sometimes have the feeling I am in our villa. A garden plot is also included. Unfortunately the trees are still quite young but the house gives shade and I have a pretty view of an old linden tree in the yard next door. The commute to the Institute is not difficult. The Institute now has two little buses (they unfortunately sold the big one). Besides that there are two trucks. One of these brought over Rudi's wardrobe trunk yesterday as the final thing needing to be moved. It still looks in astonishingly good shape, even though it has been lying in the cellar for 10 years. We didn't need any new furniture, since we actually had too much in the previous apartment.

I hope that you spent your birthday in a pleasant way and that our package and the record arrived fine. Did you think my voice recorded well?¹ The view from your window must be downright splendid, to gauge by your account. In a room like that a person simply has to feel good.

12./IX. Today your letter N° 107 came from which I gleaned to my joy that you indeed spent your birthday nicely. If I am not mistaken, once on a car trip we also stayed in the Südbahnhotel, and so I still remember it well. Many thanks for the charming flowers. I am glad that you liked the fabrics and can make good use of them. Today we got a special surprise. Einstein sent us a wonderful vase for flowers as a housewarming present. We had not expected anything like it. Otherwise everything is still taking its normal course. I

¹ KG had sent her a recording he had made (perhaps on another visit to the top of the Empire State Building: see Letter, 3 October 1948) of him reading a birthday message to her (in German): "I find it impossible that you should actually be 70 years old! For me you have never grown older than 35. And some of the pictures which I have seen of you, and also your handwriting, seem to me to confirm this. But I submit to the stern dictum of the calendar, and so we both wish you from the heart the best for your 70th birthday. May you enjoy the beautiful city of Vienna and its surroundings in good health for many more years."

haven't yet gotten around to have a look "Kontiki" at any length but will do so soon.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. How should I send those 10 \$. In a letter it is probably prohibited. The thing about the ethnic Germans has to be a canard.

My new address is:
129 LINDEN LANE

Adele is working very hard and goes about the house from early till late. She is, however, so happy to have her own home that the work doesn't bother her. She sends her warm regards to you and Rudi.

Princeton, 18./X. 1949.

54.

Dearest Mama!

It has now been a month since I last wrote you and I feel quite at home in our new place. We live here like in the country; 5 houses away the city stops and there are only a few scattered houses. The air is also much fresher here than in Princeton, though it is a mere $\frac{1}{4}$ hour walk from here to the center of the town. We have lovely surroundings here. Not far from us is Princeton High School* which is very luxuriously appointed. It stands in a large park and looks like a castle. If one compares it to our high schools! Here is now what is called "Indian Summer," which sometimes brings with it quite hot days. But from time to time it gets really quite cold and we've often had the opportunity to use our fireplace. It is hugely cozy to sit by an open wood fire. Recently an acquaintance photographed our house but incomprehensibly her pictures were lost during development. But in the next letter I will definitely send you a couple of pictures. The Morgensterns came to tea at our house yesterday but I see him now less than before. He has a lot to do and marriage is also a time-consuming institution. On top of that his wife apparently isn't in tiptop health. In the next few days she is to have her tonsils out. Recently the Einstein family was at our house. He also has a daughter whom I find extremely nice. How did Rudi's Paris trip go? I hope the two letters I sent to

Paris and also the one in which I confirmed the receipt of his letter arrived fine. In Südbahnhotel I still remember once staying one or two nights with Rudi on the trip back from somewhere (Gastein?) while you and Papa stayed on in Gastein. So your letters N° 106–108 all got here and were merely wrongly numbered. Nothing was lost due to my change of address. I am eager to see the book about the Crown Prince. And it will also really interest Adele. She is now reading a book about Emperor Franz Joseph (by Margutti, Imperial Adjutant General) and is overall very interested in historical things. Kontiki is connected to a scientif. supposition, namely the question of whether it is possible that the Polynesians could have immigrated from South America on rafts. Anyone who has experienced a storm on the high seas will find it scarcely plausible that a raft and its occupants could have endured that. It looks almost like a “*Jägerlatein*”¹. I am looking very forward to the contents of the promised package and only hope that you two did not spend too much on it.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

* roughly the equivalent of our *Gymnasium*

P.S. Warm regards to Rudi. I will write him soon in detail and would be interested in hearing more about his Paris trip. I will attempt to acquire pictures of the house as soon as possible.

Princeton, 28./X. 1949.

55.

Dear Rudi!

Hearty thanks for your l[ast] letter from Paris. I am happy that you got a pleasant change of scenery once again by means of your stay in Paris. The fact that one's job doesn't always please one and in every regard is, I believe, unavoidable, even if one has chosen it out of sheer love for the subject. I can imagine that in such politically unstable times as now prevail, work with public institutions, e.g. health insurance companies, is not pleasant. But apparently the political tensions are still increasing. But there has to sometime come a turning point. In other regard there is a noticeable ascent in Europe.

¹ A “hunter’s story,” i.e., a tall tale

Has what Paris has to offer a visitor once again attained its pre-war level? (or even exceeded it?). Hearty thanks for the book about Crown Prince Rudolf, which came today. I see that the author adheres to the “official” version, according to which it was a double suicide in Mayerling. Is that actually (also in other books) the generally held view? The book will at any rate be interesting to Adele as well as me. Adele just read a book about Emperor Franz Joseph in which one learns a lot of interesting things. Enclosed I am sending you a few pictures of the house. The end of the row of houses one sees in that one picture is simultaneously the end of Princeton. I’ll send the layout of the place soon.

With warm regards
 Your Kurt
 Thousand *Bussi* to Mama

Princeton, 30./XI. 1949.

56.

Dearest Mama!

Enclosed I am sending you a plan of our house (scale 1:100). The arrow shows from where the photo was taken. As you see, the living room is a hall in which one could easily hold a dance for fifty people. One could easily have two rooms and still made an anteroom. That the place has no anteroom is something that one would find bothersome in Europe but here it is commonplace. Adele is working very assiduously on the beautification of the house. Now she planted tulips bulbs for next year and also was given a gift of some new trees. The existing ones were pretty sparse.

Why did you have such problems with the heating? Are the people who own the apartment never in Vienna? I was sorry to hear that you had fallen again; That really has happened far too often in the last few years. But it is good you have kept your youthful limberness to the extent that nothing serious ever happens to you when you do.

A tonsil operation, to gauge by the description of Frau Morgenstern, must be quite the torture, especially the first few days afterward. I am always surprised as to why one wouldn’t preferably take out the tonsils from the outside. What does Rudi say about that?

It occurs to me that you will probably be surprised that my study has its entry via the kitchen. Actually, I was to trade rooms with Adele, but I like the

smaller one more, because it is warmer and paneled with wood. Adele wants to move the door from the kitchen into the living room but naturally we don't have the money for that now.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. The posting of this letter was delayed somewhat because I also wanted to write to Rudi. Many thanks for your letters 109, 110, 111. № 110 was unfortunately somewhat mutilated.

Princeton, 18./I. 1950.

58.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters № 111–113, which all arrived in good condition. In letter № 110 something was cut out¹ of what you wrote about Hilde. Then on the reverse side something was missing about the book of Schaukal² but that can't have been the reason for the censoring. What was written there would interest me, because that probably gave the reason why after reading it you "were spiritually completely torn up," as you (immediately after the cut-out section) wrote. We thank you both warmly, too, for the Christmas package that came a couple of days late, which did not keep us from being very happy with it. Especially charming is the little doily. It is already beneath the lamp where it works very well. Was it store-bought?

We have almost finished reading the book by Count Corti about Empress Elisabeth. Much of it seems to me very implausible, or even impossible, but it is amusing to read. Two of the dishes in the coffee set were broken, the saucers are all intact. If the package was insured you should be able to get that reimbursed. Enclosed I am sending you another picture of our house in which you can see the whole fireplace wall. Adele had some pictures made, but they aren't ready yet. The two dogs do not belong to us, but to our neighbor. But

¹ I.e., by the American military censor in Austria, which remained under Allied occupation until 1955

² Richard von Schaukal (1874–1942), Austrian poet, born in KG's hometown of Brünn. Though a vehement anti-Semite, he became persona non grata under the Nazis for his support of a Catholic and independent Austria

they very much like to be around us, which is no surprise, since Adele feeds them constantly. One of them (with the funny name “Yogi”)* she has thus transformed into a pig-like animal. Our house was clearly designed by its builder with great love and also good taste, but completely suited to his particular circumstances and pastimes. Hence the large Living-room (clearly for large social events) and the two little rooms that probably were meant to be separate bedrooms for the married couple. My little room is therefore warmer than the other corner room because it is paneled in wood and has a south window. In the winter it does not really make any difference but between seasons I really noticed it. I hope the house will never become a burden to us, as it is certainly not too large for us but rather, as I believe, just right. There is however a very large and completely unused attic that Adele wants to make into an apartment and rent out. Since we would have to borrow the money to do that and pay interest, the profit would be quite small; and I am actually quite against it since one is in one’s own house in order to be undisturbed and not have any trouble with renters or rents. We are of course not thinking seriously about doing it. The book about Einstein (in which my article is also included, that is the philosophical part; the mathematical has appeared in a scholarly journal) has now appeared. I will get offprints of my contributions and can then send you one. Regarding the article about Einstein that you sent me, there were many very similar items also here in the newspapers. Such sensational reports have been in the press here several times already, much against the will of Einstein himself and clearly only intended to make a splash. The current status of his work absolutely does not justify these reports (in my opinion), even if perhaps the achieved results will be justified in the future by virtue of his ideas. But up to now everything is still unfinished and unsure. It’s simply not true that he himself called his theory “the key to the universe.” Our house was excellently received by Einstein. What did you want me to write you about Director Oppenheimer?

The first Christmas Eve in our own home was nice, but not much different from past years either except for the fact that Adele got an especially large Christmas tree, which I will also be sending a picture of. On New Year’s (that is, when it was midnight there and 6 in the evening here) I was just on my way home running a few errands, and when I walked through the streets empty of people and half-dark that lead to the edge of town I could scarcely think of anything but you two. It wasn’t as romantic as you describe your New Year’s Eve however. You must have been in a very sad mood but sadness is after all also something lovely. I believe by the way that you are exaggerating quite a bit in depicting yourself as so old. Your handwriting looks really uncommonly young for your age and that is why I believe you cannot be any older than 60

physiologically†. If you did not know your age, you probably would not guess yourself any older. Once again the weather was topsy-turvy this year, that is to say Spring in January. It was so warm that one sweated in a winter coat and the grass began to come up in the yard. This time even the meteorologists who are otherwise used to such topsy-turviness here were surprised. I will write to Rudi soon, also about the money orders. How many schillings did you actually get from my Christmas order? How is your citizenship matter going? If you were an Austrian, that could perhaps make a meeting with you two much easier.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* He is, as I just now see, not in the picture. The black one is an outsider who only comes on occasion.

† Physiological age is the age that corresponds to the actual condition of the organs.

P.S. I am enclosing another 2 photos that just got done

[vertically in margin:] Adele also sends her best regards and thanks you warmly for the gifts.

Princeton, 27./II. 1950.

59.

Dearest Mama!

Today I finally sent the \$30.– for January and February. Please excuse my doing this so late. But in Princeton, of course no one could give any information about money transfers and my trip to New York that was planned for weeks kept getting put off for a variety of reasons. I will be sending the \$15 for March soon. You don't need to worry that these \$15 per month are a burden to us.* Many thanks for your two letters N° 114, 115. The newspaper clipping does not tally with what you write about it. It is not about Einstein and Thirring, but about the connection between mathematical and musical talent and its hereditary transmission. Did it accidentally get mixed up by the censor? What you write about Einstein's biography is correct, so far as I know, insofar as the sight of a compass as a child awakened in him his interest in physics and that through Religion class the foundation was laid for his seeking a unified theory for the entire universe. That must indeed have been a

very good and interesting Religion class. Because with the kind we had, that would certainly not have been possible. What you say about the passing of time in your report about the Schaukal book relates very closely to the topic of my essay in the Einstein volume. You are right about sadness: if there were a completely hopeless sadness, nothing about it would be lovely any longer. But I believe this kind cannot reasonably exist. For we comprehend neither why this world exists nor why it is made the way it is, nor why we are in it, nor why we were born into these and no other external circumstances. So why should we imagine we know one particular thing definitively, namely that no other world exists and that we were never in another nor will be?

The photos I wanted to send you didn't turn out well, unfortunately (by the way the ones I did send you didn't either). I will maybe take a few myself soon with a flash. Can you remember the place in the book by C[ount] Corti where at a dinner one of the guests was portrayed as playing so long with a toothpick that it sprang out of his hand and flew into the face of the person across from him.[†] That seems to me to be more or less implausible. The book about Franz Joseph is well written, but it seems very tendentious in one particular direction. What you write about Hilde's income wasn't crossed out by the censor but what followed was. Did Steffi Redlich¹ not ~~write~~ tell you anything about the exact circumstances of the arrest of F[ritz] R[edlich]? She would certainly know. At the end of last year my stomach was acting up worse again. But then I did a couple weeks' regimen with baking soda (a glass of water with baking soda on an empty stomach) that really did me good. Now I'm back to normal again (as of several weeks). Nothing came of Rudi's letter. I wanted to wait until I was in New York of course, and now it's once again high time that I write to you. I will attempt to catch up on the letter to Rudi soon. Meanwhile I send him warm regards.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

* By the way, I hope to have more money at my disposal again later

[†] whereupon the Empress barely was able to suppress a fit of laughter

¹ A sister of Friedrich Redlich. She escaped with him to Paris in 1939, and survived the war

Princeton 3./IV. 1950.

60.

Dearest Mama!

Above all many thanks for the birthday wishes, the handkerchiefs and the charming Easter bunny, which all arrived intact with the two bowls. The Easter bunny looks a little stern; one could almost ~~pass him off~~ as take him for a bewitched tax official. Hopefully that is a general occurrence with you there, that tax officials transform themselves into Easter bunnies. Here, according to official proclamation, the opposite will take place this year. What Einstein said about the arms race is something I heard on the “television news.” But it actually came across more strikingly in print, because Einstein is not a good speaker. By the way, he also made several more very pithy comments about the current state of affairs here. I also read the fairy tale about Einstein. It is very sweet and also well written, but I believe the point of the story doesn’t align with reality in any form or fashion. The newspaper clippings all arrived. There was one about Einstein and one about Thirring among them, but not one about “Einstein and Thirring.” You didn’t send one like that, though. I am not in the picture that you sent; also know no one in it. What kind of a lecture course was that? I once was photographed with Einstein, Oppenheimer and several others at an event for Einstein’s 70th birthday [*inkblot obscuring word*]. In it I am standing right at the front and it’s a bad picture of me. Is it that picture that you saw? Do you at least know roughly what the Norwegian article is about?

Of the poems of Empress Elisabeth that are reprinted by Count Corti, I find one [*inkblot*] (especially those from her earliest youth) quite outstanding. I believe she must have had [*inkblot*] a really great talent for the art of poetry which however languished because she had the bad luck to be Empress. Of the Countess Wallersee (= Larisch) I know only that she wrote a book “Meine Vergangenheit” [“My Past”]. Did she write a separate book about the Empress? Why is the diary of the Empress at Brünn? and with whom? Most likely it is a forgery. One cannot say that complete ignorance is reason enough for hopelessness. If e.g. someone ends up on an island completely unknown to him, it can just as well be that it is inhabited by a harmless people than by cannibals, and his ignorance cannot give cause for hopelessness but rather for hope. Your aversion to the field of occult apparitions is very justified insofar as it is comprised of a difficult-to-unravel mixture of fraud, gullibility and stupidity along with real apparitions. But the result (and the significance) of

the fraud is not, in my opinion, to fake genuine apparitions but rather to cover up genuine apparitions.

Morgenstern cannot, as far as I know, come to Vienna this year. But his sister would know more definitively than I. Why should Rudi of all people help in this matter, by the way? The quotation from my letter of 1946 is something you have a right to hold against me. But in my defense I have to point out that returning to normalcy is taking particularly long after this war. As of a few years now a marked development in the opposite direction has been taking place.

Spring has already begun here. The tulips are already beginning to stretch their heads out of the soil and the bushes in front of our house will also blossom soon.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards also from Adele.

P.S You two once again put me to shame with your birthday wishes. As I realize to my regret, I remain behind in sending Rudi two birthdays' wishes.

Princeton, II./V. 1950.

61.

Dearest Mama!

This time I only have one single letter to reply to (Nº 118). I hope that is not related to your foot pain and the fatigue and that you are once again feeling fine. Liver and liver medication are now apparently being much prescribed for general strengthening. Have they done you good? I thank you heartily for the birthday wishes. Here I had a visit on my birthday from two nice ladies from the Institute, whom Adele had told the date (of course entirely against my will). On Easter we were invited by acquaintances to take a car ride. We have no television set. The sets are still fairly expensive after all and the picture not so outstanding. Besides, the offerings are generally quite bad. Adele frequently goes over and watches at the neighbors'. One sees many boxing matches and short "Murder-Sketchs."

It is a misconception that Einstein's discoveries in particular made the atom bomb possible. He of course contributed indirectly but the essence of his work lies in a completely different direction.

The young man on the picture that you sent looks without a doubt a lot like me; but I think you can tell by the small ears that that is not me (For mine are not so small).

I don't believe that it lay in her nature for Empress Elisabeth to have been unhappy under any circumstances. But to be really happy on the Austrian throne at that time in particular was probably an impossibility. For historical development was irrevocably headed toward the demise of the monarchy, which made itself noticeable in such things as the enigmatic death of the Crown Prince and the murder of Franz Ferdinand, and probably in much more of which the general public heard far less.

In the past weeks, we read an interesting book about King Ludwig II of Bavaria, in which his relationship to Wagner is also depicted in detail. Wagner comes off fairly poorly, but I believe much of that is slander. Regarding Ludwig's insanity, one is rather skeptical whether it was that at all, or whether someone simply wanted to do away with him for political reasons. He was without a doubt rather eccentric, but even that was probably exaggerated and seems not to be adequate reason for locking him away. Isn't it strange that Crown Prince Rudolf, Empress Elisabeth and King Ludwig II, whose views all had so much kinship with each other, all three died a violent death?

Here it is uncommonly cold this year and rainy, but Adele is already hard at work in the yard. She planted many flowers, a lilac bush, a couple of fruit trees and vegetables. It all looks very nice. The young vegetable plants are especially charming and remind me so much of the time that we planted the vegetables in the garden. That was approximately the same time that we laughed about "Who is Speaking." Long, long ago!

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] All best for Mother's Day from us both

P.S. I hope my money transfers for March and April got there fine. I'll send an offprint of my treatise tomorrow.

So I'll send the next money order (\$30) the end of June.

Princeton, 25./VI. 1950. 62.

Dearest Mama!

Both the letters № 119, 120 got here fine and I thank you warmly for the pretty alpine flowers. It must have been marvelous at Kronichhof and I hope that you were thus able to recover well. In your last letters, you don't write at all about how you are and if the liver medicine did you good. How does it stand with Knappenhof and Breitenstein? Are they back in business? And how about the swimming pool at Semmering? I remember with pleasure our excursions there together. I am also lying outdoors quite a bit now, i.e., when it is not too cold or raining, which has been the case a lot this year. Up until a couple of days ago we still have had to turn on the furnace every day in the morning, so that it isn't too uncomfortable at the breakfast table. For my birthday Adele made me a whipped cream cake with a numeral 44 out of candles that one could really light. Of the lady well-wishers, one was "the right hand of the Director," the other a friend of hers. We did that Easter outing with a married couple we know from our neighborhood who immigrated here from Germany several years ago. They are exceptionally nice people. He is a guest professor specializing in electrical engineering at Princeton University¹. She is a psychologist who had her own practice in nervous disorders in Germany. We only drove around the nearby vicinity but even there are picturesque little spots that even remind a person of scenic Switzerland. There may not be a true alpine forest but there are exotic kinds of trees that look like cypresses.

Now, to get back to our historical discussion, the sadness in the teenage poetry of the Empress does not convince me of her melancholy temperament. More likely, one can conclude from her many "pranks" that went against court etiquette (if even but a fraction of the reports are true) and from her lavish spending that by nature she was a woman with joie de vivre. As for the expenditures of King Ludwig, everyone knows after all that that kind of thing is of benefit to the country because it invigorates the economy, i.e., "brings money to the people." I am convinced that he could have spent ten times that much before this advantage would have turned into a disadvantage. For purposes of war a hundredfold is spent just like that. But if a ruler dares to use a small fraction to create something beautiful, then there is the devil to pay. The true reason for his murder (for one cannot call it anything else) is most

¹ Max Knoll (1897–1969), co-inventor of the electron microscope, was professor of electrical engineering at Princeton from 1948 to 1956

likely a different one, namely that he was not enthused about the Prussian regime in Germany after 1866. That he had bad artistic taste I also do not believe to be true (to go by the impression I had from the book). In the case of Wagner, perhaps the bad influences surrounding him (incl. his women) were transferred over to him, but I know no details about that. I never read a biography of him, but would like to sometime.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards from Adele, too
Dear Rudi!

I have been wanting for a long time to write to you in detail, but always when I get ready to, there is a letter due to Mama. There is also not much to tell (except what I write Mama). The political story gets uglier all the time here. I don't know what it's like there. Here, one reads little about Austria. I hope your stay in Venice went to your satisfaction.

With warm regards
Your Kurt

Princeton, 30./VII. 1950.

63.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your two letters № 121, 122, as well as the card from Semmering. When I see the picture of Südbahnhotel and read your description of it, my mouth fairly waters. Here there such lovely landscapes are only in the Far West, where I saw them in passing on the trip here. Also, the elegance of the hotel must be fabulous, probably more so than before the war. One does hear that in some regards, the pre-war standard in Europe has been markedly exceeded (thanks to Americ. aid?) already. Breitenstein (which I asked after already once) has to belong to someone and it is a mystery to me why it is being allowed to go to ruin by whoever owns it. Or is that in conjunction with restitution (or non-restitution) of Jewish property?

I hope you are by now long in possession of the check that I sent 3 weeks ago. Please forgive me for not sending it as promised at the end of June. It was really strangely bad luck this time. First the the holidays intervened (3 and 4 July, the 4th is Independence-day in commemoration of the liberation of America from English reign; there are big fireworks everywhere), then I had

to travel to New York urgently and I also had a cold. Besides that, the banks are closed on Saturday, so one only has the 5 days in the week for that. It is true that we are no longer freezing in the yard but I have become so accustomed to the heat here that I feel very good that way. We have eaten frequently of our vegetables. Freshly cut lettuce has a very uniquely fine flavor, which has no rival in the purchased kind. The very most surprising is to me the fact that even the tomatoes get equally sweet in comparison to the store-bought ones. But the sun is very strong here since we live on the same geographical latitude as Naples, after all. Yesterday we went to the seaside with the Knolls (the Knolls are that couple from Germany about whom I wrote recently); it was a nice change of pace. In your last letter you praise America to the skies. That was my pastime up to now but it seems that we are destined to always be of opposite opinions. Here, gradually everything is being shifted to an economy of war and the people are beginning to hoard sugar, which was difficult to come by in the last war. I still remember that I was always annoyed to be served a first-rate coffee in a New York hotel that then had to be drunk half-bitter whenever one hadn't happened to bring along sugar from home. A couple of weeks ago there was an earthquake-like jolt that could be felt. The newspapers maintained that a munition depot had gone up, but maybe it was a little atom bomblet.¹ A couple of days ago the same thing repeated itself; but there was nothing about it in the newspaper. I don't know what people in Europe think of American foreign policy; but I suspect that people are less enthused by far about it than is stated here. In this country there is also a strong opposition but it is not allowed to be heard. Thankfully there are people now and then who don't mince words. We really are unlucky to be living in such times. I do not believe that postal connections are to be stopped in the next few months. Morgenstern's house, if I am honest, does not appeal to me at all from the outside. There is a garage gate on the front that completely ruins the entire façade. The windows are oddly narrow and high and too close to the corners. Inside it's better but in many ways not to my taste.

Now to return to our historical discussion, even Bar[oness] Heyking admits that some things are lovely; and as for the tasteless things, I am convinced that many things were sold after the king's death and replaced by others. That was surely necessary to pay off his debts and, besides that, the myth of his insanity had to be maintained. I do not contest the Empress's melancholy, I merely think that it was not innate. The poem about Korea that you sent fits the situation very well, but the government here has no sensibility for poetry,

¹ On May 19, 1950, 420 tons of munitions exploded on a pier at South Amboy, New Jersey

sadly. I see this letter has gotten quite long and so will close now since I do want to write a couple of words to Rudi

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards also from Adele

Dear Rudi!

We thank you heartily for the nice book about Vienna that arrived here 12 days ago. We already started it and find that it is very pleasant to read. Unfortunately we do not get around to reading much now, because Adele is always tired of an evening from gardening. As always, she does much too much. E.g. she had gotten it into her head to cut the grass every 8 days. Don't you think that is ridiculous? In the Fall there will be a math. conference at which I will also be speaking¹. I am curious if the European participants will not experience difficulties due to the war. Up to now we have not heard from either you or Mama about your stay in Venice, unfortunately.

With warm regards Your Kurt

Princeton, 21./VIII. 1950.

64.

Dearest Mama!

Today I write to you most of all to wish you all best on your 71st birthday. I hope you are still as perky and healthy as a year ago and will remain so for a long time. In the last year, as I see in your letters, you once again experienced many lovely things. Especially the stay in Kronichhof and in Südbahnhotel is something one can really be envious of, and I wish you from the heart that your next year is just as splendid. Adele also sends her good wishes. We are in the process of sending off a package. Please forgive it happening so belatedly but in the past weeks I was really in quite a bind. My health was fairly bad*; I kept having a small temperature of 37.1, 37.2 [98.8–99 F] and had to swallow all kinds of medicine. Now I am doing fairly well again. I naturally was held

¹ The International Congress of Mathematicians in Cambridge, Mass., which had been originally scheduled for 1940; the 1950 meeting was the first since the war. KG spoke on August 31 on “Rotating Universes in General Relativity”

up in preparing my lecture due to my illness and thus had to hurry up then (and now) all the more so. I can't write you in as much detail as usual for that reason today, but instead am postponing until after I return from my lecture that is supposed to take place on 30./VIII.¹ What you write about Wagner and America is very interesting and totally new to me. Saying that your letters to me are lost on me is an exaggeration. I admit that I do not write often but I do write in detail and every letter from me corresponds in length to 2–3 letters from you.

Once again all the best and thousand *Bussis*
from Your Kurt

* to be exact not the last but in the weeks “before last”

P.S. Many thanks for your letters N° 123, 124. Did the letter that I sent at the end of July arrive unharmed? Warm regards to Rudi.

Princeton, 29./IX. 1950.

65.

Dearest Mama!

You got decidedly shorted by my August letter and so today I want to make up for it by writing you an especially long letter. So first of all, my lecture went well. There were some one hundred listeners and much applause beforehand as well as afterward. The conference was all in all quite well attended. There were some 2500 participants, however 9/10 Americans, so rather odd for an “International” conference. Whenever one did happen to encounter a European mathematician, one invariably found that he had already been living in America 10 years. There did not seem to be many people who came from Europe for the purpose of the conference. That probably has to do with the current government here which would most like to build a Chinese Wall around the country, so that no one learns what someone in the rest of the world thinks, and the rest of the world not learn what goes on here. It is true that I have frequently grumbled about America but not until the past few years, before that I was boundlessly enthused. But now the circumstances are

¹ KG was invited to present a paper on his cosmological results at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Cambridge, Mass., the first meeting of the organization since the war

gradually becoming ever more like the European ones. It is apparent e.g. even in foreign travel, where recently (by certain arrangements at reduced rates) quite unbelievable things have happened, in comparison to which the famous “Austrian chaos” is a true El Dorado of order. I am surprised you write that Rudi would give much to be here. I did not have this impression earlier and this stance now is even more justifiable. One would conclude from Uncle Karl’s words that the world is approaching a new Sodom, that it is not much better there with you; but I believe society in Europe still has the last war too much in vivid memory for it to let itself be baited into another one already. I don’t understand why one cannot send political magazines from Vienna.

Surely there isn’t an export prohibition on the side of the Austrian agencies? (Please ask Rudi about it.) I was sorry to hear that you had your recurring intestinal issues again over the summer. I seem to recall though that it had gotten better over the years and that the Pancreon had helped you well. Or am I mistaken? Hopefully you are doing better by now that summer is over. As to the “gobbling of medicine,” I was always very against it, as you will recall. But I think that is only correct insofar as one shouldn’t start with that in one’s youth. The medicine I took recently had no ill effects; not even on my stomach. On the contrary: it put my digestion in order wonderfully so that I gained weight despite the temperatures, and this effect lasted for months. I think medicine (especially in the last decade) has made significant progress so that it gradually is actually extending the life of people (and not shortening it) and that one no longer needs to fear medications. Especially in this country the median lifespan has increased significantly in the past decades.

Enclosed I am sending you a picture of Einstein and me so you have something to make you laugh. Don’t we both look funny? Einstein is doing quite well, health-wise, despite his 71 years. The fact that one doesn’t hear him in public anymore nowadays is likely due to the fact that his early warnings were quite in vain and the development here went quite in the opposite direction. He is therefore clearly convinced of the ineffectualness of his efforts to forewarn and has bowed out. However, I am of the opinion that he is too pessimistic. I believe there is too good a core within America for it not to have to come into the light of day sooner or later again.

I don’t think that was a very good picture of Rudi. He must have wobbled during the shot and that makes him look quite unlike himself.

You will have heard by now that Frau Morgenstern had a little boy. It must have been a quite difficult birth. Her labor pains lasted 22 hours and she had to be fortified via sugar intravenously and finally given narcotics. But she looks nevertheless very happy and the child is very strong and healthy.

I would prefer you please not send me the Wagner letters, but instead a biography (if you happen to come across a good one somewhere). That interests me more than letters. I believe the primary accusation leveled (or that one can level) at Wagner is essentially that he thought art and artists too little honored in relation to whatever good they created by bringing enjoyment to millions of people, and that he thus took too much for himself as a result. But isn't he right, in principle, after all?* The book by Friedlaender about Vienna is really excellent, much better than it seemed to be on the first couple of pages. It is all very realistic and one feels with every word that it really must have been like while otherwise in the case of historical books usually the opposite impression dominates (namely, that it could not have been like that)

I hope the check I sent in September arrived fine. It was of course delayed by the conference. I hope I finally manage to send the Oct. check punctually. Why are you worrying over presents for us? We got something so nice last year (the coffee cups) so that we really could be content with that for several years. It is news to me that they plan to fly to the moon. I only heard that there is a second small moon to be built which also will orbit the Earth and will carry human observers.

Many thanks for your letters N° 125, 126, and most especially for the long one of 30./VIII. You are doing the Princeton landscape an injustice. We have a very lovely lake here and around it very romantic meadows that remind one of the Prater meadows, even if they are not as large. All in all the country looks much like a park; only the true alpine forest is missing. This year is the coldest year that I have experienced up to now. In June we still turned on the furnace and in August one would start all over again; and otherwise it was still warm clear into the end of October. I hope to get a little letter from you again soon, for the last one was quite some time ago.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

*esp. when you consider how publishers etc. often make themselves wealthy on the works of others

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for the pretty card from Velden. I am glad you got such a good shot and recall clearly our stay in Bled together which was a success in every regard, and something I enjoy looking back on.

With warm regards Your Kurt.

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 1./XI. 1950.

66.

Dearest Mama!

I think this is the first time that I only have one letter from you to reply to (Nº 127) and it didn't come until 6 weeks after 126! But you wrote to Adele, who was very pleased to hear directly from you, in the interim. She planned to write to you immediately; but, as it goes, she put it off and then she got the grippie. But I believe she will be doing it soon.

Now, first to the picture with Einstein that I sent. My poor appearance must be an illusion because my weight has remained pretty constant for several years and shouldn't be much different from that in the previously-sent photos. Einstein looks like a good old grandpapa which there is no reason to object to, and as for the suspenders, it is merely a question of habit and fashion as to whether one finds them aesthetic. A 100 years ago one would have found an uncorseted woman unaesthetic. The thing that Einstein warned against was attempting to attain peace by building up arms and by intimidating the "opponent." He said that this process would necessarily lead to war (and not to peace), and he was right. And it is known that the other process (a goal of agreement by amicable means) was not even attempted by America but rather rejected out of hand. Who started it is not the only question and usually is also difficult to ascertain. But at any rate it's certain that America is waging a war under the catch phrase of "democracy" for a completely unpopular regime and does things for the U.N. in the name of a "police action" with which the U.N. itself is not in agreement. The current entry restrictions here have nothing to do with the immigration of desperados. Perhaps you have heard that they are turning to experts to advise the U.N. and that recently the participants of an international doctors' convention were detained on an island near New York. I am surprised that you say I would change my views in Europe. I was just thinking that people are more sensible in Europe. Whatever you wrote in your last letter about the strikes in your youth was cut out, unfortunately.

What you wrote about the furnishings of the villa is really strange. Why these things in particular? The whole question of the villa will of course not be finally settled before the peace treaties are signed and stable circumstances have returned again. It is really unbelievable that now, 5½ years after the end of the war, no peace has been made. By the way there has got to be some lawyer in Austria who knows if the current law also applies to Austr. citizens. Morgenstern's child wasn't baptized at all yet and won't be baptized till a later age, as is often the case here apparently. I am not at all enthused about Wagner's music (as you know) and I like the Italian opera (you malign) a hundred times better; but I am less clear about his personal character. What

did he need these immense sums of money for? Was he in some kind of dire straits? I did not like the movie “Cinderella” nearly as much as Snow White. It looks more like a parody. Just one cat that is in it, is really sweet. It’s true that I am now working on “cosmology.”

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

[*Vertically in margin:*] Much love and warm regards from Adele

P.S. I sent the money punctually this time. I am glad your citizenship is taken care of.

Princeton, 3./XII. 1950.

67.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 128–130 and the enclosed newspaper clipping. I think this brief depiction of the history of quantum theory is excellent and definitely objective. Einstein did get mentioned as well, in accordance with his contribution. His major contribution lies in another area, after all. Then Bohr and DeBroglie* are also mentioned, who are both not Germans. (The former is a Dane, the second a Frenchman). I can see in this no aversion toward Einstein nor any omission of the Germans. Just what was said about the “decisive” progress since 1941 is on very wobbly legs indeed but even there the Germans were not omitted. If you buy yourself any random book about Einstein, it will probably be bad. There is a very good biography by Phillip Frank, but it probably has not been translated into German.† As for Wagner, I have seen Lohengrin, the Flying Dutchman and Tristan and could not get enthused about them. As you know, I don’t really go for operas, but possibly that is due to the staging, the playing and the singing one is presented with. Maybe in the 19th century there were quite different opera performances than today. At any rate it is clear that many really lovely melodies are to be found in Italian operas, which one cannot claim in Wagner operas. It seems very unlikely to me that only the love of pomp is to blame for Wagner’s enormous expenditures.

It is very gratifying to hear that Vienna is so beautifully restored again and, given the immense sums America sent to Europe, I would not have expected otherwise. Has Rotenturmstrasse been restored to its previous appearance?

And how does it stand with the Prater and the Schönbrunn zoo? Adele told me that there was nothing left of the latter in 1947.

The political views that I expressed in my last letter, have been confirmed magnificently in the meantime; especially to the extent that people in Europe really seem to be much more sensible (I did not speak of “sensible” but rather merely of “more sensible”). The war monster never comes unbidden and this time it must have been particularly difficult to summon it.

I am sorry Grete Brausewetter is so ill. How is she doing now? Goiters can be treated surgically these days and completely cured.

I don't understand the business regarding the dastardly letter about you. What was it supposedly about? today, now that almost no contact exists between you and them. With Uncle Karl, in any case, you had a lively correspondence. How is that now and what do you hear from him recently?

I didn't yet write you that we have had a television set for some time now. As is usual with expensive items, so in this case such a purchase is represented as savings: namely, since one no longer need go to the movies. But here it is really very nearly the case, for we won't need to pay off the set before two years are up. The picture is surprisingly clear, the offerings in general not yet very good, but also not worse than at the movies. Besides, it is improving all the time. I got Rudi's letter and will write very soon.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards from Adele.

* and Dirac, who is an Englishman

† Just heard that it appeared a few months ago in German.

P.S. As I hear, the book by Barnett about Einstein is very good, but contains nothing personal, rather merely a generally-comprehensible depiction of his physical discoveries.

[*enclosed Christmas card:*]

Dear Mama and dear Rudi!

We wish you from the heart a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

With many regards

Your Kurt & [*in Adele's hand*] Your Adele

Princeton, 12./XII. 1950

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for your [last] letter of 30./X. Is the Wagner biography by Chamberlain really so bad? I do remember well that I found his philosoph[ical] scientific views bad back then. We often talked about that (long long ago) in Marienbad, when I read his book about Goethe. I am of course yet today still of the opinion that most of the negative things he wrote about natural science are sheer nonsense; but Wagner is a quite different area that he perhaps understands more about.¹ An autobiography of course in the case of Wagner does not lend itself to drawing an objective picture of his character.

I already sent the \$25 for Mama a week ago. An increase of the contribution for Mama would currently still be quite difficult for me.

As to meeting up with you two, I do believe that Zurich will be especially expensive, and therefore would like to suggest Paris instead, where you perhaps also know hotels that are good and not too expensive. We would have to stay together there for 14 days so that makes sense. How about Germany? i.e., how are the prices there and could you get an entrance visa for going there? I think in particular of Hannover where I could perhaps get a trip paid for by the Institute in order to have a look at the Leibniz manuscripts kept there.

Bad weather we also had here plenty. You surely heard about the hurricane here in our region. At our house it resulted in our whole cellar being flooded with water. But nothing serious happened. What do you say to politics? Any Christmas mood will scarcely be possible.

Warm regards and thousand *Bussi* to Mama

Your Kurt

P.S. I wanted to ask you something else that Mama does not need to know. Do you perhaps know anything that what would really please Mama as a present for her 70th birthday? I can judge that from here with far more difficulty than you; quite aside from the fact that you are in fact much more adept in such things than I. So if something occurs to you, do please let me know!

¹ See note to Letter, 26 August 1946, above; Chamberlain married Wagner's daughter Eva Maria von Bülow in 1908

Princeton, 8./I. 1951

68.

Dearest Mama!

Most of all we thank you heartily for the lovely things you sent us for Christmas. We should really be ashamed that you two always go to such efforts in making a little package and I only send a prosaic check. The table cloth is very charming and we have already put it to use, and the scarf I can make very good use of in the winter weather here. We also were very happy with the books. I was quite surprised that Auernheimer¹ writes historical novels. Is he still even alive? and how old is he? There is no year of publication in the book. The little angel prompted great admiration in the two ladies who were here last year on my birthday and whom we see often, and they claim that something that cute is not to be had here at all. Christmas and New Year's went off relatively without any fuss. We did have a very nice and large tree that Adele got and decorated but the Christmas mood was lacking in this year of "war" more than ever. From Ma Porkert I got a lovely leather briefcase in the size that Adele wrote after she'd tried in vain to find something here that would suit. On New Year's Eve we were looking forward to what was going to be on TV but it was all canceled. After midnight only one station was broadcasting and this nothing other than the names of donors for some hospital charity with a statement of the amount donated. The TV offerings are sometimes quite good old movies. Recently there was a broadcast from the Metropolitan Opera (Don Carlos) so I had the opportunity of seeing that the opera productions there are not better than elsewhere. On the other hand I recently heard a selection from Carmen used to unusually good effect in a movie by Maria Tschebotareu². But I believe that even that was far from optimal. Often there are good variety shows especially a couple very good comedians. Many wrestling matches are broadcast, which of course do not interest me. There are by the way (you wouldn't think it possible) also wrestling matches between women and there are even a few quite pretty girls among them.

The political situation has continued to develop wonderfully here over the holidays and one hears nothing but: defending the nation, conscription, tax increase, inflation etc. I believe myself that even in the blackest (or brownest)

¹ Raoul Auernheimer (1876–1948), Viennese author, theater critic, and lawyer. A nephew of Theodore Herzl, he was interned at Dachau in 1938, but permitted to emigrate to the United States after American diplomatic intervention

² Maria Cebotari (1910–1949), Romanian soprano, leading prima donna of the Berlin and Vienna State Operas

Hitler-Germany it wasn't that bad. The people that are talking so stupidly again there like in Hitler's time are probably in the minority and I hope the Germans will not be so stupid as to let themselves be used as cannon fodder against the Russians. I have the impression that America will soon stand isolated with its nonsense. As I hear, Renner¹ died over there. He was probably chosen in '45 among other things in consideration of his age.

Why did it happen so suddenly with Frau Morgenstern? Only in your last letter you had written that she was doing better.

Is the book about Einstein really so hard to understand? I think part of the issue is the prejudice against and the fear of everything "abstract," and if you would try to read it like a novel (without wanting to understand everything on first reading) it maybe wouldn't seem too incomprehensible to you. It is true that I am now working in cosmology and that cosmol. and physics are natural sciences. I received letters 131, 132 and the Dec. check is en route.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Many regards and hearty thanks also from Adele. A letter from her will follow soon.

Telegram

5. III. 51

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHENSELDERSTR 81 VIENNA =
CONDITION QUITE GOOD AM ALREADY HOME ADELE LOVINGLY
LOOKING AFTER ME MANY REGARDS = KURT

¹ Karl Renner (1870–1950), Austrian socialist politician, leader of the first Austrian government after World War I, who was elected the first president of Austria following World War II

Princeton, 17./III. 1951.

69.

Dearest Mama!

Finally I feel well enough to pull myself together for a detailed letter to you. My friends would probably say that if I couldn't do it earlier that it probably had psychological reasons. But the matter is not quite that simple. For a long time I had almost no bowel movements and for that reason could only eat very little. All around however, I felt quite fine and didn't lose very much weight, which surprises me. Now finally things have settled down and I am so hungry that I can't eat as much as I would like to. I can go out again and am surprised how little weakened I actually felt the first time. That is probably connected to the vitamins that they injected me with by the kilo in the hospital. I hope it will continue to improve but cannot resist a certain sense of pessimism.

I thank you warmly for your letters № 134–136. The numbering seems to have gotten into disorder somewhat, since 133 and 135 are missing and yet there are two occurrences of 136. But I think everything you wrote has gotten here. Adele was hugely pleased with your dear letter. She already had a draft of the reply ready when I became ill. Now she has her hands full with my care and cooking for my dietary needs. I thank you even more for the little flower. It is very charming. We spent the holidays this year with no less fuss than otherwise except the atmosphere was lacking more than ever. That was unavoidable given the current circumstances here; I wrote you about the television offerings. The state of affairs here is in many regards not yet comparable to Germany 1933–39, but as to warmongering, building up of arms, repression of any pacifist impulse, that will soon be reached. You are right not to read the war reports about Korea. I believe there has never yet been something so disgusting as this war artificially kept going in order to prevent at all costs any peace from “breaking out.” What I would require from a good opera performance would be above all that facial expressions, gestures, and vocal conveyance fit the situation in a natural fashion. In the case of Cebotareu¹ that was the case to a certain extent, whereas what you usually get consists merely of exaggerated singing technique along with a kind of admiration for one's own singing and at best a couple of wooden gestures. Einstein was of course quite especially nice to me during my illness and visited me in the hospital as well as at home quite a few times. You will have

¹ See note 2 to Letter, 8 January 1951

probably read in the Viennese papers about the prize¹ that I (along with another scientist) received on his birthday. It came as quite a surprise to me. It was really a lovely gold medal that went with it but for me at the moment the money was particularly important, for you can imagine that doctors, hospital bills etc. devour a fair portion of it. But I hope that a tidy sum will remain. I'll write to Rudi regarding a possible trip to Europe. Unfortunately I glean from your recent letters that you two are not doing all that well, health-wise. How is it looking now?

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. The \$30 due on 1./III are already en route.

Princeton, 18./III. 1951.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for both the letters. Forgive me for not fulfilling your request for more frequent shorter news up to now. As I heard though, Morgenstern wrote to his father ca one week ago, also about my condition, and I of course assumed that he would tell you two, as well. So I hope that you did have news each week with my telegram and this letter. As to your medical questions, I can inform you of the following: The matter began suddenly on 1./II.* with vomiting of a black bitter fluid before breakfast. Then followed black tar-like diarrhea that lasted for more than 24 hours. An operation (as one of the doctors told me) is not a consideration. The attack did not come out of the blue, insofar as my temperature had been going up over the entire past $\frac{3}{4}$ year, also from time to time (esp. in the beginning) back pain and heart issues. In partic[ular] my temperature always went up at the least chill (or to put it better, cooling) I took Aureomycin and Penicillin a few times to ward it off. Lately my appetite became ever worse. Whether and how that can have anything to do with the bleeding, you as a doctor can judge better than I. The

¹ KG shared with the physicist Julian Schwinger the first Albert Einstein Award (for “an outstanding contribution to knowledge in the mathematical and physical sciences”), for which KG received \$7,500 and a gold medal

longstanding constipation began with an enema at the hospital in which a large amount of the water stayed inside. An X-ray is to be taken in ca. one week.

As for my trip to Europe, it is made easier by the prize I won, but on the other hand made more difficult by my state of health. It thus will scarcely be possible before Sept. I hope you are doing better again with your gallbladder and remain with warm regards

ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards to Mama and you from Adele, too

* I wrote you once that everything here is so precisely regulated that the winter cold or the summer heat begins exactly on the 1st of the month. With illnesses it therefore also seems to be the case.

Telegram

23. III. 51

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA
THANK YOU FOR GOOD WISHES HOPE EASTER PRESENT ARRIVED
SEND WARM EASTER GREETINGS DETAILED LETTER ON THE WAY
= KURT AND ADELE

Princeton, 12./IV.1951.

70.

Dearest Mama!

A week ago I was just about to write you when you letter N° 140* came and then I spent that time reading instead of writing. So this letter is somewhat delayed. After what I wrote last time you don't have to be worried any more now. At least as far as appetite is concerned, for some time now I am doing better than before the bleeding. Now the previous condition is beginning to reassert itself but I hope that is only temporary. Probably I ate a little too

much. I have an excellent doctor¹ here (who also treats Einstein). Unfortunately he has his office in New York and only comes out to Princeton now and then. But I talk to him on the telephone very often and often travel to New York, too. I am not very enthused about the Princeton hospital and the Princeton doctors. Really good hospitals can only exist in large cities, where all specialists are readily available. In a certain sense it is right that Princeton is an “island of peace” but that comes with various disadvantages, e.g. this one. The weather here is unfortunately also windy, rainy and cold so that I have yet to have many opportunities to take a walk or lie outdoors. I of course intend to relax thoroughly in the summer this year. Adele wants me to do that in Europe. But experience tells me that the sea does me the most good and since this is only a 2 hour train ride away from here, I don’t know if there is any sense in taking on the duress of a journey of 6000 km. It would be lovely if we could meet e.g. in Abbazzia or Bled and spend a few weeks together, but I really don’t want to travel that far before I am completely back to normal. But you shouldn’t think that you will forever remain the waiting “Wiebke” for this very year I want to be serious about my trip to Europe. The correct amount of my portion of the prize is unfortunately 7500, and not 15,000. By the way, I want to know which of the two newspaper clippings that you sent me came from the Presse and which from the Arbeiterzeitung. I assume the shorter one was from the Presse. I didn’t write you anything about the ceremony because I hate those sort of things. Each of the two prize recipients had a speaker who praised him. Mine was Johann von Neumann, a prof. at the Institute who really praised me to the heavens, so that every unbiased listener would have had the complete impression that the prize was not adequate to my accomplishments.

You must have gotten your nailbed infection from your lack of care in using the nail scissors. I can remember clearly how often Rudi scolded you for that. Now the main thing is that nothing worse happened.

Please write me how many schillings you got for the Easter present. Through which bank it arrived at was not my doing but rather the bank’s here. Regarding “saving” and prices it is here like it is there. The prices are going up rapidly and no one knows what the future will bring. At any rate, to go by the current situation, our house was a good gamble to have taken.

¹ Dr. Rudolf Ehrmann (1879–1963), who was Einstein’s personal physician in Berlin and then in New York. In August 1939 Einstein successfully enlisted the help of the dean of medicine at New York University to offer Ehrmann a position, which allowed him to escape Nazi Germany

The little Morgenstern boy has been here often, but we haven't seen him for a long time now. His own father couldn't tell me anything about his "heroic deeds." So what was it about? Enclosed I am returning Mimi's letter. Is this one sheet all that you sent? Or did maybe the most interesting part get lost? I will close for today and remain with thousand *Bussis* and

warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt
Many regards from Adele too.

*137, 139 just arrived

Princeton, 13./V. 1951.

71.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you two warmly for the birthday wishes and the little package. The book about Wagner especially pleases me. It is at any rate well and intelligently written. As far as its objectivity, that is of course another question. But if the author is not directly a forger and a conscious liar, one can mostly make sense of it. The tie is very charming.

I am doing very well again, health-wise and have gained almost 1 kg in the past 14 days. I have to keep to a strict dietary regimen for 4 weeks. May not eat any soup, nothing spicy or sour, no fat other than butter and no raw fruit. Baked goods may not contain anything other than: flour, milk, butter, eggs and sugar. Meat must be minced, vegetables and steamed fruit pureed, the latter mixed with beaten egg whites. I really have no desire for the forbidden things and some of the especially recommended dishes taste quite excellent to me and were completely unknown to me before, e.g. the compote with the whipped egg whites or egg frothed with milk. Oddly enough, I never had intense pain from the ulcer, neither before or after the bleeding; just discomfort or a little pain on the right in the area of my back and a feeling of fullness in my stomach. But as I keep to the diet and my digestion is in order, these symptoms are disappearing. The X-ray results showed "an ulcer beyond a doubt" namely at the exit of the stomach. The doctor is not in favor of Larostidin. I don't know what else he intends to do. For now I have to keep to the diet in order to gain weight. I hope to go to the seaside in July because that is the loveliest time here. Going to Velden in Sept. would be the most

appealing of all plans of traveling to Europe; especially also because there is a sanatorium there. For I fear wherever I eat in a restaurant it will not do me good. Another possibility would be for me to bring diet canned goods with me that one would only have to warm up. Here I live mainly off of these canned goods, which are very good. How expensive would the sanatorium be? The water in Wörthersee is probably not very warm anymore in Sept., right? (compared with Bled e.g.). But that would not be an issue since I hope to bathe enough in July.

Of course there were articles regarding the awarding of the Einstein Prize in all the newspapers here, in some there were also pictures of me but most of them were bad. In the New York Times it was even on the first page under “World News summarized.” I got congratulations from a number of former classmates, namely from: Löwbär¹, Hammerschlag and Klepetar². Löwbär lives in New York and owns a shop for Chinese objets d’art. Hammerschlag is with his parents in England and he seems to be doing quite well, too.

Spring was very cold and windy here this year but now the time is slowly arriving when I can go lie out in the garden. Adele has already planted a number of lovely flowerbeds and a couple of exotic bushes are blooming in front of the house. You cannot say about Vienna that Spring in a big city is sad, since you have the municipal park, the Volksgarten and the Vienna Woods. As I see, you take advantage of getting out into Nature via these opportunities too. Thank you for the charming little flowers. Yes, I also like thinking back to our excursion à deux to Kahlenberg. I think that must now have been just about 19 years ago. At our place we have undertaken a rearrangement occasioned by the prize. I switched rooms with Adele and Adele has decorated hers really quite delightfully in farmhouse style. Even the wood paneling of this room is as if tailor-made for a farmhouse (or hunting) parlor. She uses it of course at the same time as a workroom, too. My new study looks much nicer because it’s significantly roomier and it is also better situated but it has the disadvantage of being hotter in the summer, which one can perhaps rectify with a fan. What exactly are these Americans who lived in your house? Did you know them personally?

¹ Fritz Löw-Berl (1906–1976), a member of a family of wealthy Jewish Brünn industrialists, who became a leading collector, dealer, and scholarly authority on Chinese lacquerware

² Harry E. Klepetar, another boyhood schoolfriend of KG’s from Brünn; later, as editor of Prague’s leading newspaper, he was forced to flee the Nazis to Shanghai, where he lived for nine years, before subsequently settling in the United States. See also Letters, 21 September 1953 and 3 October 1954, below

How is Grete Brausew. doing? The “pandering” behavior you write about I guess has to with her illness because I can’t remember noticing that about her before. Rudi’s letter arrived. I will write him soon and find out about the View Master stereoscope in the next few days in New York.

Please do send me a letter of Mimi’s in which she writes about religious questions (especially about Catholicism). That would interest me very much.

I send you thousand *Bussi* and another thousand extra for Mother’s Day, and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt.

P.S. I want to send the next \$30 in the beginning of June

Warm regards from Adele, too. She says she’s sorry that she still has not written. She has a lot of work with the garden just now.

P.S. Adele knows nothing about anything being wrong with her mother (as I assume from your letter) and that is very good just like it is. So please do not mention anything! (also not in letters to me). I received your letters 141–143.

Princeton, 28./VI. 1951.

72.

Dearest Mama!

Not long ago true Summer suddenly set in and it got so hot that one preferred to lie in a shady spot and do nothing. But other than that I always feel the most comfortable when it’s hot. I postponed my stay at the seaside by 14 days because this year the Spring was so cold that the ocean water will not be warm enough yet. We spent a day at the coast recently to see about lodging and there was literally far and wide not a single summer guest to be seen, even though the season begins on 15./VI. I believe it will be poorly visited this year, which of course is fine by me. There seems this year to be no one who has the money and time despite (or due to?) the huge armament business. And the stores are empty everywhere. Perhaps there is a consumer strike against the unconscionable prices. At any rate it has the result of frequent sales with reduced prices where the public’s needs are met.

I hope Rudi has long since received the stereoscope. The picture-series asked for were all included except for three that were not to be had. Perhaps I can get ahold of them somewhere else. We also had a look at the pictures of course and we liked them so much that I immediately had to buy Adele a

Stereoscope like it too. They really are quite delightful. Many thanks for the essay about relativity and Mimi's letter. I will write you more about it soon. Today I just want to briefly tell you about a new award that I recently received here. Yale University (one of the oldest and most renowned universities in America) awarded me an honorary doctorate, and the occasion was the 250th anniversary of their founding, which is a very special recognition indeed. There were ca. 25 honorary doctorates awarded to deserving scientists. I was by far the youngest; all the others were 60 or even older. For the ceremony I had to wear an academic robe and a beret which Adele found very flattering. I will close for today so that this letter finally makes it into the mail, but will write again soon.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. In the garden it is very pleasant despite the heat; Adele has built a little terrace onto the house

Princeton, 30./VI. 1951

72a

Dear Rudi!

I hope the stereoscope has now long been in your possession. I got 2 of the missing 3 picture series in New York and enclose them in this letter. Of course I didn't deduct the \$10.—, but rather I view the stereoscope as a belated birthday present for you. We never know what we could give you for your birthday. Many thanks for the information about Velden. A hotel or sanatorium where butter is rare is not a consideration for me. I live primarily off of butter (ca 1/8 kg per day). Besides that I devour some 5 eggs (of 2 only the white). I don't eat much meat, however it does have to be very tender. I don't know if it would not be better for me to come straight to Vienna; by plane from Paris or here so one doesn't have any difficulties with border revisions. With a diet regimen one is of course better off being at home. I could stay at the hotel in Josefstadt and bring canned fruit and vegetables with me (N.B. aren't there so-called baby foods in Vienna in which everything is pureed and prepared without spices?) Beside the canned goods I would need a chicken only once a week (which keeps for 8 days after all), as well as mashed potatoes and 2 eggs per day whipped into beaten egg whites and 2 eggs beaten

with milk; for that purpose I could buy an electric egg beater if neither of you have one. Bread must be toasted. Do you have an electric toaster? By the way, it could be that I won't have to stick to such a strict dietary regimen in the Fall any longer. Now I am doing quite well, health-wise. I have continued to gain weight so that I am almost back to my weight before the bleeding. I don't eat whipped cream but milk beaten with an egg (which is called Eggnogg here) is even more nourishing. Please write me as soon as possible what you think about the idea of coming to Vienna for 3–4 weeks. The Stereoscope is really attractive. I am only surprised that there are not more picture series and that these are so expensive. By the way, the latter does not seem to be my opinion alone. In a New York department store you can already get them for 21 c.

With warm regards, also from Adele, Your Kurt.

Princeton, 27./VII. 1951.

73.

Dearest Mama!

So I want to write you today (with some delay) the continuation of my last letter. Your and Rudi's letter of 9./VII. (Nº 148) have arrived and I am glad that you thus think a trip to Vienna to be the most sensible too. I assume that I will have no difficulties here with a visa if I say that my mother lives there. Though for a trip beyond the "Iron Curtain" it might be hard or impossible. I would have liked to have visited Brünn and seen about the villa.

As you see, I am still in Princeton. Recently the weather was very inhospitable and not at all suited to bathing. Now it is hot again and so I will leave very soon.

I would come to Vienna somewhat later than intended. They will surely give me vacation during the semester for a couple of weeks. The air tickets from here to Vienna are so ridiculously expensive, 710 \$ roundtrip. Today, the dollar is not what it once was, when one would practically travel for free in Europe, calculated by local prices. Now most countries are just as expensive as the U.S.A. Only Austria is a notable exception. How are the economic conditions for you there, actually, compared to before the war? Isn't everything essentially like it was before?? I was highly surprised that in a sanatorium (!) in Kärnten (!) one wouldn't get butter daily. The idea with a cot is, I think, not good. That would only work for a couple of days, I think. I am glad that you have had such a nice stay in Kärnten once again. It is no sign of

aging that you were nervous before your departure. I remember that was the case 30 years ago. In 1930 I heard via Menger about the niece of Count Zeppelin and had sent her an offprint (at her request) of one of my treatises. Nothing by the way has been heard from Menger for many years. Even Morgenstern is quite out of contact with him. I don't know whether that is simply his way or if there is a particular cause. The book about the Vienna Circle was very interesting to me. Most of it is known to me, naturally, but in the historical chapter I did find some new items. I don't find politics laughable. I wish it was but unfortunately it is much worse than that. The confession of the driver of the trolley accident you write about seems suspicious to me. The true reasons for such traffic accidents is stinginess on the part of the companies, either for reasons of greed for gains or after they have gone half (or completely) bankrupt and have no more public funds for their support. But the public must of course not learn that. In the last few years the number of railroad accidents is on the rise too and the reasons given for them are frequently obviously false. Nowadays, money and workers are only available for the arms buildup. The wonderful cars, in which one feels almost nothing of the motion and only hear the sound of the wheels on the tracks, have long disappeared. My study is not newly furnished but it looks much nicer in the larger room now. Adele really built the porch all by herself but in keeping with the size of the house it is quite small, for a table and couple of chairs. It looks very charming, especially since it now has gotten a sun roof too. I have only two poor pictures from the newspaper clippings about the prize conferral, and half the text is missing. So you'd get nothing out of that. I find Mimi's letter, which I am returning enclosed, very interesting to read. Haven't you got some more of this kind? What she claims about Einstein is of course only partially correct. He is without a doubt religious in one sense, but certainly not in the churchly sense. How is Grete Brausewetter?

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards also from Adele

P.S. Health-wise I continue to do fine.

P.S. I will send a money order to you on 1. Aug.

LETTER TELEGRAM

31. VIII. 51

MARIANNE GOEDEL LERCHENFELDR STR 81 VIENNA =
HAPPY BIRTHDAY JUST RETURNED FROM THE SEASIDE WE ARE
FINE WARM REGARDS == KURT AND ADELE

Princeton, 17./IX. 1951.

74.

Dear Rudi!

Please excuse that I'm only just getting around today to answering your letter of 30./VII.* Due to my absence from the Institute, where it was delivered erroneously by the Post Office, it came to my hands belatedly and then I wanted to ponder the matter myself first somewhat. I would very gladly like to help you and considered it for several days but finally came to the conclusion that one should not get mixed up such things; indeed, I think that goes not just for me but also for you. What kind of a company is that and what kind of a representative? Do other companies do that too? Aside from everything else I doubt if I could acquire the desired confirmation from the St[ate] B[ank].

As to my trip to Vienna I cannot write anything definite yet, unfortunately. I am now thinking of leaving here mid-to end of Oct. Before that I would like to spend a few weeks doing a "post-cure" after my summer stay. The advantageous effect (esp. on appetite) has just begun to show itself since my return. A second reason is that the flight tickets are substantially cheaper in the off-season. I can't come back with Morgenstern because he is going to India for 3 months after his Europe trip and his wife is coming back alone with their child. Mama shouldn't be angry that I haven't written anything in detail about our summer stay. I will do so in the next few days and also enclose postcards.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

Thousand *Bussi* to Mama. Warm regards from Adele.

*according to the postmark

LETTER TELEGRAM

24. IX. 51

EUFOLF GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA
UNFORTUNATELY CANNOT SEND DOCUMENT LETTER ON THE
WAY PROBABLY COMING MIDDLE OR END OCT WARM REGARDS
= KURT

Princeton, 27./IX. 1951.

75.

Dearest Mama!

Now I haven't written to you for an endlessly long time. Yes, during the summer vacation one gets lazy and swimming in sea air makes one tired. That is how the August letter got dropped, i.e. turned into a telegram. So first as far as our summer stay, it was in some aspects very nice, in others less so. Enclosed I'm sending you a brochure of the place where we were and two postcards of the hotels where we stayed. We first took a room in the Asbury-Coulton. But Adele found it too expensive there and thought she could get a private apartment with a kitchen for half the price and she was right in that. We actually found a very nice little apartment with 2½ rooms and kitchen. And the landlady was very nice, but unfortunately it turned out that for some inexplicable reason the air in the rooms was so bad at night that the "tonic" effect of the sea air turned into the opposite. One of the rooms was paneled in wood but it wasn't any better there. So after a week we moved out again and took a room in Hotel Monterey. That is a very appealing hotel with fabulously elegant and really tasteful common areas. (I believe they are copied off the Viennese Hofburg). It is at any rate already rather old and probably therefore affordable for non-millionaires. The weather was not exactly bad but the summer in these past few years and especially this one were much cooler than the ones 5 or 6 years ago. That probably has to do with the spots on the sun. For all of these reasons I didn't recuperate as much as I expected, feel however decidedly stronger since my return. I mainly swam in the "Monte Carlo-Pool." That is, they say, the largest swimming basin in the world. It is also really gigantic; so big that there is room in the center for an island. Surrounding it are innumerable colorful chairs and tables set up and in the evening all of it is illuminated, which really looks romantic. Between 20 and

31 Oct I would like to come to Vienna, as I have already written in my last letter, but still now have to speak to the Director regarding the time off.

A good book about World War II must be very interesting, esp. if it has precise and true information about the extent of the destruction, the number of casualties, the kind of warfare waged etc. It seems to me that (with good reason) there is conspicuously little written about these things. Or is that only the case here?

Television is often quite amusing, but often one feels annoyed too. The good movies are strictly between 11 pm and 1 am. and the listings are often conspicuously incomplete, confusing, and often even false regarding these films. One has the impression that that is sabotage on the part of the movie theaters.

One's mouth quite waters at your description of the excursion you two took to Kahlenberg and Kobensl¹. But isn't Kobensl now quite restored and even lovelier than it used to be? The defrosting is sadly an unpleasant characteristic of all Frigidaires, with the exception of only a few newer models, which do it automatically. However, we defrost ours only once a month.

I am sorry that you are, as you write, not doing well with your intestine again. That must be nerves with you. Is your weight satisfactory?

What Mimi writes would be very interesting about religious promises fulfilling themselves in her life, if she would go more into detail about it. Does she never write anything more about it? Regarding the question of stoicism I will write more next time in case I am not yet in Vienna by then. I still can't quite believe that it will happen that soon.

Until then, thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

[Vertically in margin:] Warm regards from Adele

P.S. Your letters up to 153 all arrived

P.S. On Oct 10th I will send \$60 off.

Warm regards to Rudi

¹ Cobenzl, a peak in the Vienna Woods with a famous view of the city; it is near where KG lived in Grinzing in 1937–38

Telegram

12. X. 51

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA =
DO NOT AGREE = KURT

Telegram

9. XI. 51

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHEN FELDERSTR 81 VIENNA =
MUST UNFORTUNATELY POSTPONE DEPARTURE SEVERAL
MONTHS BECAUSE OF LECTURE LETTER FOLLOWS WARM
REGARDS = KURT

Princeton, 12./XI. 1951.

76.

Dearest Mama:

Of course it made me hugely sorry that I had to disappoint you with my telegram, but after all I am not postponing my coming forever and I hope based on what I wrote you that you weren't altogether firmly convinced I was indeed coming now. The lecture I am to give at the end of December is once again a great honor. It is called "Gibbs-lecture" after a famous physicist in whose memory these lectures are held once a year. Of course only physicists and mathematicians who have done something significant are ever called upon. I was invited quite some time ago and thus did not assume I would be prevented from traveling to Vienna as a result. But due to the summer vacation and the delayed recuperation and other things that occupied me I have worked less on it now than I intended to and I don't want to be busy with other tasks when I finally get to see you two again after 11 years. My stomach is doing surprisingly well after my stay at the seaside and I have gained 2½ kg in these past months. As to the exact date of my postponed trip I prefer to write nothing now for I don't want to disappoint you again. For the time being I got my passport, which went very quickly (10 days). It does happen that issuance of a passport can be delayed due to so-called "loyalty examination." The permission of the military authorities is as I hear easy to get. How is it actually with the different zones there? An acquaintance told me that the zone borders can be crossed all over Austria without any issues, but for staying overnight in

another zone a permit is required. Are the rules really so strange? That Goethe didn't visit his mother for 9 years is quite new to me. I thought that he got along very well with her. It's exactly right that many things in Europe seem to be from a doll's world to someone coming from here. I believe I told you once about that when I got back from Venice. On a summer vacation these gigantic dimensions aren't pleasant in every regard, naturally. Of course, there are also smaller towns and solitary places on the seaside but I wanted to stay in a big hotel this year due to the selection one has of food and also I needed a swimming pool. There was not much else left, especially since this place is particularly easily reached from Princeton (an hour by car). Alpine air doesn't do me nearly as good as the sea.

Just now your letter N° 157 arrived (I also received 155, 156 correctly) How do you get the idea that I don't want to come. Of course I would come more than gladly, but one thing is true, that, aside from the fact that you two live in Vienna, it is not at all pleasant to me to be traveling to Europe, and especially to Austria. I have indicated the reasons to you already before and also written you that I was plagued for a time by nightmares that I went to Vienna and couldn't get back. Now, nightmares are certainly no valid reason and so I planned to make the journey nonetheless, but the unpleasant feeling remains, although it is ebbing.

Enclosed I am sending you a picture that was taken in Yale on the day of the awarding of my honorary doctorate, but "behind my back," i.e. without my having an inkling of it. How do you like it?

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Adele sends you many *Bussis* and hugs and is worried that you are sad. She is also in the photo at the back right, by the way
P.S. I wanted to send another \$60.- at the beginning of Dec. Please ask Rudi if that is alright with him.

Princeton, 29./I. 1952.

79.

Dearest Mama!

I hope Adele's letter arrived alright and made up to you for the delay of mine. She wrote a lot about us both, after all. Your packet arrived on approx. 10./I. (which exact day I can no longer recall, unfortunately). We were both

surprised by the many lovely things and thank you heartily. Quite particularly pretty is the glass bowl and Adelen's brooch. Adele has already finished reading her book and found it delightful. I arranged your presents symmetrically on the dining room table after we had finished unwrapping. That really looked pretty. In the middle was the glass bowl and the little deer, left and right both of the books, at the front the scarf with the fountain pen on top and the other things in between. I don't understand why you had such trouble with our package. Adele also sent a package to her people and didn't hear of anything like that. Of a book for Rudi not a trace has arrived. On 1./II. I will send \$60 for January and February, just like Rudi wants me to (so the total since Nov. is \$150.-). Regarding Christmas here there is not much to write. We are always alone, after all. Adele bought a lovely tree with roots, that we were able to plant in the yard afterward. But I was even less in the Christmas spirit this year, since I was already poised to leave. (My lecture was on the 26th). The New Year's Eve show on the television and radio was (in contrast to last year) particularly nice this year. There was good light music until 6 am and before that good variety shows. Adele, who was also in attendance, told you about my lecture, that the audience was numerous and very interested. It was a very large hall with loudspeakers in all corners. We stayed in a very lovely hotel on the 10th floor and had a wonderful view over the entire city. The hotel even had television sets in the rooms (at least there was one in our room). At the conference we saw many acquaintances from Vienna, among them two women who former classmates of mine. Menger was there too but he didn't come till the last day when I had already left. I did not send you the picture with Adele because I believed the other one is better of me. Don't you think? My pecuniary situation is currently not bad, but in these times no one knows what's coming and so I am glad that I have something (even if it's not an inordinate amount) in reserve, and can't afford to spend it willy-nilly. You two don't write anything about your reasons why I should not come to Vienna. I hope I can learn something about it from Morgenstern. Einstein thinks it unfounded to have any concern about the Communists. What do you suggest then where I should be coming to? Austria of course would be my preference, since that is surely the cheapest and also the easiest for you two. It would surely cause no difficulties to extend the stay to a couple of weeks, which would not be so simple in Switzerland or Paris maybe. When you say that I always promise to come and then don't, you are being unfair to me. Only one single time have I said that I would probably come up to now, and that is no promise. Regarding the movie Tales of Hoffmann I have already heard many good things, but the most recent movies are not to be seen on television after all. That would make too much competition for the movie

theaters. As far as I know, gates are not locked on apartment buildings here overnight, but I myself haven't lived in a real apartment house since 1941. The story with Morgenstern's passport seems very strange to me. That is most likely due to the fact that they want to prohibit travel into certain countries from here, so as not to let the true mood of these countries toward the U.S.A. become known. I am glad that you had yet another lovely stay at Kronichhof. I haven't seen a proper forest for 10 years now.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Your letters 160–162 arrived
Warm regards from Adele.
P.S. I still have to get used to the new fountain pens

Princeton, 31.I. 1952.

Dear Rudi!

I wish you all the best on your 50th birthday and send you a book that I believe will interest you. Yes, how long has it been since we celebrated Papa's 50th birthday and I am even now close to 50 myself. Do you remember the city games in which you were a factory owner and I was the mayor? Back then it seemed so impossible to me that we would really see the dates of years such as 1950. In the city games we were always both rich already by this time. That has not happened yet but we can also not complain that we are worse off. I am glad to hear that you want to buy yourself a car in Spring. I am doing quite well health-wise. I believe I look better than before the attack. I am naturally sticking to a diet of light food. I already did so before the attack and there not very much has changed.

Please sent thousand *Bussi* to Mama and warm regards to you from
Your Kurt

P.S. Adele sends you a birthday *Bussi* and wishes you all imaginable love

Princeton, 10./III. 1952.

80.

Dearest Mama:

In February you two took a long break from writing, so that we began to be worried whether everything was alright with you. Then finally your letter N° 164 and Rudi's letter of 27./II. came. However, I didn't exactly write much in February either, as I notice. I am glad that Rudi was interested in the book about American art. Even now there is still much painting done in the old style here. Is that not also the case there? I can't believe that Cubism has already overtaken everything. The intended book for Rudi finally arrived here a couple of weeks ago

As you see, I am writing this letter with the "ink-ballpoint." It is behaving quite decently to this point and writing is very easy with it.

Providence, where my lecture was, is the very city you found in the encyclopedia. I did not know that it is the center of the silver and jewelry industry. We were only there 2 days and didn't go much beyond the hotel and the university, except that we enjoyed that lovely view over the city from the hotel window. Now in particular it is no longer entirely true that everyone in this country is doing well (as you write). Many justifiably complain of high taxes and poor commerce. And what should the relatives of the fallen or injured in Korea say? As one reads in the newspapers, the military medals awarded to the fallen are often being sent back by their parents. That truly demonstrates the mood of the populace. The political atmosphere has improved significantly here and the people are not mincing words in the press, radio etc. any more. It would be nice if Eisenhower would become President in the Fall. Isn't he also very popular in Europe?

Yellowstone Park is unfortunately a little far from here (a 2 day trip). There are lovely woods with mountains, waterfalls etc. also much closer to here (e.g., in the "White Mountains"), but we haven't been on a summer vacation for years after all and last year I of course had to primarily do whatever is good for my health. Adele sent the packages to her relatives the exact same way as the one to you and so it is puzzling to me why they were treated differently. Our Christmas tree seems be taking root well in the yard. I have only seen Morgenstern once up to now. He has a lot to do. We will be visiting him again soon, though. As to my coming, I first have to know when Rudi wants to take his planned trip. That I wrote in 1947 it would be only a few months until I came I had altogether carelessly forgotten. That was however careless. But back then one did believe that normal conditions would return again soon. Today your letter N° 165 arrived. So Rudi got his car. I congratulate him heartily. Was is the make? And is it open or closed? The only thing I can glean from your writing is that it isn't old but rather new;

otherwise no breaking it in would be necessary. I didn't know anything about the picture of Einstein. On what occasion was it taken? Here Spring has begun by 3 little yellow flowers poking their heads out of the soil in the yard. The weather however is stormy and rainy. How do you explain the birdsong in Brünn? I don't understand. We had no inkling of Papa Morgenstern's illness, though I asked Morgenstern a couple of days ago on the phone what he heard from Vienna. Why is one of Grete's eyes stuck? I thought it was goiter. In what kind of an office was Liese, actually? I am allowed to eat light baked goods. Adele always makes me a wonderful Kugelhupf, sometimes also Palatschinken. Lately I had a cold a couple of times, which last time also affected my stomach somewhat. But otherwise I've been doing very well. I sent the \$30- for March via the bank today. I will reply to Rudi's letter soon.

In the meantime, thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 18./IV. 1952.

81.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 166, 167 and the sweet liverworts. Rudi's car must be really lovely to go by your description and the color picture, and you must have a lot of change of scenery from it, as well. I suspect that it is to blame for your long break from writing that you yourself expressed surprise over. The trip through the valley of the Danube is, as far as I recollect, a very lovely landscape. It is a good sign that Linz is having such an upswing and confirms once again what I always maintain, namely that Europe must have by now economically exceeded pre-war level. It seems to me that Uncle Karl's trip to Gastein is further indication of this. Won't you be seeing him there, or can he not make a side trip to Vienna on his way back? Why does the breaking in of the car take so long, by the way. How many km does it have to be? Who is Lotte? I suspect it is the same one whose car Rudi used before. But you never write her name and also not anything more in detail about her.

I didn't know that you had been living alone in the villa for 2 years. I cannot imagine you doing that. Did A[unt] Pauline die back in 1942? Did you at least have a nice maid? And how was it with keeping up with the upstairs parties and the house? I would be surprised if the songbirds remembered the

rifle of the cellar boy for such a long time, and there were probably cats all over in the neighborhood. Maybe during the war people hunted birds to keep them from hurting the crop seed.

The death of Papa Morgenstern also seems to be a mysterious thing. Morgenstern told me that it was caused by a liver abscess, which you expressly denied. What is Rudi's opinion? You wrote something about the prostate too. You say something about a telegram of Morgenstern's to Rudi, but not what its content was. How has his sister survived all of this? She had already been at the end of her rope with her nerves. By the way, what did Liese tell you during her last visit that you write about? We saw a Disney movie "Pinocchio" here back in 1941. I thought it not bad, though not as good as Snow White, which was never again attained. Psychologically, I find completely understandable what you write about Aunt Paula. You did always say yourself that Uncle Carl was her everything, and since he was most likely hypochondriacal not only for his own but also for her person, she is thus acting in accordance with his being so worried about her own health. If the relationship between them was really the way you described it to me, then one would be surprised that she was even able to survive his death. Here the standard April weather prevails. On Easter Sunday we attempted an excursion to the "Lake" (which I've often written you about). But it was so cold that we (despite fur coat and 2 woolen sweaters) soon turned back around. On Monday though there was immense heat. But that kind of thing is quite normal here. My stomach is doing fine. Gugelhupf and Palatschinken are of course not my sole nourishment but almost my sole baked goods.* Instead of whipped cream I drink a lot of "egg-nog" which is raw eggs frothed with sugar and milk. Lately I put some dried milk powder into it too, so it becomes concentrated nourishment something like Ovomaltine. Besides that I eat a lot of chicken, pureed vegetables and mashed potatoes†, all with a lot of butter. I have a very good and nourishing wheat bread that is made of whole grains and also contains honey and powdered milk. I eat compote usually with a beaten egg stirred into it, but only because it tastes better to me that way and has more nutritional value. I can also drink coffee but only after a meal. For breakfast on an empty stomach it doesn't agree with me very well. The main difference to my earlier food is that I never eat goulash, sauerkraut, lentils etc. and also no hard cheese but rather a special kind of soft. Maybe these things wouldn't hurt me now though.

In the book about World War II that you sent me for Christmas, there is quite a bit of critique about Allied warfare. It claims that the residential areas of large cities were destroyed in Germany without the goal of a strategic effect, and that also the atom bomb was redundant since Japan would have

capitulated soon anyway. That seems fairly unlikely to me, but reading this criticism one learns many interesting facts. By the way the author seems to be a good Catholic. At least he likes to quote the papal newspaper in Rome.

As I see, you have already heard about my new honorary doctorate from Adele. Actually, it was to be kept secret till the day of the conferring[†] because you don't receive it till then. The current one is an even greater honor, by the way, than the first. For Harvard University is the oldest and also the most renowned university in all America. The conferring is to take place on 19th June. I don't need to give a lecture, but I do want preferably to come to Vienna not until afterward (and for other reasons, too). I believe my Vienna trip will one day become reality just as suddenly as the length of time that I have postponed it but I still do not know when that will be exactly. Your joint Spring trip will be starting soon after all and I wish you very good relaxation and amusement. I have owed Rudi a letter for some time now. Will his mail be forwarded?

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* I could of course eat other things but Adele makes both of these so well that I don't have any desire for any others.

† I notice no ill consequences, however, when I don't eat it puréed.

‡ that is requested in the letter in which one was informed

P.S. I sent \$30.- in mid-month for April. Don't surprised if the date of this letter doesn't tally with the postmark; I wrote it in three stages. Warm regards to you both from Adele. In our yard the peaches and apricots are already blooming and everything is in resplendent fresh green.

Telegram

11. V. 52

MARIANNE GOEDEL LERCHENSEL GERSTR 81 VIENNA
HAPPY MOTHERS DAY = KURT

Princeton, 12./VI. 1952.

82.

Dearest Mama!

Now it's been endlessly long once again since I wrote to you, though I had planned to write long letters not only to you but also to Rudi soon. But the days are far too short; each one should have at least 48 hours. I thank you for your letters № 166–171 and the little flowers from Kronichhof, which were particularly cute this time. Your trip description is so lifelike that one has the feeling of being there oneself while reading. It really must all have been wonderful and interesting. How is the Lehar Villa in Ischl? I.e., how does it relate in luxury and taste to the Kaiservilla? The trip over the Arlberg Pass I imagine to be especially romantic. I nevertheless vaguely remember the sausages from Annaberg, but if I am not mistaken, the stomach drops I bought myself there in a pharmacy soon made me feel much better.

According to newspapers here one should not believe (despite wide circles here would wish it so) that people are of the same views in Germany today as under Hitler.

Does Uncle Karl also get a pension from Czechoslovakia, actually? If yes then it is yet more proof that not everything there is as bad as is claimed.

I'm doing quite well with my stomach, and otherwise as well. What do you have against powdered milk? It's nothing more than concentrated real milk. So you should also say one shouldn't take Ovomaltine but rather preferably fresh eggs and malted coffee substitute. Next Wednesday I'll be going to pick up my honorary doctorate. It does not carry anything with it, unfortunately. You will get your money's worth with newspaper clippings, since I will be getting it simultaneously with 25 others and therefore each one will not be photographed individually. By the way, Adele sent a home movie in color recorded by her to her relatives that I am also in. That is certain to be of interest to you.

I am pleasantly surprised that the house that we lived in back then in Grinzing is still standing. So everything there looks quite unchanged? Morgenstern has always got a lot to do now, so that I see him seldom, in contrast, I see Einstein almost daily. He is very chipper and has even gotten younger rather than older in the course of the last few years. The operation of Dec. 1949 seems to have had favorable effects.

Here it's been hot since the beg[inning] of June (after an ice-cold May), but the heat doesn't bother me and I like sitting outside, even in the sun. It looks very nice in our yard now. The 3 trees that were here are really fairly large now, so that they give enough shade. Adele planted 6 small fruit trees and 3 small fir trees there, besides which there are flowers all around everywhere and an especially cute corner with 2 little yew trees and a rose

bush. I am surprised I never wrote to you about the lake here. There are also very nice "meadows" nearby that look like the Prater meadows in miniature and so are particularly charming as a result. I thank you two for your birthday wishes. You both sent us so much for Christmas that one really can't expect you to come up with else. Maybe I will write Rudi soon about a couple of books. Recently it occurred to me that I once got a ring for my birthday from Adele with a large red stone (1936). (Was it stolen or does Rudi have it?) Papa's gold watch is with Rudi, isn't it? Was Deabis still alive during the war? and did he visit you often and tell you interesting things?

How is Rudi's gallbladder doing? I hope the trip did him good in this regard. I would think that driving a car (or any exercise) would have an advantageous effect. As you see I wrote this letter with an ink-ballpoint. I used it frequently lately and am just now finding that one writes incredibly easily with it. It moves as of its own accord. The sole disadvantage is that the ink smears more easily. I'll send the \$30.- for June on Monday from here.

Thousand *Bussi* and many regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 22./VII. 1952. 83.

Dearest Mama!

Many warm thanks for your letters № 172–175 and the pretty little flowers. Your travelogue is a pleasure to read and not at all convoluted (as you maintain). The second part of the trip (to Zurich) must have been even much lovelier than the first. I did not even know that Switzerland, even apart from the high mountains, is such a wonderful country. The way you describe the city of Zurich and that green-tiled wave pool in the Alpine forest really makes one's mouth water. And those prices are not even higher than in Austria? That is clearly attributable to the American support of currency-poor countries. That is probably also the reason that the streets in Austria are better than in Switzerland. Yes, after World War I the defeated countries were left open to exploitation by the victors, but now it will soon be the reverse. When one considers, e.g. that here in the case of larger entrepreneurs income tax is $\frac{3}{4}$ of profit,* then one isn't surprised that there is a strong opposition growing against it. A large part of it goes to armaments, however; but in Europe to a

large degree as well. It is doubtless true that Switzerland is the most cultivated country in Europe and the reason for that lies in the fact that it is the oldest democracy (Wilhelm Tell lived back in the 13th century). That a theater flyer from Brünn showed up at the Lehar Villa and with the very same cast as the play you saw is really strange. You may not know that serious science has begun lately to occupy itself with such things, too, and has invented the lovely word “synchronicity” for it. It was certainly only after this death that the Lehar Villa was done up so tastelessly and kitschy, probably so that one should accordingly draw the equivalent, thoroughly false, conclusions about his music. In the case of the 103 horses of the Empress one can probably subtract the 100.

To expect that Uncle Karl will get a pension from Czechosl. is not so unfounded, since after all Aunt Mizzi, as I heard, gets one.

Now I finally want to get to the topic of my honorary doctorate. I got it with **13** (not 25) others and I am enclosing a group photo of these 14 along with a description of their accomplishments. The latter you will find as the so-called “Citation” printed next to each name. These are announced upon conferral of the diploma in front of a huge group of onlookers outdoors with innumerable microphones. My citation was unquestionably the loveliest. In it I am called “Discoverer of the most significant mathematical truth of this century.” But this matter has nothing to do with Einstein, who by the way is no mathematician, but rather a physicist.† As you can see from the newspaper, among the 14 was also the current Secretary of Defense and the originator of the peace treaty with Japan. Through no fault of my own, I therefore, managed to get into a highly warlike company, since the peace treaty with Japan is primarily calculated to prepare a war with Russia. By the way you must not interpret my citation as my being called the greatest mathematician of this century, instead the word “significant” means something along the lines of: of greatest general interest outside mathematics.

As to ring and watch you do not need to be alarmed. The ring was probably stolen from my safebox in Himmelstr. and Rudi probably has the watch.

Breaking your big toe is quite the trick. How did that happen? About the pains of others, I would not be so upset, especially if they are not very serious or merely imaginary, as is indeed probably the case with A[unt] Paula. Morgenstern’s child is especially charming and well-behaved. You could tell that about him already a couple of days after birth, as I wrote you back then. Here for the past 14 days or more there has been a really scandalous heat and without any break. I have never experienced anything like it. Since the air is hotter than the body, one has the sensation of constantly sitting in a hot air machine, except when one goes into the cellar, which I do from time to time.

The heat is also partly to blame for why I am writing this letter so late, but to make up for it now I am trying to write a really long one and to also fulfill as much as possible your wish for pictures and newspaper clippings. I have no document from you and Papa other than the baptismal certificates. But I don't think that's what you were looking for? A death certificate for Papa must be substitutable by a confirmation from Hietzing Cemetery. Don't you think? I'll send off the \$30.- for July tomorrow. Please forgive everything being so late this month. I would so very much like to write to Rudi at some point too but I am not getting to it. Cortina d'Ampezzo must be a wonderful little place to go by your description. Weren't the two of you there once before? What do you say about Eisenhower? I hear that people in Europe were glad he was nominated. I hope we can soon take a trip, probably to the same place as the previous year. It is now 11 pm and I want to post the letter yet today. So I will take a walk of a $\frac{1}{4}$ hour in the cool night air.

But for today thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt
Warm regards from Adele to you both.

* and in contrast to Europe, also probably really get paid

† therefore his discoveries are not mathematical but rather physical.

Asbury Park, 25./VIII. 1952.

84.

Dearest Mama!

I send you thousand birthday *Bussis*, this time from our summer stay at the ocean where we have been since 14 days ago. We hope you are well and you have gathered new strength through the lovely trip. We are amusing ourselves quite well here too, except the weather leaves something to be desired. But the stay is having a good effect on me nonetheless. The sea air alone gives one an appetite and we have also sunbathed 6 times and bathed in the water 3 times already. We are staying again in the nice hotel that I wrote you about last year.

I got your letter 176 with the 3 pretty little pictures right on the day of our departure. In them you look (as in all other pictures I have seen up to now) strikingly young. And Rudi's trouser crease has, as I notice, still retained its old elegance. The car must be really very charming. The white collar on the picture from Harvard is the sash of my first honorary doctorate. I totally forgot

to tell you about the trip home in an airplane. It was very pleasant and interesting. Instead of 6 hours by rail one flies a mere hour and the price is almost the same. One flies incredibly high (several thousand meters). The cars look almost like dots.

I have the watch chain here and also wear it most of the time. I am glad that you liked the color movie. I fear however that I must have looked rather bad still at that point. After all, it wasn't long after the hemorrhage.

That Tell never actually lived I must dispute. It is of course another question as to whether the story with the apple is true. There is no indication of your hand having shaken (why?) while writing. The air-cooler in our house is not intended for this kind of heat. I still have various things to answer from your last letter but I have to hurry so that this letter still makes it into the mail today. So I will write you the next installment soon.

A thousand more *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

All the best for your birthday and warm regards also from Adele. I am sending off a birthday present at the same time.

Princeton, 20./IX. 1952.

85.

Dearest Mama:

Well you should not make fun of the many resumptions of my last letter because, as you see, this letter was written ca. 1 week earlier than normal; so that is something. Your letters 177 – 179 have arrived in the meantime and I see with pleasure that you are living a life full of variety. Nomads in a car are a new species of human. By the way there are really cars in which one can sleep and cook. I cannot quite believe that the Kranichberg castle is from the 8th century. What part of it is actually so old? Perhaps only the mountain on which it stands? You made quite an interesting acquaintanceship with Kardinal Innitzer. Isn't he already quite old? In general, I am not an enthusiast of Catholic bishops. Aside from that, Innitzer is said to have been a great friend of Nazis. However I do not know if in him one should count that as merit or sin. How did your lawyer manage to get the papers for you?? I think it highly odd that you are to get nothing paid back. Isn't something rotten there? The laws in general are not so strange that the amount of a claim is dependent

on when one locates a document. The increase in value from 100 to 400 S[chillings] is really quite decent.

Our summer holiday was, as I already wrote you, not exactly blessed with good weather, but I managed to recuperate well especially insofar as appetite and digestion are better now than before. Adele made some movies (also of me swimming). But they have not been developed yet. They have to be sent in inconveniently through the mail and I am not so sure if they even came out, since they are the first we have done. The movie that you saw was taken by a neighbor of ours. Adele learned to swim this year. After the pool attendant had assured her one would not sink even if one lies calmly atop the water it went very quickly. She had already learned the strokes as a child but never had the confidence to swim because she had once been thrown in and gotten a fright. Now she swims like a duck.

When I wrote you that you looked strikingly young, it was not a “compliment” but rather a simple observation of fact. Hochwald, who visited us recently, spontaneously said exactly the same thing. So it has nothing to do with “overcompensation.” You are certainly much more youthful in other aspects than women usually are at 73, e.g. insofar as you tolerate the long car trips apparently without any particular fatigue. And you had the very same symptoms with your intestine in your youth. How is Rudi? Isn’t driving a car good for his gallbladder? My trouser creases are now better than in Vienna since they are looked after by Adele, who by the way brings me home new suits from time to time too. If they do not fit, they get exchanged.

I did not write you at all that I took up a new sport during our vacation, a kind of bowling, but one does not knock down pins but rather manage to land inside numbered rings. There are prizes also and I won a nice set of kitchen utensils for Adele made of stainless steel that costs at least \$6.- Even more interesting is the fact that Adele has developed a marked talent for guessing numbers in games of chance; of course not always but more than randomness would dictate. I have determined this flawlessly with ca. 200 attempts. That belongs to the chapter on occult phenomena which have been analyzed at a university here with the greatest of scientific rigor, with the result that each human possesses these capacities but in most only to a very minor degree. At the moment I am a grass widower. Adele is visiting a friend in Washington for 3 days. She just now phoned me.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. So I am sending for the time being \$30.- every other month. — My July payment was not made, in error.

Princeton, 31./X. 1952.

86.

Dearest Mama!

Today it occurs for the first time in a long time that I have only one letter of yours to answer (Nº 180). That certainly was quite a fat little letter or actually 2, since Rudi also wrote to me. I hope that your foot has now long been fine again. It could have been just an insect bite (maybe a spider?) I continue to do quite well health-wise. My acquaintances tell me I have not looked this good in a long time. There is not much to write about the scenery of our summer vacation. I did send you pictures of it last year.

Reproaching you about trouser creases was the last thing on my mind. As you know, I am definitely not that particular. I still have the suit from Decker and it still looks like new. However, I use it very little.

Hochwald now lives in New York. Until recently he lived in the western U.S.A. That is from here roughly as far as Moscow from Vienna, so by European standards not even living in the same country.

News about old acquaintances and relatives always interests me. You actually write me much too little about that. The fact that I do not like Europe has nothing to do with my private relationships and that I write to no one also does not mean that I have no interest. I only reply to letters here in America when a pressing reason to do so exists and sometimes not even then. The fact that evil forces are at work in Europe, as you write, holds true for here just as much, the only difference is that in Europe they are perennially at the helm, here only occasionally and partially.

As you know, there was an extremely rancorous election campaign going on here in the last few months. Just now I read that the candidates have spoken 35 million words in their stump speeches. If one calculates what others say about them in addition, that has reach into the hundreds of millions. The atmosphere is now so laden with tension that one can scarcely believe that the election will proceed calmly. But at any rate I hope that Eisenhower will be elected and am convinced that political developments not only here but also in Europe and Asia will be of quite a different nature.

When was it that Innitzer's apartment was plundered? 1938? That would surprise me, for back then the Catholic church made a declaration in which they "joyfully acknowledged" the accomplishments of Hitler's government and called on everyone to vote for him. I do not understand why the Protestants take part in a conference of Catholics. The name "Protestant" is well-known as a derivative of "to protest" against Catholicism. What does e.g. Mimi Peters have to say about something like that? I think you once promised me to send me one of her letters about this question, but I haven't received anything.

If it didn't even occur to you that car trips could be fatiguing that is an even better indication because it is certain after all that even the best springs to prevent bumpiness leave something to be desired during long trips. Einstein was sick a couple of weeks (a minor phlebitis) but he is back walking from the Institute to home again. Now there are so many astonishing miracle drugs for everything that one should not be surprised if the mean life expectancy of humans has risen by 10–20 years. We have not had the movie developed yet but I hope to be able to send it to you in the next letter.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt
Warm regards from Adele

Dear Rudi!

Hearty thanks for your l[ast] letter which I am replying to only briefly for the time being. I have been taken up so much with politics these past 2 months that I have not had time for much of anything else. Also I was not in New York for nearly 3 months, but will be going there soon again and get the View Master pictures. So I will not be sending support for the time being.

With warm regards Your Kurt

Princeton, 14./XII. 1952.

87.

Dearest Mama!

Hopefully you got Adelen's letter properly. It was supposed to have arrived 3 weeks ago, but probably you were so stunned by the essay and picture of us that it "left you speechless." Our Cherry is unfortunately long dead, otherwise he would surely now look a lot like the dog in the picture.

I am glad that your ear is back to normal a long time by now. Yes, penicillin is truly a miracle drug. The cause was probably a cold? I used to also have earaches in the past but that stopped completely since I wash my ears with warm water and sleep with cotton in my ears in winter.

I had great pleasure from the barometer and thank you heartily for it. It works flawlessly. In the first two days the needle was stuck immovably at the same spot and did not move when it was tapped so that we thought something

in the mechanism was broken, but now everything is fine. It apparently had to first adjust to the new surroundings.

Many thanks for your letters N° 180, 181. You write so seldomly now that I was about to send a telegram to see if you were not perhaps seriously ill. But on that very day your letter arrived.

Of course we followed the election campaigns quite a bit on television. The most interesting was the party convention where Eisenhower was put up as candidate. The speeches that were given there were astonishingly unvarnished and therefore were not printed in the papers for the most part. Especially sweet was a female delegate who had transformed herself into a kind of toad just for the convention and spewed poison and gall for an hour long. I actually do not think Truman and Eisenhower verbally abused each other. They clearly remained within the boundaries of decency. Why do you write that things are quite a show here? I have no knowledge of anything of that sort. But perhaps you know something that we are not supposed to know here. I am rather isolated among my acquaintances here with the great expectations that I have for Eisenhower. But that merely comes from most of them being from Europe and drawing analogous conclusions from European circumstances, which are quite unfounded in my opinion; e.g. they compare Eisenhower to Hindenburg. I view it as fundamentally wrong to view America as a kind of Europe that merely in some regards is further developed and in others less so. In reality it is quite the opposite of Europe in many aspects. The prospects of a new Hitler in Germany are now certainly far unlikelier than ever.

I one time had Mimi's letter here but in it she only addresses the question of Catholicism once and very briefly and in an aside. Didn't she ever write anything more specific about it?

"Joan of Arc" I found poor and above all Ingrid Bergman did not shine in it whatsoever. She was made to play this role but one has the impression that everything was fearfully avoided that would have let her have an effect on the audience and that it was even calculated to banalize her role as much as possible. I do not doubt that that truly was the case. Didn't I say that very thing to you already when I saw the movie here? Now you can judge for yourself.

I see Morgenstern fairly seldomly, since he is very busy. On Wednesday we are invited to his place for a cocktail. It is only a pity that I cannot drink any cocktail.

We finally sent off our movie to be developed but unfortunately it was largely ruined. $\frac{3}{4}$ of it is not exposed at all. The company sent us a second reel of film for free and advised us to have the camera looked at.

We are having lovely winter weather here now. Recently we took an outing to a very nice area where there are hills, woods and ravines, almost like at home in the foothills of the Alps.

Adele is very industrious as always. Now she has finally found a really nice and reliable person to do the heavy work in the house and yard for her. He is a Negro, who are overall much better here for that sort of work than whites.

We were very sorry that Mama Brausewetter has died. She should have enjoyed life a few more years, as perky as she was, had this accident not occurred. The fact that I did not react at all to the news of Fritz Wengefeld's death cannot possibly be true. Most likely a letter from me must have gotten lost.

It just now occurs to me: Was the move you saw even the one that Ingrid Bergman played in? and if so did it have German subtitles or is German spoken?

How is Rudi doing? You write next to nothing about him in the last few letters. We wish both of you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. A little Christmas package and a check are en route.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Much love and warm regards to you both also from Adele.

PS. Adele is once again naturally quite worried about her sister Liesl. Her relatives write so vaguely that one has no idea of what is actually going on.

Princeton, 14/I. 1953.

88.

Dearest Mama!

The day before yesterday your letter N° 184 and the one to Adele arrived. That was the first news from you since 12./XII. We thank you both warmly for the lovely things you once again sent us for Christmas. Oh, but that music box! I have never seen, much less received, such a charming thing. One should really let it play every evening then stroke it and put it to sleep in a little silken bed. Where does one even get such a thing in Vienna?

Adele has naturally been very worried lately about her sister. I do not understand what is the point of her relatives writing so vaguely this entire

time. That is the sort of thing you either have the sense to keep to yourself or write about in detail. Recently they wrote that Adele would hear more about it from Rudi, which apparently is based on a misunderstanding. In the end then a long letter came from Frau Bauer and today one from Lisl herself.

You do not need worry about the Negro. He is a very industrious, reliable, and decent person. It would be desirable if the white servants at home were like that.

It is sad that Hilde Wengfeld is so all alone now with her mother. Where does Fritz's wife now live, actually? It is really odd that so much misfortune has clustered in this particular family. One would almost get superstitious and maintain that Aunt Jenny has conjured it up with her eternal jammering. I hope that at least Hilde is calm and sensible and not at the end of her rope with her nerves.

You ask why Bergmann's role should have been banalized, since they wanted to make as much money as possible with the movie. I pose the counter question to that, why one would have made such kitsch of the entire movie, a fact that is irrefutable and definitely not in the interest of the moneymaker. But people are used to kitsch, but it is surprising and annoying that they expressly chose Bergman for it. Unfortunately we simply live in a world in which 99% of all beauty is destroyed as it is created (or even beforehand). That is an equally irrefutable fact even if not known in particular how that happens and who does it.

In a week Eisenhower is to be inaugurated and I am looking forward to seeing it on television. The most beneficial effects of the change in presidency are already beginning to show now even before he takes office. One reads for the first time in years of an easing of tensions in international circumstances, Stalin is making peace offers and the ludicrous buildup of arms in Europe is grinding to a halt. Surely the rights of American citizens abroad will be better guaranteed under his government than now, which would be very pleasant to me in conjunction with a trip to Europe. I have often written to you about the feeling of insecurity that I have at the thought of a trip abroad.

The coronation of the English queen on television in June will also be interesting. How do you like her by the way? I find her extremely appealing.

Here great uproar prevails about the death sentence against the Rosenbergs. That is a typical result of the Truman regime and goes against all American traditions.

I am glad you have once again had a nice stay at Kronichhof.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

Warm regards from Adele. She will reply soon.

Telegram

Reply Paid

8. II. 53

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERST 81 VIENNA =
PLEASE INQUIRE DOCTOR IN DETAIL LISL AT HOME FEVER-FREE
WOUND HEALED RELIABLE CARE ADELE DEEPLY NERVOUS

Princeton, 20./II. 1953.

89.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters № 185, 186. It is of course true that you are a “good little girl” in regard to writing, but it is not so very bad with me that, as you say, an exchange of ideas is impossible. For I always conscientiously do answer all the questions you put to me. Regarding the question of why 99% of all movies are kitsch, your explanation that people are not interested in anything better absolutely does not suffice. For I have often determined that the really good movies are the ones most well attended, and therefore remain longer in circulation and bring in more money than the bad ones. And there is no lack of good writers and actors. Therefore there must be some forces at work that actively suppress the good. One can easily imagine where they come from but one should not be suspicious of anyone without proof. The statement of Einstein’s about America that you write about is interesting, but I would doubt whether it really corresponds to the facts. Especially here (in contrast to Europe) one has the feeling of being surrounded by good people who are willing to help. That goes for whatever has to do with state and agencies in particular. While one has the impression in Europe that agencies are really only there to make people’s lives sour it is the reverse here. This same sense is spoken to by the fact that there are so many downright “charming” things here, for instance the *Mickimaus* movies, the many cute little dogs, the nice knickknacks (that one often gets for a few cents) the many lovely flowers etc. Also the music (I mean the light kind, I do not listen to any other) I find much better here, at least in the best they have to offer if not exactly on average.

Adele is of course glad that Liesl is doing relatively well again, but on the other hand she is in constant worry that she might overtax herself with work

around the house and tear open the wound again. She fears it even more since there was some kind of misunderstanding with Hilde. Adele was of course very happy about the Christmas presents especially the lovely cup I believe she will be writing you soon.

Gertie writes very charmingly and he seems to be a quite particularly likable person (as I conclude from the picture). To go by his name one would think that he is a Russian emigré. Is that correct? Did he himself recently emigrate from Russia or did his family come a while ago? They are quick off the mark now with shock treatments and claim that there are no lasting deleterious effects, hopefully rightly so.

As for the hearing aid you should have no hesitations. They are made nowadays such that one does not notice anything at all. Recently I saw one on a lady of which absolutely nothing was visible except a mother of pearl button in the ear that looked like the head of a hatpin. Adele asked me if I noticed anything conspicuous and I said no, without lying. As for the flu, I am not afraid. One acquires an immunity to it more and more as time goes by, i.e. you only get it very mildly, and then there is also penicillin now that works true miracles in this regard. My stomach remains unchangedly fine, too. I may be somewhat more sensitive to mistakes in diet than before but the mistakes in diet are, after all, avoidable. Unfortunately I cannot send you a new newspaper clipping, but instead tell you something else will make you happy, namely that the Institute has offered me a professorship. I of course accepted and so it will take effect in the Fall.

You always write so vividly of the Prater and Kobenzl so that I feel completely transported there and the style of Auernheimer and Schnitzler's¹ novels ring in my ears. Of course I wish Rudi belatedly all the best on his birthday and say thank you to him for the telegram. I will be writing to him really quite soon again

With thousand *Bussi*

ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] Warm regards from Adele

¹ Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931), Viennese avant-garde novelist and dramatist. His works, condemned as “Jewish filth” by Hitler, were burned by the Nazis

LETTER TELEGRAM

4. III. 53

DR RUDOLF GODEL LANGEGASSE 76 VIENNA
ADELE COMING TO VIENNA WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON ON
DOCTOR'S ADVICE LETTER FOLLOWS = KURT

Princeton, 25./III. 19523.

90.

Dearest Mama!

I am very sorry that you were so upset by Adelen's coming. I feared that would happen and therefore telegraphed to Rudi's practice so you wouldn't be surprised so suddenly by the news; but that was obviously nonsense on my part because telegrams are probably sent on to home. As to the thing itself, I believe that the two of you are being unfair to Adele in this instance. She is after all not undertaking a pleasure trip to Vienna, rather her sister is really perilously ill and the same fate can overcome her as with Grete's passing. It would certainly not at all have occurred to Adele to want to travel to Vienna for no reason. If and why her people provoked her into coming on purpose I do not know.* You are a better judge of that than I. The state of Adelen's nerves here was at any rate certainly not an act. Instead she makes more of an impression of being very ill and does not refuse to take any number of sedatives or sleeping pills or she even demands them. A neurologist in New York told me that her entire condition is not hysterical and therefore also not treatable. Regarding the costs of the trip, she flew tourist class, which (in winter) only costs 100 \$ more than by ship. Besides, I will most likely recoup the entire cost of the trip through living here, especially due to the fact that Adele usually spends a great deal of money for yard and house in the Spring, things that are horrendously expensive here. That Adele is abandoning me here certainly cannot be said. You know me, that I like most to be alone and see no one other than a few intimate friends.

As far as the question of my coming (or not coming) is concerned, that only indirectly has anything to do with Adele. One can at any rate absolutely not reproach her for talking me out of it; on the contrary, she keeps admonishing me constantly to finally go and she would have been very happy to invite you after my receiving the Einst. Prize and if possible to spend 2000

\$ for that. She namely maintains the point of view (and she is supported by some people in this) that the more modest you are the less you get. Now that may well be correct in some cases, but least so at the Inst. for Adv. Study at any rate. For it gives money to its members without requiring anything in return† for the sole purpose for them to live their scientific interests without being disturbed, and besides that the salaries there are even higher than those of universities. So I cannot join with that opinion but instead only spend what is absolutely necessary for myself. As to my coming you both know after all that money is not the only consideration‡ but rather other difficulties exist. I do hope though that it will be possible one day. For you to come here during Adelen's absence, now that you are on bad terms with her, is of course scarcely possible. If you ask her, she would probably say that it is of no matter to her, but it would be a very bad idea given her attitude. And also I can afford it far less now than 2 years ago. When I become a Prof. my salary will also be larger by the way. I am sorry that you have fallen out with Adele. With her attitude, which I wrote about, that will probably be difficult to reverse. Probably it would not even be advisable now. Adele doubtless has large flaws but it is also irrefutable that for the most part these are admittedly medical symptoms.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

[*Vertically in margin:*] Excuse the belated reply to the letter from the two of you. I was down with a cold and still feel poorly.

* I actually see no grounds for that

† I will have no requirement to lecture as a professor

‡ and not even the most important

Princeton, 14./IV. 1953.

91.

Dearest Mama!

Yesterday your letter N° [1]90 came and I am hurrying to answer it right away, since the content of my last letter apparently causes you great concern. You write that you are sorry for me and you would like to help me. But it is really not that bad and even less so now that I have two honorary doctorates and a professorship and to all appearances the problem with shortness of funds

will soon be eliminated once and for all. There is also no reason to be bitter over the fact that, as I write, I only spend on myself what is absolutely necessary. For “necessary” includes an expensive summer vacation and as many taxis as I wish. I.e., I am not miserly with myself and would scarcely spend any more on myself even if I had the most frugal wife in the world. As you know, I have no desire to travel, and there would be little reason to buy books either, since I can get everything that interests me much quicker and easier through libraries. When you write that you now see that you have “always accurately judged Adele” and that she makes a great fuss and puts on an act, that is definitely ~~not~~ right false. Adele is by nature certainly entirely harmless and good-natured, but has clearly suffered a nervous breakdown made far worse by her experiences (especially the overly strict upbringing at home and her first marriage). That led especially to a dependence bordering on the pathologically exaggerated and an overvaluation of her family, and particularly of her mother (that was perhaps exploited by her people?). For these reasons the fight with her sister is possibly not a misfortune at all but rather seems, to go by her letters, to have a positive effect on her psychological state. She writes that she now sees she has always been viewed by her people as a cash cow and she would not have traveled to Vienna if she had known how it all would work out. She also seems to no longer be resenting the behavior of you two so much. By the way, she did not have a falling out with her mother and as far as Lisl, right will probably not be completely on her side. The reason for the argument seems to have been that Adele visited a friend, a certain Frau Bauer, who lives next door to the Porkerts, too often. Now it is certainly unwarranted trying to forbid her to talk to people other than her relatives. It is not surprising that something like that would lead to severe scenes given the state of Adele’s nerves. As to life here Adele is generally quite normal and only very seldom does she have “attacks” and only on account of her people (because of her father’s death, of her sister, of Lisl’s illness etc.). By the way, I have the impression that her abnormal attitude toward her fellow humans (which I wrote about) has very much to do with her upbringing. Limiting the spending of a wife is a difficult thing to do here, since it is in general custom here that man and wife have a joint account and the wife can withdraw as much as she wants. She hears that from her acquaintances and acts accordingly, even though our accounts are separate. Since her wishes are not really exorbitant I cannot and will not take an energetic stand, especially since, as I said, the entire problem will soon be completely gone. Health-wise I am not doing so badly at the moment that I would need “care.” It is merely the usual aftereffects on my stomach of a cold. What I need is just someone to wash the dishes for me and tidy up and a

neighbor lady does that. I am very sorry that my letter unsettled you so, but I hope that the stay at Kronichhof will still do you good. You must not take these things so tragically. Everywhere there is something that is not right and at any rate in the past 2 years there have been many more gratifying things than not.

I will close for today. It is already 10 pm and I want to put the letter into the box yet today.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi, to whom I also wish a good vacation

ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 10./V. 1953.

92.

Dearest Mama!

I wish you all the best on Mother's Day, which is exactly today. It may be customary to do that a couple of days in advance but then one does not know whether the letter will arrive on the right day, and today in particular I am thinking of you a lot. I hope that your foot is completely healed by now and that this accident didn't hamper you for your trip to Gastein. I am very sorry that you had such bad luck again, but thank goodness I glean from your last letter that rapid progress has been made in your recovery. I was very glad that the stay at Kronichhof did you such good and wish you the same for Gastein. Are you also taking baths for your sciatica there? Please convey warm regards from me to Uncle Karl and Aunt Mizzi. I hope that they are doing well and would be glad to hear details of them from you.

Today it is a hot summer day, the first in this year, and in the yard a couple of lovely exotic plants are blooming that Adele bought last year. It all grows on its own without one having to worry about it. Indeed, Princeton is very lovely in the Spring, as I have described to you before. In my last letter I did not tell you any lies. I did not keep from you that Adele has her sizeable flaws, only merely said that the resultant unpleasantnesses are more than balanced out by the good sides of my life here. And do you have anyone among your acquaintances who lives in a paradise and has nothing to complain about? You will certainly know that Adele has reconciled with her people to the extent that she visits her mother often. If, as you write, Adele's relatives were not gratified by her coming, why did they cause her to do so via their unclear*

letters? and why did they reply to Adele's question that they would be glad if she came? I must say I don't understand various parts of the affair. The fact that Adele wants to spend some time enjoying Vienna I will not speak of, and the concern about her sister was abnormal but certainly not play-acting. Of course now that she has fallen out with her and sees that she looks fine, her worry will no longer be as great.

I thank you warmly for your birthday wishes. This time I of course spent my birthday rather lonely but did not even notice it much since I was in New York from morning to evening. I currently do not need someone to "take care of me" but my acquaintances are all very nice and would certainly do it if it were necessary. And now Adele will be coming back very soon, on the 19th by ship. Please do not write me then anything more that she should not see. Your letters up and including to N° 192 all arrived. In one of them you write that you are quite angry at Eisenhower but not why. Everything to date is going wonderfully and there is probably going to be a ceasefire agreed upon in Korea soon. When I write that there is very good light music here, what I meant was of course not the jazz bands. There are, especially in the last few years, quite a number of new pop hits of which many are not "lurid" but just as serious and melancholy as "Am Brunnen vor dem Tore,"¹ except that I like them more than that one. I believe the same melodies must probably be on the radio etc. there, but one has a hard time identifying them because the lyrics are often quite different. You write something about a good picture of me that the Porkerts took. What year is it from? Can you not send me a copy? One time I would like to see a good picture of me. You should not at all resign yourself to our never seeing each other again. In fact, I am even firmly convinced that we will see each other again.

With thousand *Bussis* ever Your Kurt

* insinuating

P.S. Warm regards to Rudi. I hope that the trouble with the health insurance has gone up in a puff of smoke. I sent off \$60 beginning of March.

¹ Song from Schubert's *Winterreise*

Princeton, 20./VI. 1953. 93.

Dearest Mama!

I am hurrying to answer your letter N° 194 since you, as you write, are going away again on the 27th. I am glad that the fracture and the foot are apparently back to normal again, since you didn't mention anything about it in your last letter. And again this time you wrote all sorts of interesting things about the trip you two took. That the people in the west are showing happier faces now has probably to with the classic Viennese character. Everywhere in the German region it seems to be going well, that is, better than before the war. That you saw Uncle Karl and Aunt Mizzi again has to have been a pleasant distraction for you. I am quite curious about the promised pictures. How did Uncle Karl get pneumonia? Was it flu? At 76 that is no small thing despite penicillin. That "little" Trudl should be 40! years old is the most astonishing of all proofs that time is passing. When I last saw her, she was 10 or 12 and a very charming little girl. Did she stay that way later, too? Regarding politics, the *Reichsdeutschen* must have not had enough after two world wars lost. Aunt Mizzi writes very sweetly. I must answer soon. You do not have to be fully immersed to counteract sciatica but there are probably better treatments by now than Gastein. I find the Vilja song very pretty and believe if you do not like it, it is only due to coincidental circumstances, e.g. that you heard it played too often on bad gramophones or sung by bad singers. Besides, one can be of varied opinions regarding the lyrics. As to my excursion to New York on my birthday I can tell you absolutely nothing. For the purpose was merely to have a look at some books that do not exist in Princeton. Health-wise I am doing quite well again now, i.e. my normal appetite has reestablished itself. Currently a horrible heat prevails but it doesn't matter to me at all. I will close for today. More soon!

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. I believe Rudi erred in calculating the billing somewhat to his disadvantage, but I can't send any more than \$30 in the next few months anyway. In the beginning of May I will send \$100.-

Princeton, 26./VII. 1953.

94.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for the little birthday package and the little doily, as well as for your letters N° 194–196. I can really make good use of the box for the stamps, and the lambikin that stands on two little legs! such a sweet thing I have never ever seen!! You got my taste just right with those aphorisms. I love all things short and find in general that the longer a piece is, the less is there is in it. The little flowers that you send are once again very cute; but the pictures were most especially of interest to me. I do not think that you have aged at all; you just look rather fretful in two of the pictures, but in the one where you two are sitting around the table even that is not the case. Uncle Karl has also remained surprisingly young. The picture where you are standing next to one another could have just as well be taken 30 years ago. Who is the woman sitting on your left at the table? I thought of course immediately of old Trude, but that is impossible of course since there is not a single feature that bears similarity and also the head- and facial shape is quite a different one. Mizzi actually looks quite unchanged. The poem you copied for me is really quite charming. The name Kästner still remains in vague memory from literature class. Wasn't that a friend of Goethe's in his youth?

My worsened appetite from the beginning of June was, I believe, primarily caused by the cold I wrote you about. Every cold has that kind of effect on me ever since I had that severe flu in 1930. My lack of money here would surprise you less if you were familiar with the prices here. E.g. we need a man to work in the yard twice a week and to do the heavy work around the house and that costs \$100.- per month; and if we make an excursion to New York (of course without participating in any particularly expensive entertainment) then there's not much left of \$30.

I have already read quite a bit here about the trial against Fuchs¹, but always had the impression that the really interesting parts of his statements were not being published. Is that perhaps different this time in the article in Monat? One can order foreign magazines here only from New York. I watched the coronation on television, but I thought that the staging was miserable in many aspects. The queen walks as if on eggshells instead of striding majestically, looks constantly at the floor like some poor sinner. What

¹ Klaus Fuchs (1911–1988), German-born physicist who supplied the Soviet Union information about the British and American atomic bomb programs. He was convicted of espionage by a British court in January 1950 after confessing his activity, and at the time KG was writing was serving sentence in a British prison

do you say about Eisenhower? After all there is a ceasefire in Korea that was brought about. That would definitely have been impossible under the previous government. It did disappoint me somewhat that he did not pardon the Rosenbergs for they are the least to blame of all these spies, and none of the others were executed. On the other hand though you have to say that the defense primarily caused their execution by making incredible mistakes, apparently on purpose, for the Communists needed new proof for American "barbarism." The "almost" car accident that you describe is an entire drama. I am only surprised that such a thing as horses on the road still exists there. Here they are completely relegated to the past. If music makes Rudi nervous, it is probably because you two don't have the right records. Bach and Wagner make me nervous too as do bad records. I haven't decided anything about a summer stay yet, since I am so nicely involved in my work at the moment. Probably I'll go back to the seaside.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Asbury Park, 23./VIII. 1953. 95.

Dearest Mama!

Thousand *Bussis* and all the best on your 74th birthday. I hope you are feeling fine and that the lovely trips you did again this year linger pleasantly in your mind. We are now back again in our usual Asbury Park, i.e. we have been here 14 days and are traveling home tomorrow. Aside from swimming and sunbathing I took up my Skee-Ball playing again that I wrote you about last year. This time I am somewhat more lively so that we won a wonderful electric kitchen clock. Regarding the coronation ceremony I have to stick by my assertion. The way the queen is to stride is clearly determined exactly by court ritual so that is not her fault. But it nonetheless remains true that she walks too slowly and takes too small steps, which ruins the entire effect.

Can you cut out the report about the Fuchs affair for me? I scarcely believe that he sews sacks. More likely he does some kind of accountancy work and on the side there remains enough free time for him (as one reads here) to study philosophy. The English legal system is very humane after all. Here they could not avoid executing the Rosenbergs although they are far less guilty. We still have the well-behaved Negro; but here any kind of servant is hugely

expensive. That is also why more and more machines are used for everything. But for weeding and polishing floors those do not exist yet. I hope that Rudi's car was not too damaged in the accident and that insurance paid everything. Collecting books is certainly not pointless, but rather a good investment of capital; I believe better even than stamps. I would by the way like to learn more at some point about Rudi's library, after I have heard so much about it indirectly (through Morgenstern etc.) already, but only in very uncertain terms.

Another thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. As of 21 Sept. you can write to me as "Prof."

Princeton, 21./IX. 1953.

96.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you both heartily for the congratulations on Prof. and the letter of 29./VIII. What you wrote to me once of your "nomadic existence" will really soon be fitting because literally each of your letters comes from somewhere else. However I find that one can quite easily get used to that kind of nomadic life. The renovation of Rudi's apartment will surely be finished by now. What does it look like now? The description of Rudi's library is far too general for me. Can't you name me of the title, year of publication, and description of some of the more interesting books as examples?

The recuperative effects of the summer vacation usually make themselves noticed only afterward. This year as well. Now I have a much better appetite and also look much better already. I did describe Skee-ball to you some last year. One has to toss a ball of ca. 10 cm diameter up a slanted surface and into certain demarcated fields. According to what you hit you then get "points." Last year I won on average one point, this year 2 points per toss. I do it of course mainly because it is a kind of gymnastic exercise.

The work that the Negro does is certainly not limited to weeding and polishing floors but rather he also cuts the grass, trims the hedges, vacuums the rugs, in short he does pretty much all the work in yard and house with the exception of cooking and washing up the dishes.

Einstein is doing very well; he has been feeling particularly fine this summer. However it has become too much for him now to walk back and forth to the Institute, which takes ca. an hour in total. So he only does one way now. I just got off the phone with Morgenstern. He arrived back from Rome today where a conference was. I wrote you already that I saw Hochwald this past winter. Now there is also a second schoolmate of mine here*, namely Klepetar, whose mother, I think, you once met (or am I wrong?). He was first an editor in Prague then lived (after Hitler had come to power) for a long time in China (Shanghai) and finally now has landed in the U.S.A. However, I have not seen him yet.

What do you say about Adenauer's victory? He is certainly Brünnning¹ II and I only hope that the sequel will not be the same. I am glad to hear the censor in Austria has finally been done away with and even more that you view that as an accomplishment of Eisenhower's. There is namely a decided tendency toward ascribing all sorts of good things that are indeed happening now in the field of politics (as far as it is even recognized) never to Eisenhower but instead always to all sort of other circumstances. Contrastingly my opinion is that if the previous regime had stayed in power here, we would have certainly in no time have careened into a Third World War. Interesting, by the way, that both main opponents of Eisenhower (Stalin externally and Taft internally) died in the course of half a year. And now, aside from them, the president of the Supreme Court² (a creation of Truman's) has died. I think nothing like that has ever happened before. The likelihood of that is 1:2000.

As to the English queen, I believe that one can conclude from the current historical situation that the coronation ceremony has to be bad. For the history of the past 500 years is primarily comprised of ever more limitations being imposed upon the power of the kings and emperors. How could an impressive coronation ceremony fit into that?

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

* i.e., to be exact, for 2½ years already

P.S. In a week I will send off \$30.-

¹ Heinrich Brüning (1885–1970), chancellor of Germany from 1930 to 1932, just before Hitler's ascent to power

² Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson, appointed by Truman in 1946

Princeton, 31./X. 1953.

97.

Dearest Mama!

As I see, my last letter dated 20./IX. and yours 26./IX. Quite a long time. I hope that everything is all right there with you two. For me the last few weeks once again flew by especially quickly (or actually, raced by). As you know I now have to take part in faculty business. There were already 5 faculty meetings and besides that one receives on average 1–2 letters per day with some kind of suggestions that have to be voted on in writing. Of course that is only that bad at the beginning of the year. In addition one can make it easy on oneself by simply saying yes to everything which anyway is almost always the result of the deliberations. But I do want to get oriented regarding all these things that are being discussed. A professor from Holland¹ was here into the bargain, a famous man who has much to do with my area of specialization. So I had to invite him to our house (once for lunch and one for tea.) He is already 72 years old and no longer quite in his prime. His lectures haven't found much resonance (and rightly so). He has clearly only come to America in order to earn money here. So you see once again the difference between here and over there. The pensions have not been raised at all in Holland (since 1939) even though the prices have risen threefold, so that this famous man has to work in a drugstore as a bookkeeper (or manager?) in order to even be able to subsist with wife and daughter. That is actually very sad, when something like that happens to renowned men.

Tomorrow there are elections (local) here and I want to get a little more oriented about the candidates. In contrast to Europe, here it is not usually the case that both candidates are equally bad, as one saw e.g. in the Eisenhower election.

As for the castle of King Ludwig it seems to me that you already wrote about that once; but you just now saw it for the first time? As far as I can recollect I doubted back then if all the tastelessness on display there now really originated with King Ludwig. Your current report only strengthens me in this opinion. For why does the castle not look equally tasteless and overladen from the outside as from inside? Probably because they could not very well change it after his death.

¹ L. E. J. Brouwer; see Letter, 21 September 1941. The pharmacy was owned by Brouwer's wife

Many thanks for the picture that I am enclosing with this letter. I look like a real baby in it, that is true. I believe it is from 1925, and so cannot have been taken by Adele's father.

I am happy to hear that Trudl is so nice. I would not have expected otherwise based on my recollection of her. But one could think by your description that she is a young girl. She must be ca. 40 by now? How is Rudi? You have not written anything about him for a long time. I see Morgenstern fairly seldom now. He also seems to have a lot to do. I would like to write you many more interesting items but there is unfortunately nothing. On television there are now frequently surprisingly good plays, e.g. recently the Mayerling Incident¹ depicted so lifelike (with all the local color) that one felt quite transported into it.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. This month I'll send \$30.- again

Princeton, 9./XII.1953.

98.

Dearest Mama!

Christmas is not very far away any more but the mail to Vienna now works so promptly that there it is still too early for Christmas greetings. So I want to just answer the questions from your last letter N° 200. There is not such a thing as a celebration at the Institute on the occasion of the conferral of professorship. Indeed, the Institute keeps itself as far away as possible from stiff etiquette, which of course is just fine by me. By the way there is, as far as I know, also no such "celebration" at the universities. In Europe there are "Accession Lectures." There is nothing more attached to my title* since there is only one kind of professor. At universities there are Assistant- and Associate Professors, which corresponds to our "*ausserordentlich*" professors. But one is not so title-crazed here as we are at home. It is e.g. not considered an insult to address a professor as Dr. or Mr. My "fame" I have not felt to be unpleasant in any way up to now. That starts only when you get so famous that

¹ The 1889 murder-suicide of Crown Prince Rudolf and his mistress, which fascinated KG

every child on the street knows you, as is the case with Einstein. Then, from time to time crazy people come who want to have their delusions parsed or to complain about the conditions in this world. But as you see even that is not dangerous since Einstein has already reached the age of 74 years.

The play about Mayerling was a short sketch (of $\frac{1}{2}$ hour) written for television. It definitely had tempo and suspense and also there was something undefinable in it that somehow made one feel transported back into the time of the old Austrian monarchy. I know Mayerling Castle from excursions I took there 20 years ago and so the piece awakened in me personal memories, too. The short pieces on television are mostly not worth much, but now and then there is a pearl in the dung. It is not true by the way that they do not have any sense in America of the Viennese local color. I have written you frequently that I have never heard such good Viennese music in Vienna as here sometimes. Of course everything good is rare, at least in the last few years, before, it was much more frequent. It is not commonplace that university professors' retirements are a pittance. Earlier that wasn't even the case in Austria, much less in Holland. Health-wise I am doing better than usual and I have been gaining weight for several months now. I have not written to you yet about our latest acquisition. We now have 2 parakeets, a green male and a blue female. They are enormously charming. If you let them out in the daytime, they go back into their cage again after a few hours all on their own and they are not a disturbance in the house at all. They just flutter around now and then; mostly they stay in the vicinity of the cage or climb like woodpeckers outside around on the cage bars. Maybe they can be taught to speak, but that will take some time yet I imagine. I am glad to hear that Hilde's daughter has married so well. You write that several of your acquaintances in Germany have died. I did not even know you still had some there (aside from Mimi Peters).

I will close for today and send you thousand *Bussi* and Rudi warm regards ever Your Kurt.

* except of course: Prof. in the School of Mathematics at the Institute for Advanced Study

P.S. I am sending a total of \$80- this month. In Nov. I sent nothing.

Princeton, 6.I. 1954.

99.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you both warmly for the lovely Christmas presents. The writing portfolio and the sandwich platter are indeed really elegant and the playing cards are sweet. One at first is tempted to think that they are too small to really play with them but it turns out that that works very well. I am quite curious about the article in Monat. I haven't gotten around to reading it just yet. Here at our place there was quite some goings-on over the holidays. There is an acquaintance of Pipsi Bauer here, namely the wife of the head of the "Fango" (Dr Hlavac) whom Rudi will likely know. She is apparently in New York on business and has visited us 2 times, once with a female friend and once with a male acquaintance from New York. It was quite amusing and the entire company stayed overnight here (i.e. to be exact 3 nights). That Dr Hlavac is very nice, except her politics seem a weak point of hers. She seems to have a blind hatred of everything communist and also socialist. Other than that she makes a very intelligent impression, so that one is surprised that this political one-sidedness can be compatible with it. But that seems to be a frequent thing with women. We had a similar case among our Princeton acquaintances.

Christmas and New Year's themselves passed fairly solitarily as is usual with us. We had a very pretty Christmas tree, that is 2 to be more exact, one in front of the house and one inside the house (which is by the way very common here). The New Year's Eve progrs. on television and radio were beneath any critique. Surprises will never cease. One would think that now after the signing of the ceasefire in Korea there would be no reason to dampen excessive merriment. I already heard of the new Disney movie, too, but it has not yet come to Princeton. What you write about the son of Frau Decker sounds almost like the eccentricity of King Ludwig. That must cost a pretty penny. Did he make all of that as a movie actor? I had completely forgotten about An Slavik and called her to mind only after your letter, that she was that fragile girl one was always afraid of dancing with for fear she would break apart in one's hand. As to the political developments about which you ask my opinion, I think that up to now only good things have happened under Eisenhower.

1. The ceasefire in Korea which I believe to have saved us from a Third World War,

2. The decreasing of the military budget by 3 billion \$

3. The standstill of inflation that had been going on for 6 years.

I do believe however that this is merely the beginning, for a new president cannot change course overnight after all.

The parakeets are getting more charming all the time. Now the female is doing true somersaults, that is she flips herself 360 degrees around the perch she's sitting on like an acrobat. I would never have believed that these animals could do such tricks all by themselves without any training. As to the 80 \$ sent, 50 \$ of them were intended as a Christmas present. I did not send any package this year because as you know I am not suited to picking out presents for you and therefore believe that you will find something nicer for yourself with the money than my presents. As I see, I owe you the support for 2 months from last year which I will pay back now in January and February.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 10./II. 1954.

100.

Dearest Mama!

Your letters all arrived fine. A stay in Semmering in the winter must be glorious and also very healthy. But whether that would do me good is another question. For me the ocean was always the best and the past few years I really only love warmth. Were there many visitors up there? In Austria there must be enough well-off people once again now, but "winter vacations" are not as commonplace as summer vacations. The essay about Einstein makes a concerted attempt to find the exact middle between left and right, which in and of itself is sensible. But then it deliberately avoids a closer discussion of the actual question and prefers to talk about irrelevant things and things are attributed to Einstein that he clearly did not mean.

The essay about Fuchs is very interesting. Especially the third part, about his arrest and his confession, reads like a suspenseful detective novel. However one has the feeling from time to time as though his remorse and conversion are not really authentic. For oddly enough he only ever began doubting Communism when things got too hot for him with the police and he had to stop his meetings with the Russians. However he did not get a milder sentence by that. What will become of him when he gets out of prison? He most probably won't be allowed to emigrate to Russia. On the other hand he can scarcely get an academic position in the Western countries. Though one does not know how the political situation will have changed by then. It is not an illusion of mine that there was an actor Decker here in Hollywood (or still

is). Besides, I remember quite clearly that someone said to me (or wrote?) that he was a son of the Viennese Frau Decker. But who that was I no longer know.

It is true that the parakeets sometimes screech, but that does not really bother me. The rest of the time they twitter particularly quietly and charmingly.

Frau Hlavac, who appears to be very well-read, loaned Adele a book with the title "Das vergessene Dorf" by Theod. Kröger¹. It depicts the experiences of a German man who lived through the events of the First World War and the Russian revolution in Siberia (in part as a prisoner). It is supposed to be based on a true story* and apparently has kicked up a lot of dust (1 mill. copies were sold). Have you ever heard of it? It is well written but includes very unfortunate things, of course.

One cannot say that Vienna is drawing a veil of silence over me, I think. That happens of its own accord since I am not there and there is not the same kind of interest and comprehension on the part of the general public for such abstract things as there is for the atom bomb or television. Even here there was only one single article about me in a non-scientific magazine and that was on the occasion of the honorary doctorate in Harvard and a lecture by me and after an interview with me, since journalists don't know anything about my work on their own. Regarding the Einstein Prize there were reports even in the Vienna newspapers.

It is terrible indeed that Paula Gödel has bladder cancer. She will surely have to be operated on at once. If you tell me the sanatorium she is at we would really like to write her. Did you get the money for January that I sent at the end of the month?

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* However I do not understand then why it first appeared in 1951

P.S. To Rudi I send many birthday greetings, unfortunately late again.

¹ "The Forgotten Village," a fictionalized autobiography by the German writer Theodor Kröger (1891–1958), first published in 1934; it enjoyed great popularity under the Nazi regime for its anti-Bolshevik themes

Princeton, 19.III./1954.

101

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 204, 205. The description of the evening in Auerberg Palace sounded very cozy. Old palaces, castles etc. are something I really like very much. That kind of thing unfortunately does not exist here. The character of my existence did not essentially change as a result of my professorship, i.e. only insofar as I now have to take part in the selection of the members of the Institute for each year. That costs firstly time and secondly it is not pleasant because one takes on a certain responsibility in doing so. At the moment I also have a contribution for a book to write (about logic not the theory of relativity). Hence my long break from writing. Health-wise I am doing quite well. My appetite is good and the diet is not too strict. I find the political situation not so bad. One cannot expect of Eisenhower that he would fix all the mischief overnight that Truman made in the course of 8 years. But one does see that much is improving. Above all we stood at the precipice of a Third World War. I do not believe that Einstein lost popularity among the general public by his position on the question of "loyalty investigations." There are certain circles here (who are clearly in the minority) who approve these things; I believe it was the clerics, primarily. I see Einstein almost daily still, only in winter the weather is often too bad to walk. I was very sorry to hear that Eva has leukemia. How are the chances of a cure these days regarding this disease? Can't that be treated with X-rays? I have not gotten around to reading anything else in Monat than the Fuchs Affair. I will close for today and will make it up to you by trying again to write more frequently.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

How is Aunt Paula?

Princeton, 4.IV. 1954.

102.

Dearest Mama!

Your letter N° 206 got here a couple of days ago and I want to answer it right away. Yes there is certainly enough tradition in Austria and I have always liked these things very much. I made excursions to Luxemburg and the ruins of Greifenstein and Rauenstein more than once. That same thing exists

by the way in some regions of Germany. E.g. I imagine the Rhine valley, aside from the beauty of the landscape to be in this regard too very interesting. Will you not be taking a car trip there together sometime? The book about Einstein with my contribution already appeared back in 1949. I will send you an offprint of my contribution which is not mathematical but purely philosophical and has to do with the essence of time.

I was very happy that Eva does not have leukemia after all, for I suspected right away that that is one of those diseases that cannot be healed yet even nowadays. I am very sorry for Aunt Paula. Can they not operate on any bladder cancer, or is that only when it's discovered too late?

The Brausewetters must be well off to go by your description. Since when has Grete had this splendid position that was primarily the reason for her ascent? I didn't know that Morgenstern's sister was so extremely pious. Is that tradition in the Morgenstern family? I see him quite seldomly here. There was no celebration for Einstein in Princeton; for he hates such things. There was merely a political meeting in his honor in which he did not take part, however, but instead answered questions in writing. As to "Moulin Rouge" I too have heard much but the topic is unappealing to me. If you write me your impressions it would interest me very much. Health-wise I continue to do well. I had myself given a massage a couple of times which further improved my appetite.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 5./V. 1954.

103.

Dearest Mama!

I send you thousand extra *Bussis* and wish you all the best on Mother's Day. To go by your description you once again have another wonderfully lovely car trip behind you. Your description of the blooming Christmas rose reminded me of our excursions at Marienbad. There sometimes you could get to see blooming meadows in every hue. Elsewhere I have really never that. I have fond memories of Feldherrnhügel¹. Yes, back then warfare was a

¹ *Der Feldherrnhügel* ("Reviewing Stand for the General Staff"), a 1909 stage comedy, subsequently adapted in several film versions in Austria and Germany

relatively jovial affair. The program from "Moulin Rouge" would interest me very much. Hopefully the entire content of the piece is not the fact that the hero is a cripple. Or is that perhaps the best part of it? You are completely right that the new Disney movies are by far not as cute as the earlier ones. It is indeed odd how many things that start off nice get ever worse over time. One can observe that in many television programs. Luckily there are enough "rejuvenations," which however are just as soon run aground. It is true that Eisenhower looks bad but it is at any rate not to be denied that his government has proven to be beneficial. Note the Geneva Convention and the exposure of McCarthy. That Oppenheimer had lost his position as Director of the Institute is absolutely not true.¹ To date only one investigation is in progress and one has to await the results. But even if they were unfavorable, he still would not have to lose his position at the Institute by any stretch of the imagination. Why do you think that he looks terrible? In the pictures taken lately he of course has a fretful face but otherwise he does look quite nice. By the way, he did not immigrate from Germany, but rather was born in the U.S.A. His father is from Germany. I am sorry to hear that you still have issues with your digestion but I hope that the sense of it being worse than in previous years is mainly based on a false impression. For I can recall that you always were afraid to eat something on trips. The story with your Nescafé is easily explained. For you always said that coffee had a diuretic effect on you. So if you drink too much at once (and perhaps without eating anything beforehand or along with it) then that can result in all your blood streaming into the digestive organs. The lack of blood in the head makes one see black before one's eyes. Please for Heaven's sake do not worry about birthday presents. How is one always supposed to come up with something new twice a year for years on end? Many thanks for the letters № 207, 208 and the little Spring flowers from Kronichhof. The music box plays as charmingly as it ever did. In the yard everything is blooming. Especially pretty are the tulips in every color. And now the fence is freshly painted too. So everything looks very nice, like out of a gift box. One does not lose weight from a light massage. That merely activates the blood circulation. Hearty thanks for your and Rudi's birthday wishes. You absolutely do not have to come to terms with us never seeing one

¹ Admiral Lewis Strauss, a member of the Atomic Energy Commission as well as the board of IAS, had accused Oppenheimer of being a communist and sought to have his security clearance stripped and to have him fired from his position at the Institute. Gödel joined a public statement of support for Oppenheimer after he lost his clearance, and Oppenheimer continued to serve as IAS director until 1966.

another again. On the contrary I believe that it will not be so very much longer at all.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. I put \$30 in the mail at the beginning of May

Princeton, 1./VI. 1954. 104.

Dearest Mama!

I may not know when and where this letter will reach you, am writing nonetheless since nearly a month has passed since my last letter yet again. Your little letter N° 210 arrived, 209 is missing but to go by what you write about the dating of the previous letters, that seems to be based on an error in numbering. By now you must be in the middle of your trip. And so you will be meeting up with Eva, too. Apparently she is not doing badly, which makes me happy. I am really sorry for Aunt Paula. I cannot understand why they can do nothing there; nowadays surgery is so far along that one can even operate on a heart and insert a stranger's kidneys. Or was the cancer discovered too late?

Politically, I am as always optimistic. The news from Geneva is favorable in the sense that the western powers apparently have become somewhat more flexible and thus the danger of a World War is considerably reduced. That, I think, is the only important thing. Whether the Communists win 3 points seems immaterial to me.

The little package has not arrived yet. I already heard as a child of Lorenz and of course I can remember both my lame cousins very well. What has become of them, actually? But those things I no longer remember any more. Our favorite restaurant for special occasions was Meissl and Schadn. Does it not exist any longer? You described the Prater excursion once again as "tasty": does Rudi still ride sometimes? I still regularly do gymnastic exercises in the early morning, i.e. I started back up doing them several years ago and they do me very good. That the bad weather should be in connection to the atom bombs I find entirely possible. Here it was very cold till the end of May this year. Today (promptly after that date) it got fairly hot.

Thousand *Bussi*
ever Your Kurt

Soon I will write more

Warm regards to Rudi. How is he doing with his tooth treatment?

Princeton, 27./VI. 1954.

105.

Dearest Mama!

A couple of days ago your letter № 211 arrived and I am hastening to answer it. The card from Garmisch and the letter from Igls also arrived and I thank you for the pretty little flowers. The trip that you have completed seems to be the loveliest you two have done thus far. At least that is what one has to conclude from your description. The landscape is probably more varied in Austria and thus even more attractive than that in Switzerland? It seems to literally be true that it always rains in Salzburg to go by your report. If they don't heat well in a hotel, one can sleep wonderfully with an electric heating pad on the back. I do not know if you have already tried that. Of course you have to set it at the lowest current setting. Why do you find Innsbruck unappealing? You write something too about someone having been rude in a bank? So you also met up with all the relatives but I glean from your writing that you did not agree with Uncle Karl on everything. I remember very clearly the heated debates during World War I. Nationalistic people are now probably in an agitated mood because the developments in Germany (and also elsewhere) are not going their way. Adenauer is truly Brünning II and it looked as if Hitler II could follow (except this time with the blessing of the Western powers). But now these developments have slowed to a degree. Between Dusi and Robert by the way there seems to be a similar conflict at hand, though in this case fate has apparently decided for the lamb and against the ram. As to the Slavs in Vienna we have the Communists more than Hitler to thank for them don't we? Aside from that I do not find that Slavs are unlikable except for the ultranationalistic ones that maybe predominate now in Vienna. It is certainly sad that A[unt] Mizzi now lives in such impoverished circumstances but I believe with her temperament she will scarcely call it tragic. Or does she seem depressed to you? You write about Trudl that she is larger than her husband. Is that because she is so large or because he is so small?

The little birthday package finally did arrive and I thank you heartily for it, especially for the lovely gloves. The tie is also not bad. First I read the chapter about the *ewig Weibliche*. His relationship to American women is really interesting. Particularly nice is the part where he was covered with so many *Bussis* that he looked like a Sioux chieftain in full war paint.

I am doing well. There was no reason to think about going away up to this point because $\frac{3}{4}$ of June was damned cold. The final decision regarding Oppenheimer has not yet been released. As to his position at the Institute I am, regardless of the outcome, completely optimistic. But not all members of the Institute are of this opinion.

The parakeets are more charming than ever. Now they mainly sit in the window and watch what is going on outside. Then they assiduously imitate what they see the birds doing, i.e. they stroll around over the carpet and pick imaginary grains up. Our house was freshly painted. It now once again looks spit-spot. Otherwise there is not much new with us.

Farewell for today and be kissed a thousand times
from Your Kurt

Dear Rudi!

Enclosed I send you my contribution to the Einstein volume. The article was actually supposed to be comprehensible for a broad audience but I doubt very much if I managed that. Most likely no one without prior knowledge can understand it. I hope I can finally get around to writing you in detail.

With warm regards
Your Kurt

Princeton, 31./VII. 1954. 106.

Dearest Mama!

Lately I was once again rather under pressure and so did not write to you for quite a long time. On 9th Aug. we want to go to the seaside again and I want to finish the contribution for the book I wrote about in order not to have this matter going around in my head still while on vacation. Now and then there are still things to get done, and now that almost no one is in Princeton, I now have to take care of that with one other faculty member. In addition terrible heat prevails for some time now that bothers me less than most of my colleagues, however. You probably read that the drought this year is likely to

destroy a substantial part of the harvest. But we live in such a topsy-turvy world that one has to be more happy than sad about it. For here the government buys up the overages of agricultural products at fixed rates and the storage facilities are already full to bursting. That leads of course to political disagreements for this is all on the backs of the taxpayer. But one once again sees from all of this how good everyone has it here. The farmers have no worries and the others have so much that they can easily pay [sic] the necessary taxes; for in relationship to the overall taxes that is only a small amount. The drought is so bad, by the way, that one feels the effects even here in Princeton in the way the lawn is turning brown. Our yard is an exception, however, since Adele does not save on the water; and if we use the sprinklers a lot in this heat we create a kind of tropical climate that makes everything even more lush, so that even passersby on the street stop and stare. You are astonished that I find the Slavs likeable, but you yourself give an example in your last letter of how their supposedly unlikeable qualities are based on slander. For you say that Elly herself (or her children) destroyed the linden tree but are blaming it on the Czechs cutting it down. I find Elly's behavior to gauge by your description very unappealing and at any rate not comparable to that Czech Denbis. It is another question of course as to whether the Czech refugees currently living in Vienna are likeable, for these are for the most part ultranationalists (i.e. the "rams" in contrast to the international "lambs"). One can be, I think, very satisfied with the development of the global political situation. Another hotbed, in Indochina, has been eliminated.

A big piece of news in Princeton. The shopping center in our area that, as I wrote, had been in the planning for 5 years, has now finally been opened (i.e. approximately half the stores already open). The stores are really enormously big and very elegant, some of them correspondingly expensive. Everything is "air-conditioned," i.e. wonderfully cool. A number of large stores even moved from the center of town over here. The stores are in a rectangle arranged around a huge square. The square is clearly meant to be planted like a park. Beside it is a correspondingly large location for cars that are expected from all around.

I read about the flooding you are having, in Bavaria and in Bohemia. When did something like that ever happen before? I can't recall. Your letter N° 212 arrived. You write nothing of Aunt Paula. Probably because it is too unpleasant. Where is she now, actually?

I hope you and Rudi are doing well and remain with thousand *Bussis* and warm regards

ever Your Kurt.

P.S. I will send off \$30 from here on Monday.

Asbury Park, 25./VIII. 1954.

107.

Dearest Mama!

I wish you all the best on your 75th birthday and hope that you spend it in good health and a pleasant mood. A little present should be arriving at the same time as this letter. It is a new kind of fountain pen that sucks up the ink via a nozzle. A money transfer is also on its way. I write this letter from our summer vacation. I am lying here in a lounge chair behind the hotel and a pleasant breeze is blowing after a hot day of bathing. Unfortunately once again there hasn't been all that much of this during our stay. This summer was overall quite abnormally cool. But it was nonetheless quite nice here and I am doing very well. In a few days we will be returning to Princeton. Unfortunately I cannot tell you anything interesting about our stay. Everything always takes the same course in approximately the same fashion so that you only have to read my letter about that from last year over again. I received your little letter N° 213 (with A[unt] Paula's note) and the card of Kronichberg (with Innitzer's signature). The one good thing regarding A. Paula is that she is at least not confined to bed, even if otherwise one has to feel very sorry for her.

With the political developments I am very content. What do you have against it? After all we were at the brink of a Third World War and now everything has shifted suddenly. I thought Elli was your housekeeper during the war? How was it a Czech Communist woman? It is certainly true that cancer is sometimes overlooked through the fault of the doctors. But I scarcely believe that happens here more frequently than in Europe, since millions of dollars are spent here annually for cancer research and public education etc.

With thousand *Bussis* and even more birthday *Bussis* extra.

ever Your Kurt

Warm regards to Rudi

Princeton, 3./X. 1954.

108.

Dearest Mama!

I am glad that you once again managed, as one can see from your letters, to have such another successful stay in Velden and Grado. And you also had pleasant company, too. Once again, in the pictures you really look very good and young. And Rudi too has a very contented facial expression. Trudl of

course I would not have recognized. When I saw her last, she must have been ca. 10 years old. Unfortunately, on the pictures one sees so little of Aunt Mizzi that one cannot tell what she really looks like. If you want to send me some of the old photos, I would be very glad. We have not got a single photo of Papa here.

In the past few months I had really very little to write about and I cannot tell you anything more about my summer vacation than I did in my last letter. As for swimming you two surely had it better in Grado. This year was a quite particularly cool summer. But now it is hot here. Yesterday during a parade on the occasion of an anniversary 25 people fainted from the heat (that is really not a joke). On the weekend the bathing beaches in New York were overrun since most of them were closed. Aside from the temperature it looks quite autumnal here.

Surely you no longer need to worry about the Americans moving out of your house? Or is the pre-war condition still not restored?

Einstein still walks to the Institute on foot every day, despite his 75 years, on which I usually accompany him. A couple of weeks ago he had problems again with his gallbladder (or with his intestine?) so that he could not go out, but now he looks quite contented and chipper.

The book about Lorenz is written in a very nice chatty tone, but what he tells about are actually for the most part quite commonplace things. But perhaps I have not read the most entertaining chapters yet. How is the new fountain pen holding up? I had the impression that one could write especially easily with it, but whether a person likes it is also a question of becoming accustomed. Thank you for the little flowers that you sent me. I am surprised how fresh they still look now. How is Rudi? Velden and Grado will certainly have done his gallbladder good. The parakeets are as charming as ever. Now they have got a big new cage and they prefer it inside more than outside. The door is open all day long but they come out only seldomly. At least that is the case with "her." "He" flies out often and scolds her for not coming along but it does not help him much. Recently Hochwald and Klepetar were at our house and we talked about old times again, 30 years after our high school exams. Klepetar has a very nice 6 year old boy who did somersaults on the lawn and was sorry that in New York he did not have any opportunity to do them. Then he played with 2 little girls in the neighbor's yard and told us right afterward which of the two he wanted to marry. Hochwald is leaving us, unfortunately. That is, he is taking a position 300 miles north of New York. The Brausewetters are certainly not the reason that I haven't come to Vienna yet!

With thousand *Bussis* and many greetings to Rudi
ever Your
Kurt.

RADIOGRAM

1. XII. 54

RUDOLF GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA=
FOR 4 WEEKS HEART CONDITION AND DEPRESSION WILL WRITE
SOON =

KURT

RADIOGRAM

11 XII 54

RUDOLPH TOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA =
CONDITION CONSIDERABLY BETTER LETTER ON THE WAY =
KURT

Princeton, Dec 10, 1954

109.

Dearest Mama!

Your two letters of 10./XI. and 1./XII. (with the newspaper clipping) came the day before yesterday and I want to answer you right away. Most of all please do not be mad at me that I made you go without any news for so long. But it was probably better than to worry you even earlier. Because I did not want to simply lie and say that everything is all right. Now I can at least write to you and say that I am doing better again. The heart issues (heart palpitations, anxiety, sleeplessness) have abated. I have a much better appetite again and go out daily. Yesterday I was even in New York, which, contrary to my expectations, did not fatigue me much at all. A large part of my issues is certainly psychological. For a while I had very strange mental states. I had the irresistible feeling that I only have a short time left to live and that the usual things in my surroundings, the house, the books, etc. were of no matter to me. That paralyzed me to such an extent that I couldn't work up the energy to go about my accustomed activities. That has subsided but of course the entire

thing sapped my strength somewhat so that I now need to recuperate with food and rest. But at least now you two are approximately oriented regarding my condition. Your little letter 219 is what I want to answer next time.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. My entire condition resembles the business with the tooth in 1934. The cause was probably similar. Back then a small infection started in the tooth, this time the infection that gave me a low temperature now and that always got worse with a cold. The doctor believes that it resides in the left lobe of my lung. I have not had any excitement and disagreements in the past few months that could said to be a cause.

[*enclosed Christmas card*]

Merry Christmas
and
Cheers to New Year!
With thousand *Bussis* and
many warm regards
Your Kurt

Part 3

Philosophy and Reunion

1955–1959

The Institute for Advanced Study had been founded on the idealistic notion of establishing a haven for pure intellectual pursuit. Situated on a square mile of open fields and woods, separated by a half mile (and a golf course) from the main Princeton University campus, IAS required nothing from either its visiting members or permanent faculty but that they enjoy the privilege of engaging in pure theoretical research, undistracted by having to teach classes, apply for grants, or supervise students.

For Gödel this proved a mixed blessing: the splendid isolation of IAS was in some ways *too* splendid for someone of Gödel's reclusive self-sufficiency. As his colleague Karl Menger later observed:

At no time in his life did Gödel need intellectual stimulation to conceive and develop original and unexpected ideas. But he needed a congenial group suggesting that he *report* his discoveries, reminding and, if necessary, gently pressing him to write them down. All this he *had* at the beginning of his stay in Princeton . . . and he presumably could have found such support later. But apparently he never looked for it, and no one seemed to volunteer. The fact is that I could not observe anything of the sort in the 1950's. Rather, it soon became clear to me that he wrote up many brilliant ideas only for his desk drawer if at all. From the point of view of the outside world, his incomparable talent was lying lamentably fallow.¹

¹ Menger, *Reminiscences of Vienna Circle*, 226–27

This was all more so after the death of Einstein on April 18, 1955. Einstein's death was clearly a heavy blow to Gödel, and took a toll both personally and professionally, increasing his isolation and his worries about his own health. The loss of such a sympathetic scientific colleague exacerbated the sharp drop-off in his publications that had been evident since the beginning of the decade. He continued to work on endless revisions of a never-to-be-published chapter that he had agreed in 1953 to write for a volume in the *Living Philosophers* series dedicated to Rudolf Carnap, a philosopher and mathematician whom Gödel had known since the days of the Vienna Circle, and whose lecture course he had taken while a student at the University of Vienna. Gödel's chapter was meant to be an exposition of his longstanding disagreement with the view of Carnap and others of the Vienna Circle (strongly reflecting as well the ideas of the Austrian-born philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose writings on the subject greatly influenced the members of the Vienna Circle when they excitedly discovered them in the 1920s) that mathematics is nothing but a "syntax of language," a set of rules for manipulating symbols devoid of any semantic meaning or inherent truth. Finally, in 1959, he told the editors he was still not satisfied with his chapter and would prefer not to publish it at all. In 1958 appeared what would be his last new publication (and the first since his relativity papers of almost a decade earlier), a paper (in German, for a volume of the journal *Dialectica* in honor of the 70th birthday of Paul Bernays) returning to some questions on the consistency of mathematics where he had begun his career.

Although some of Gödel's colleagues at IAS had been worried that if he were appointed professor he would not be willing to devote the time faculty were expected to devote to administrative matters, the real problem proved to be exactly the opposite. Although Gödel complained about the time spent in faculty meetings ("I often think with regret back to the lovely time when I didn't have the honor of being a professor at the Institute,"¹ he ruefully told his mother), he was as always conscientious to a fault, meticulously poring over IAS's finances and causing interminable delays in applications for appointment of visiting and permanent members by his insistence in going into every detail of an applicant's qualifications. By his own estimate, he was spending one-third of his time on Institute business.

In his professional pursuits he increasingly was now turning to philosophy, and it was his interest in studying Leibniz's papers in Hannover, Germany, that was behind his repeated and increasingly elaborate proposals to meet his mother and brother there for a vacation, and possibly come to Vienna as well. (In one

¹ Letter, 30 September 1956

letter he even asks Rudi what the voltage of the electrical service is in Vienna.) As before, a snag always develops: his doctor's advising him that he really needed to go somewhere on vacation at an elevation greater than 1000 m; the sudden expenses he had to incur buying the lot next to theirs in Princeton, to prevent a house being built a few feet away; and—no doubt the truest reason—his recurring flashbacks to the events of 1936 in Vienna (his hospitalization for a nervous breakdown, and the murder of Moritz Schlick) that continued to haunt him.

Yet overall the late 1950s were a period of relative happiness and stability for Gödel. Despite his brief and sudden bout of depression in late 1954, his health and appetite had markedly improved since his ulcer attack in 1951, and he often writes with pleasure of again enjoying the Austrian dishes that Adele sometimes cooked and baked, including the traditional Viennese crescent-shaped Christmas sugar cookies *Vanillekipferl* and a whole carp for Christmas Eve. Books, history, politics, television, summer vacations at the beach, occasional expeditions to New York (they saw Aida at the Met on New Year's Eve day 1955), and the antics of their pet parakeets continued to provide welcome diversions.

Adele's concerns that her ailing mother was not being properly looked after in her apartment in Vienna led to their abrupt decision in March 1956 to bring her to Princeton to live with them, which she did until her death in spring 1959 at age 91.

No doubt recognizing at last that her younger son was simply never going to travel to Europe again, Marianne flew to Princeton with Rudolf in April 1958 for their first reunion in twenty years. “Adele and I were hugely happy about your visit and think it was a success in every regard,”¹ Gödel wrote her afterward, a letter which Adele adorned with a little sketch of a heart pouring out a torrent of tears. They would repeat the visit every two years until Marianne’s death in 1966.

* * *

¹ Letter, 8 May 1958

Princeton, 5./I. 1955.

110.

Dearest Mama!

I must begin this letter with an apology once again for having not written in so long and also for not having confirmed the receipt of the Christmas package yet. To make up for it I want to write in detail this time. Health-wise I continue to do quite well, even if I still have palpitations and insomnia occasionally. Of course, I eat very healthily and consume all kinds of very concentrated foods, e.g. daily 1/8 kg of butter, lots of sugar, egg with concentrated milk. I am not at all as lonely as you think. Because I often visit Einstein, and Morgenstern among others visits me often. And at Christmas there was a big hubbub at our house since that Frau Hlavac was here with a woman friend for several days. By the way, Frau H. has divorced her husband in Vienna and wants to stay here permanently now.

I have no time to pursue any fancy (called a “hobby” here), but that is not even necessary; as I am interested in a variety of things outside of my profession, e.g. politics, also I watch plays and variety shows on television so that I have enough distraction from mathematics and philosophy. I can imagine that Einstein wrote nicely to you. He is just friendliness itself (at least to me). Unfortunately he has been ill for 2 months with anemia and cannot go out. But he has improved visibly in the last few weeks.

Now to the Christmas package for which I heartily thank you both. The things that you sent me are once again all really hugely nice. Especially charming is the chess set and the glasses really look very elegant. I will probably get a lot of use out of the book embosser. The book by Zweig will surely be very good and recall to mind times long past.¹ I really like St[efan] Zweig very much even if I also think he has something gloomy and depressing about him. Have you read this autobiography actually? And is it his last work? I do not know at all how and where he died. If I recall, it was by suicide.

There are quite a few of your letters lying in front of me that I still have not answered yet (216–21). I have read them all through again. Fortunately they mostly contain only pleasant things. Many *Bussi* for the charming chimney

¹ *The World of Yesterday*, a memoir and history of the times by the Austrian Jewish novelist, biographer, and journalist Stefan Zweig (1881–1942). He and his second wife committed suicide in 1942 in a small German settlement in the mountains of Brazil; his suicide letter, expressing despair over his exile from his home, was included at the end of the posthumously published book

sweep figurine.¹ It came just as I needed it most, namely when my illness began. It is very remarkable that they are building a subterranean tunnel at the Opera and that Mariahilf street was lighted up like a fairyland, and seems to prove that not only the German loudmouths can speak of an “ascent.” What I do not understand is that the Opera and the Burgtheater still have not been repaired. As I hear, however, the Opera is to be completed by next Nov. and to commemorate the occasion a calendar depicting its history with many color plates was released. An acquaintance of Frau Hlavac brought me one.

The photos from Leoben of all of you were very good and you look very happy and content, especially Rudi. It is not necessary at all to look for old photos for me, especially if it upsets you. I already live more than necessary in the past. The name “Hubertus Castle” also reawakened a number of memories for me. Isn’t there a hotel-restaurant by this name in Hietzing where we once all drove by car together to eat. Or am I mistaken? I do know for sure that I stayed in a forest hotel by that name with you once. We then traveled on to Mariazell and later climbed up to the Rax (on the cog railway). Do you remember?

We haven’t seen “The Living Desert.”² We hardly ever go to the movies now, since it’s so much more convenient to watch it on television. We have seen several interesting battles among animals on TV. Once between a poisonous snake and a “mongoose” just like described by Kipling in “Riki-Tiki.” Until one has read this book one doesn’t realize how much this book is taken from real life.

I am not, as you can imagine, fully satisfied by the results of the elections here, even though I myself always used to vote Democrat. I don’t see Adenauer as a guardian angel; he doesn’t look like one either. It is really quite odd to build up Germany’s arms again after 2 World Wars and that is surely also the private opinion of Eisenhower. The explanations he gives about that are, in contrast to those of the English, very dovish. This has become a long epistle now and I have to finally close. Today writing “flowed from the pen” like never before for me. Perhaps because I have new ink. The old one had dried up to a sauce which probably made writing difficult.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

¹ A traditional good luck token

² 1953 Disney wildlife documentary

Dear Rudi!

As I see, “hobby” has already become a German loanword. I could only name politics as one, which is not as necessarily and in every regard unpleasant here as it is in Europe. The business with the lobe of my lung is also a mystery to me. But the temperatures (after a chill or, better, being chilled) are definitely real. Perhaps one can make a better diagnosis whenever I come to Vienna. It also could be, by the way, that my heart was irritated by too much sun at the seaside.

With warm regards Your Kurt

P.S. simultaneously sending \$30

Princeton, 14./II. 1955.

111.

Dearest Mama!

Please excuse my having not written for so long once again. I hope you are not worried about my health. I am doing quite well but I have huge amounts of work to do and therefore can only write to you quite briefly today. Due to my illness in the Fall, the completion of the work that I wrote about was postponed again so that now I really have to finally finish this thing. Besides that there are a number of things that have to do with my professorship and beyond that the piece about Einstein that I sent you is to be translated into German. I hope I soon can catch my breath and can then write you in detail.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Many thanks for the letters № 222, 223

Princeton, 14./III. 1955.

112.

Dearest Mama!

Finally I am at the point that I can write you a leisurely letter. I already sent off the translation, supplying some elaborative comments. For when I

read through some earlier work of mine again then I usually cannot stop thinking about it further. That naturally takes more time than merely translating it, too. The philosophical treatise about Carnap¹ is now practically done and as to faculty matters there is a break, too. Health-wise I am pretty much back to normal; I also have attained my previous weight. Just my sleep is not as good as it used to be. I often wake up at 6 am and cannot get back to sleep. That of course result in being less peppy during the day and working slower.

I am sorry I had to let you go so long without detailed news. In addition my last (short) letter must have taken abnormally long since you didn't have it yet on 19./II. It is really odd that the letters are now taking longer than 2 days (and sometimes even 4 days). Before, the excuse was the censor. But what is the cause now? I have received all your letters N° 222–224 and thank you heartily for the charming four-leafed clover. Your last letter of 19./II. was quite a while ago and I am very eager to hear what news you have to tell me from the course of the last few weeks.

By dint of A[unt] Mizzi's presence you have a change of pace once again. What all did she have to tell you? (N.B. how much pension does she actually get?) When I heard that Frau Mosing had died I thought that A. Mizzi would move permanently to Vienna and want to set up housekeeping with Mosings. They used to always be such good friends. Why do you write that bad relations prevail with the Mosings? And why should the daughters get a pension? Don't they both work? We got 2 nice letters from A. Mizzi and a Brünn calendar with views of the city. I was highly surprised that something like that exists at all. It comes from Heidelberg, where a "Brünn Homeland Courier" is published. It apparently does pay off to publish their own newspaper for those Brünnites strewn throughout German. It would be interesting, however, to know what actually is written in it.* How is Uncle Karl? In your last letter you wrote that he was doing better but that Trudl and her husband were going to see him nonetheless. You've stopped writing anything about Aunt Paula. Einstein has completely recovered and is back to going on foot to the Institute every day. Today is his 76th birthday, by the way. So naturally his house and the Institute were besieged by reporters. But in vain, because he did not even show himself. I could not find a farewell letter by Stefan Zweig anywhere in the book. Maybe it is merely printed in another edition. Of course I have not even gotten around to reading the book but I

¹ Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970), Austrian-born logician and one of the most prominent members of the Vienna Circle. He was present at Vienna's Café Reichsrat the evening of 26 July 1930 when Gödel first announced to his colleagues his incompleteness result

hope that I can do so soon. One's mouth fairly waters at your description of the Ice Revue. In television one sees such things frequently but in real life and in color it is quite another matter. I have heard of the movie "Caine"¹ but on television no new movies are broadcast (otherwise the movie theaters would be empty). Why does the piece end with a question mark?

I don't find the situation in Formosa to be that unfavorable. Eisenhower has explained clearly enough after all that he cannot go along with everything Chiang Kai-shek apparently intends and that was surely the best thing he could do for maintaining peace.

Our joint car trip to a large restaurant in Hietzing for dinner is no figment of my imagination. I still recall that one could see the Insane Asylum Steinhof in the distance from there. I can no longer say with any certainty however whether this restaurant was called Hotel Hubertus. How is Rudi? It has gotten too late this year even for belated birthday wishes.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

* since there are no more Germans left in Brünn

Princeton, 10./IV. 1955.

113.

Dearest Mama!

Today is Easter Sunday and at the same time the first warm day of the year, so that we were even able to sit in the yard. But the day before yesterday it was so cold that a fur coat felt good. I do always say that even the weather here submits to the general orderliness. Your little letters № 225, 226 with enclosures arrived and I thank you heartily for both the pictures and also for the essay about Einstein. The picture from Abbazzia is very pretty, especially excellent of Papa. I am quite curious what other pictures you will be sending me. In the course of the years one forgets what pictures even exist. I think the picture of Einstein that accompanies his horoscope is immensely charming.

We were very sorry to hear that Aunt Paula died, even though nothing else could have been expected given what you wrote about her illness. The

¹ "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial," the play based on Herman Wouk's novel *The Caine Mutiny* and presented live on television in 1955

circumstances at the Mosings are not completely clear to me. They could just give away the cats now, if the old woman is no longer alive. As to Miki, she worked for years in different bureaux, and why is Hedi actually unable to work? Couldn't Aunt Mizzi can get by just fine on RM 100-, if she lives in the country?

I have already read half of the book by Zweig. It is very interesting how he describes the time in Vienna before the First World War. I can't find he toots his own horn. If anything one can reproach him for being so repetitive. Mostly he says the same thing 3–4 times or more. In his earlier books he did not do that at all. That must be a consequence of his deranged state of mind caused by the political circumstances. Or perhaps he wrote the book in a hurry, because he needed money. The book by Auernheimer that you write about, would also interest me very much. I still fondly remember his novel "Ruine Greifenstein" fondly among others. I hope he did not also die by suicide. One could almost believe it to go by your description of his book. The book about Einstein that is being translated is of course mainly highly scientific even if it is not mathematical. Except there might be some things that would interest you in the autobiography which it contains. Since you know Philipp Frank's book "Einstein and His Time," it probably would not bring you anything new. By the way, this biography also is more about his work than about his private life. Carnap spent 2 years in Princeton, but unfortunately he wandered 4000 km westward last Fall and now has a professorship in California.

In Hietzing there was that "Tyrolian Garden" with a lovely view. The restaurant I mean did not have a particular view, only in the vicinity of Steinhof far away in one direction. Was it maybe "Hübner"? So the "Homeland Courier" tells about events among the Brünn inhabitants who emigrated? So one really has to be surprised how that is even possible since these people are dispersed throughout the country.

Einstein is still doing well. But now his daughter has been in the hospital with sciatica these past 3 weeks. There are radical injections available. But they do not want to use them because she is not strong enough for that. So her condition is only improving slowly. The parakeets are as charming as ever. A while ago they suddenly began nibbling at a few leafy plants that we had in the room, so that Adele finally had to give the plants away. Since then they sit proudly on the wire frame against the wall that had been there for the flowerpots. It almost looks like they had intended that very thing by nibbling at the plants. The funny thing about it is that they look so good on these wire rings that a person could believe them to be artificial twigs with stuffed birds on them.

Thousand *Bussis* and also many Easter greetings after the fact to you and
Rudi

ever Your Kurt.

[vertically in margin.] Health-wise I am still doing fine.

P.S. Just now your letter № 227 arrived. Many thanks for the pretty little flowers

Princeton, 25./IV. 1955.

114.

Dearest Mama!

Many *Bussi* for your letters № 227–29. The last just arrived. Actually, I wanted to write you several days ago to reassure you and so want to do it now right away. Einstein's death was of course a great shock to me, for I had not expected it at all. Einstein particularly in the last few weeks made a quite healthy impression. Whenever he walked with me the ½ hour to the Institute conversing all the while, there was never any indication of fatigue, as sometimes had been the case before. Of course I have lost much by his death, purely personally speaking, all the more since in particular lately he had become even nicer to me than he already was before, and I had the feeling that he wanted to come out of himself even more than before. He had been rather reserved regarding personal matters. Of course I have been doing worse again the last few weeks especially in regard to sleep and appetite. But a couple of times I took a strong sleeping pill and now am more or less up to snuff.

Isn't it strange that Einstein's death followed barely 14 days after the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Institute? There was a big dinner that he did take part in. One of his doctors indicated to me not a gallbladder infection but an "aneurysm" in his lower torso. That is a disorder of the blood vessels in which the latter become fragile and leaky. So perhaps his anemia was traceable to some inner bleeding? He suffered from this aneurysm for many years. But as I was told, cramps in the intestine can result from such disrupted blood circulation. So that was why his so-called gallbladder attacks. Many thanks for your birthday card. Please don't always fuss and run around for this one little package for me! Only recently did I just get so many nice things for Christmas and it really is impossible to find suitable presents every few months. For the next occasion I will give you two the name of a book that

interests me. I imagine the corner of the balcony that you two are setting up for yourselves to be very romantic. I will close for today and postpone the answer to everything else that you write me for the next time.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 15./V. 1955.

Dear Rudi!

A few days ago we received a letter from Pipsi Bauer in which she writes that Hilde is not reliably caring for Mother Porkert; that she e.g. recently did not go upstairs for three days so that then there was nothing more to eat. Besides that she is very coarse to her mother and to Pipsi whenever she tries to take the part of Frau Porkert. Adele is naturally very unsettled about these circumstances and is of the opinion that it cannot continue to go on this way. Is it really so bad? Is some kind of servant there who can take charge whenever Hilde does not come upstairs? And what would one actually do to fix this matter? We will send 40 \$ by cable tomorrow so that Adele's mother can go for some rest after her cataract operation to the sanatorium "Enzian" in Hadersdorf. I would be grateful to you if you could see to it actually happening and that the reservation is made as soon as possible.

How are you doing? I have not heard anything directly from you for an eternally long time. As I hear you have changed your office hours to evening. So does that give you afternoons free? And how is the practice doing? One would hope that the economic boom in Europe would have favorable effects everywhere. Recently someone told me that ca. 50 years ago there was a famous radiologist named Gödel in America who introduced various methods of examination that are still practiced today. Have you ever heard of him? As I read, Austria has now become an independent state again. It is however not clear as to whether that will prove to be favorable or unfavorable on the whole. But it is welcome at any rate that 10 years after the end of the war finally peace has been made. All in all the international situation is ever-improving, since Eisenhower became president.

I now have plans once again to come to Europe, although not to Vienna to which I have an aversion, but rather to Hannover due to the Leibniz manuscripts to be found there. The institute would probably then pay my

travel costs and I would stay there ca. 4 weeks. I will do that for certain at some point even though I do not know the exact date yet. With best wishes for your summer trip this year and warm regards

Your Kurt

P.S. Thousand *Bussi* to Mama. Health-wise I am doing well.

Princeton, 21./VI. 1955.

115.

Dearest Mama!

As I glean from your last letter, you two should be arriving in Vienna today, unless Rudi perhaps extended the trip. A mere two days with Uncle Karl is indeed really rather short. But I actually see no reason why you couldn't stay a couple of days longer and then take the train back. Uncle Karl could put you on a direct train. I am quite curious what news you will have to tell me about our relatives. Your letters N° 230–233 (I added the numbers) all came today as did the postcard from Grünwalderhof. Your trip together must have been glorious once again. Yes, Graz is a nice city. Hadn't you ever been there before? You have surely been to the Schlossberg. Back in 1936 there was a tame parakeet there who would greet all the guests and talk to them. Besides that there are (or were?) the famous tame squirrels. Didn't you also come through Merano? That was where we spent our last summer stay together.

Thank you for the pretty star flowers and the memento of the Baumbach fairy tale that I had already quite forgotten. I never heard of the "Ochenbauer." Shouldn't that be "Ochsenbauer"? I am glad that you were so pleased with the roses. We have very lovely ones here in the yard too. They glow so brightly that one could believe red lanterns were burning. All in all our yard has now become very lovely and lush. When we moved in everything was bare and neglected.

I did not know that Einstein's son had written a eulogy to his father. It would interest me very much. Of course there were articles columns-long in the newspapers, but there were mostly only generally known things in them. In reality, Einstein's villa does not look so ritzy as in pictures, but behind it is a very lovely parklike garden. The fact that I am never mentioned in connection to Einstein is certainly fine by me (and would also have been perfectly fine by

him, for he was of the opinion that even a famous man has a right to a private life). After his death, I was asked twice to say something about him, but of course I declined. Health-wise I am doing fine. I have definitely gained weight these past two months. I only took that sleeping pill 3 nights and then the insomnia disappeared.

I envision a stay in Hannover with you for a few weeks to be very nice. Hannover is supposed to be a very lovely and appealing city (according to Morgenstern). We could take a small apartment there for a month, so we don't have to always go to a restaurant, especially for breakfast and supper. Perhaps it would also interest you to have the opportunity to get to know a German city a little better. Rudi could certainly come and visit us there for a time. Of course I do not know how the situation with apartments is there, but one could probably get something as a sublet. I really have to finally do something about my books in Vienna. I did not have them shipped here to this point because I always thought that I would be returning to Vienna some day. It would probably be best to have them all shipped here in a large crate via Ostraco. The summer heat has thoroughly set in now after a cold Spring. I am sorry that I didn't get this letter written to you sooner. I will be sending the money for June tomorrow.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Just now your letter of 17./VI. arrived. You don't have to worry about cooking a special diet (or cooking at all). If I need a special diet (and frequently even otherwise) I eat canned food that only needs to be warmed up. For supper I never eat anything more than a chicken sandwich, and one can buy chicken for 3 days or more in a restaurant. I can certainly fend for myself and I have already frequently tried my hand at that here. But probably my plan with the apartment in Hannover is not feasible anyhow, as I already wrote at the end of the letter. But it really does not so much depend on it anyway. If I make it to Hannover there are other possibilities. E.g. you could come visit me there with Rudi and I could go somewhere with the two of you for an additional week. I would very much like to come to Vienna if it were not for the various matters there about which I have already written often.

Again, thousand *Bussi*
Your Kurt

P.S. The package arrived just now. Thank you for the many lovely things

22./VI. 1955.

115a.

Dear Rudi!

Hearty thanks for your [last] letter. Of course I can understand that you do not want to get involved in the family circumstances with the Porkerts. Actually, I only primarily wanted to have information about their circumstances in Vienna. We know absolutely nothing to date as to whether Mother Porkert really did go for recuperation. I could not discover any trace of a radiologist Gödel up to now. Maybe my source of information was wrong about the Radetzky March. Last year I was unfortunately unable to send any money to Switzerland. In the upcoming months I can send \$100.- once.

With warm regards

Your Kurt

Princeton, 2./[VII] 1955.

116.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your long little letter № 234 including enclosures about Einstein. The eulogy signed with -i, “A Room Stands Empty in Princeton,” is very nice. From which newspaper is it? The Auernheimer book has not arrived yet. In the meantime I finished reading the book by Zweig. It contains many interesting things even though I don’t like the style as much as his earlier writing. Oddly enough this book did not depress me, despite its content, like some of his other books. I have the impression that it was not the political developments after 1933 that were to blame for his suicide but rather other quite different personal reasons were in existence. As is clear from the book his was anything but a “sedentary” nature and so he scarcely could have been devastated by the separation of his homeland of Austria. What isn’t mentioned in the book, however, is that he lived apart from his wife the entire last few years, even though he corresponded with her up to the end. The situation was clearly that his wife could not forgive his indiscretion with a secretary. That is clear in a book that she wrote about him: “*Wie ich Stefan Zweig erlebte.*”¹ The book is written in a very peculiarly cold tone from which one clearly notices that she did not love him anymore. In it is mentioned that she had caught him

¹ Friderike Maria Zweig, *Stefan Zweig—Wie ich ihn erlebte* (“Stefan Zweig—How I Experienced Him”)

with a secretary. But she herself must not have been innocent in the matter since she apparently refused to emigrate to England with him in 1933. She was of the opinion that one should hold out in Austria as long as possible and to not let the "good" cause down. That further led to him not being able to take along his library and other things that were dear to him and that he needed for his occupation as a writer abroad. All of this clearly played a part in his suicide. It did not occur to the many other important men who also denounced Hitler to commit suicide. Financial difficulties could not have been the reason, for Zweig's books were all translated into other languages so that he had money in every country under the sun. You once wrote something about a farewell letter of his. But I could never find it anywhere. Where did you read it?

After the abnormally cold Spring here this year here is abnormally hot summer (supposedly the hottest since 1871). So that is why we now had an "Attic Fan" installed via an opening in the ceiling which sucks the hot air out of the place and forces in the cool evening air through the windows. Then one can sleep wonderfully despite the greatest heat, for the air is the same as outdoors and we live almost in the countryside here with many fields and trees around us. I will probably not travel, or only for a few days this year, but I believe the Attic Fan is worth almost as much for health as a summer vacation. It cost almost as much, too.

I will most likely not be able to come to Hannover this year. So there is plenty of time to work it all out. However, if as you say, Rudi won't let you take even a single step by yourself, my plan is not feasible.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 24./VIII. 1955.

117.

Dearest Mama!

I wish you much love on your birthday. A check is en route. I hope that the intestinal attack is over as quickly as it came on. From your letters I deduce that you fortunately had been more or less spared such attacks in the past years. Many thanks for your little letters N° 234, 235 and the lovely birthday presents. The card with the little yellow flowers and the blue butterfly is too dear. The colors go so well together and the branch looks so natural. The scarf from Lake Garda is also very nice. I didn't know that there was a medieval

fortress at Lake Garda. Adele immediately devoured the book about Auernheimer. Up to now I have merely peeked inside and seen to my astonishment that he spent some time in a Nazi concentration camp.

The essays about Einstein are very dilettantish. E.g. the saying is ascribed to him that God is not playing at ninepins with us. But what he said is that God is not playing dice with the universe, i.e., that nothing in the universe is left to blind chance, which has nothing to do with what the author of the essay reads into it. I don't know the biography by Antonina Valletin.

What is in it about his inner attitude toward life and about him having little good fortune in his private life? His daughter still lives in his house in Princeton with his secretary. Lately she has not been going out at all, since she suffers from a severe case of sciatica. You don't need to worry at all about my nutrition. Of course I eat mainly fresh things, and also a chicken that has been in the refrigerator 3 days is just as fresh as on the first day. Except now and then or if my stomach is not doing well I eat what is known as "Baby" canned food, in which everything is pureed and it does not contain any sort of seasoning or preservative substances. These canned goods are absolutely not harmful, but rather were prescribed specifically by the doctor for me. After that bleeding in 1951 I lived off of these canned foods for weeks and thus gained several kilos. They also do not hurt any even if I have no upset stomach and besides that they taste very good to me. In Hannover I will mainly live off of them, since the restaurant food in Germany makes me uneasy. It is not at all true that I have "blown off" Hannover. I just don't want you to feel in any way bound to have to come there. I made the suggestion only because I believed that you would be pleased by this arrangement. If it makes you uneasy or you find it unpleasant to be so far away from Vienna living alone with me in a strange apartment, then it of course is out of the question. You write you read something interesting about Oppenheimer, but not any more detail what. Of course I see him only seldomly, mainly at faculty meetings. You will probably have read about the immense flooding that followed upon the immense heat. Everything here is oversized, starting with the houses that turn into skyscrapers and on up to the atom bombs. You saw the gigantic gorges of the rivers in the West in the little stereoscope you have. I am absolutely in agreement with the political developments in the past few months. It simply couldn't be any better. I had not heard of any nervous breakdown on the part of Mrs. Eisenhower, and cannot imagine at all what the reason could be for it. What else was printed about it?

Another thousand and many birthday *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt
Warm regards to Rudi, too.

Princeton, 28./IX. 1955.

118.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for both your letters of 30./VIII. & 12./IX and the little flowers that look especially fresh and colorful this time. The view of Salzburg is really splendid. This fairy-like illumination at night is probably something new. The photos of the trip are also very nice. It was a particularly excellent shot of you both (i.e. you and Rudi) in the picture with the chaise longue. How did the color photos turn out? Thanks too for the enclosed letter from A[unt] Mizzi. We got the package returned to us because we had stupidly neglected to put a second addressee on it. On 28 June I transferred \$30.- to you. The check that the local bank sent to you clearly must have gotten lost. That does not matter since one can have the check canceled, which I already requested done. Someone else cannot have pocketed the money since the check was made out in your name and a stranger would have been required to show identification. However, I will not get the money back until the Vienna bank has received word that the check has not been cashed. By the way, in June the check to Frau Porkert also got lost. Is that not strange? I will send \$30.- to you tomorrow for September. Health-wise I continue to do well, and I hear from all sides that I look better than ever. The attic fan did me good in summertime. It is astonishing how much of a difference it makes whether one sleeps in fresh or "stale" air. I have not read anything here about a physicians' strike. I read the paper only once a week and apparently no one thought the strike important enough to put it into the week-at-a-glance. On the other hand Frau Hlavac told me that there were several fatalities. Is that true? What do you have to say about Peron? Isn't it just astonishing that a dictator was forced to abdicate. But one asks oneself: what will follow? Eisenhower's illness was, I believe, heavily exaggerated by his enemies (of whom he also has more than enough in his own party). They clearly want to make an argument out of that against his re-election in 1956. I really think one should finally put to rest the "Oppenheimer Case." Under normal circumstances no one would have made such a fuss about it from the outset. If you want to send me the Einstein biography then please, if possible, in the original. Or is it neither German nor English? In that case, the English edition would be preferable since translations into English are usually better than translations into German as I have often noticed before. It is true that Einstein was a pessimist in many regards. In particular, he did not have a very good opinion of humanity as a whole. He based his opinion among other things that everyone who wanted to do good, such as Christ, Moses, Mohammed, etc. either died a violent death or

had to use force against their own disciples (such as Mohammed). Einstein was also very skeptical in regards to the value of technological development for humanity. What the biography has about the atom bomb is more than naïve. But it is correct insofar as it maintains that the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima was a big mistake and entirely unnecessary.

To get back to Hannover: you wrote recently that a number of acquaintances had mentioned planning to come visit to you there. Do you know anyone other than Karl, Mizzi, Trudl and Eva? Today we received word that Mama Porkert is in Baden. It would naturally be best if she could stay there.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, II./XI., 1955. 118a.

Dearest Mama!

As I see, your last letter N° 238 is on 10./X. and my last one therefore must be from the beginning of Oct. So pretty much time has passed once again. It seems really endlessly long to me since I heard nothing from you. I had a lot to do in the past few weeks. The comfortableness of the time before I was a professor thoroughly ceased this semester. There are several very controversial appointments in progress*, then there are younger members of the Institute here who want advising about their problems from the professors, and finally I am also supposed to turn in several evaluations about papers of certain people for the faculty. It is a good thing that the semester will be over on 16./XII. Health-wise I continue to do well. That your building should not be properly heated, I don't understand. There are certainly now no more shortages in Vienna. Isn't there someplace (Tenants' Bureau?) where one could lodge a complaint about it? An electric heater is very expensive, of course. But don't those electrically heated duvets or blankets exist in Vienna? Adele uses them often even though it isn't particularly cold in the night. I am enclosing Aunt Mizzi's letter. It is really touching how every little thing makes her happy. I read about the opening of the opera in Vienna and that the Opera now looks much more sober inside, but the acoustics are substantially better. Who is Afga [sic] Khan? I have already gotten the money for the lost check back and sent that \$60.- to your account for Oct. The loss of both checks, however, is

strange, but didn't you write recently that you have heard of the loss of other letters, too? Eisenhower was released from the hospital today and we watched his arrival in Washington on television. He looks somewhat thinner in the face but his voice is just as strong as ever. What I wrote about the ousting of the dictator cannot be generalized for kings and emperors. Next to nothing has happened to the likes of them since the beginning of the century except that they were dethroned; but among the ca. 10 dictators of this century this is the first case of an ousting without a war. If the translation of the Einstein biography is good I will of course be happy to get the German edition. I wrote you once that I would communicate a Christmas wish to you. Here it is: Überweg-Heinze, History of Philosophy, Vol. IV (i.e. the philosophy of the most recent era, since ca. 1800) Recently a new edition appeared. I would by the way also very much like to get my books over here not merely because I need some of them from time to time but also because I can refresh old memories of my youth that way. But of course I don't mean that as a Christmas present.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

* this should of course remain a secret

P.S. You have written to me about all the Brünn acquaintances except Leos. Are Luschi, Fritz, and Else still all alive?

Princeton, 18./XII. 1955.

119.

Dearest Mama!

Above all I wish you both a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. On New Year's Eve at 12 o'clock I will think of you two as always. For the time being I am glad about both the books and also about how much better I'm doing health-wise this year than this time last year. Here there is a real Christmas kind of weather this year with lots of snow. It was a good idea for Rudi to buy you *Der Trotzkopf*¹. I would like to see it again myself sometime. Of course I do not want you to go to any trouble over my books. I think I will

¹ *Der Trotzkopf*, by Emmy von Rhoden, a popular girls' novel set in a boarding school published in 1885

just have everything packed up by Ostraco (or another moving company) and sent over. Only I would like someone to be there when the books are handed over and packed up. Erdős¹ is a very nice person. He travels around all the time and has a “Fellowship” every year in some different city or country every year. He is by the way a very talented and famous mathematician, but abhors settling down anywhere and becoming a citizen of any country. That has the advantage over a normal academy career that he does not have to teach but can devote his whole time to research. As I glean from your letter, he is obviously interested in your life story. He has also asked me about mine.

Did you see the opera yet? From which newspaper is the clipping about the opera opening that you sent me, by the way? It is astonishing that someone can write something like that so openly. It seems very unlikely to me that something should happen again to the schilling. After all, we are now in the years of economic boom after the war, corresponding ca. to 1925 after World War I.

Eisenhower is now, at least outwardly, completely his old self again and the doctor’s bulletins are very favorable. I would prefer not to mention Adenauer in the same breath as Eisenhower, for he is the main exponent of the German arms build-up. Morgenstern’s health is now completely in order again. That little fellow Karl is already quite big and starts school next year. How time does fly. It is indeed unbelievable that those Wednesday evenings were 40 years ago. My devoted adoration of Schreyer is something I cannot quite explain to this day even to myself since I am not otherwise bisexually inclined. But perhaps it has something to do with him being in some aspect an extraordinarily and very valuable person. You would know more about that than I do. When and how did he die, actually?

Mizzi’s pension of 80 RM is indeed meagre but I do believe that one can get by living in the country on that. Doesn’t that roughly correspond to 120 pre-war schillings?

Yesterday there was a symphony concert in commemoration of Einstein. That was the first time I have submitted to 2 hours of Bach, Haydn etc. There was by the way a really amazing pianist who played.²

The attic fan is of course only for the summer and an utter pleasure on hot and windless days. For then almost no air comes through the windows of its

¹ Paul Erdős (1913–1996), Hungarian mathematician, famous for his eccentric peripatetic lifestyle and collaborations with hundreds of mathematicians over his lifetime

² Robert Casadesus (1899–1972), French pianist and Princeton neighbor and friend of Einstein’s when he lived there during the war; he performed Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 26 (the “Coronation”) at the memorial concert

own accord. Another possibility is to go away in this time as do most people. But if you have an Attic Fan, it isn't even necessary.

Many thanks for your letters № 239, 240. I have not given up at all on the idea of going to Hannover. I would then stay several weeks there.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. a check is en route.

[*enclosed Christmas card signed.*] Kurt & Adele

Princeton, 16./I. 1956

120.

Dearest Mama!

Most of all I thank you two heartily for the Christmas package. I am very happy about the three books. I didn't even know that Oppenheimer had written that popular book recently, and read through it with interest. The cuckoo clock is immensely charming. It already is hanging above my desk. The article about Oppen[heimer] in Monat is very objectively written. But the only thing that is erroneous is the statement that the Institute for Advanced Study is part of Princeton University. Also it is an extreme exaggeration to say that the political climate in America is symbolized by Mc Carthy (who is roughly the American Hitler). Mac Carthy's influence has almost sunken to zero since Eisenhower became President.

I am sorry that my Christmas letter arrived so late. The mail must have functioned particularly badly once again. I received your dear letter № 241. I hope your grippe was over soon and that you recovered well with the good weather at Kronichhof. Where did you catch the cold? Usually it is one's own doing.

Christmas went as usual with us. This year Frau Mayer, whom you know, was at our house on Christmas Eve. She is actually here a lot and plays "Kanasta" with Adele. On New Year's Eve Day we did something special this year. We went to the Metropolitan Opera in New York for Aïda. Much of it was very lovely, especially the dance segments, the splendidly colorful costumes and the choruses. But in general I did not think the Metrop. Opera

was anything special. It is not much larger than the Vienna Opera and both exterior and interior are much less impressive than that. It of course quite old now, 80 years. I think the content of Aïda bears a striking resemblance to the tragedy of Mayerling. For today's version is, after all, that Crown Prince Rudolf was forced to commit suicide, because he otherwise would have been embroiled for reasons of political machinations in a case of high treason. The opera was written 20 years prior to the death of the Crown Prince, however, so that there cannot very well be any connection.

After the opera performance and because of the train ride we were naturally quite tired by evening and so went to bed earlier than usual on New Year's Eve, but I did wait till midnight.

As for Schreyer, the uniform can scarcely have been the reason for my *Schwärmerei*, for back then the entire city was full of uniforms. But I think he really had something terribly winning and appealing about him, and that must have had some basis in his essential nature.

Aunt Mizzi wrote us a very nice letter with an exact layout of her room. The room must be really quite pretty. But she should really send a photo of the house.

I read all of Mimi's letter and the newspaper clipping. To gauge by the newspaper article, this Rudolf Ortner must be one of those people who are in-between a scientist and a quirky eccentric, i.e. whose theories may be not uninteresting in some regards but also not scientifically solid. But of course one would have to know his writings to be able to judge with certainty.

Morgenstern had a cold in the chest for several weeks that he could not shake. But now he is doing much better already, apparently since he was treated with Aureomycin. As I have read, the Russians offered Austria a loan and the Social Democrats are against it and the Christian Social ones are for it. Clearly the latter do not plan to ever pay off the interest or the capital. Naturally, then every loan is favorable. The world is strange.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 24./II. 1956.

121.

Dearest Mama!

Warm thanks for your letters N° 243 and 242 with enclosed photo. I think you do not look bad in it, certainly not at all like 76. I am very happy to hear

that Adele was there and that everything has now settled down. Her Vienna trip will not have come all that unexpectedly to you probably. For the relationship between Frau B. and Adelen's mother does really seem to have been untenable; and leaving an 88 year old woman on her own all the time is downright dangerous, due to gas, fire etc. In and of itself the fact that Adele has already sold the apartment is good (to Bauers?). But it is nonetheless possible that some kind of difficulties will crop up in the end regarding her mother's trip. In that case of course Baden would be the best. It is not clear to me from the correspondence whether that fell through due to Adelen's mother or the Baden relatives.

I am sorry to hear that your eyes still haven't cleared up. Perhaps that has something to do with your being out in the intense cold? I hope that it is already passed by now. Nothing like that has occurred since '29. Perhaps that is the reason the mail has been functioning so poorly now. Your last letter took a whole week.

The Einstein biography by Antonina Vallentin is very interesting in parts. E.g. it seems to be the only biography in which has some things (though not much) about his younger (intermittently mentally ill) son. In the other biographies that is simply hushed up and Einstein himself also never talked about it. It would be interesting to know what the connection actually was between this Antonina V. and Einstein.¹ I will ask Einstein's daughter soon, who has invited me to tea next week.

It is true that this Dr Ortner has a strange physiognomy. Here there is an expression for the kind of person I described in my last letter. They are called "cranks," but there is no exact translation for that.

The opposition against Einstein certainly is not merely politically motivated, by the way. Only what Einstein wrote in the first half of his life is generally accepted. What he did in the last 20 or 25 on the other hand, has not been proven at all up to now and is rejected as folly by the majority of physicists, including the Jewish ones.

If the singers are happy to get to the Metropolitan Opera then it probably is because of the higher incomes connected to all professions here, and especially with that one. Besides the interest in opera seems to have been great here in earlier years as evidenced by the fact that many operas had their premieres in New York before in Paris, London and Vienna, for example Aida. But the opera theater here is not particularly impressive either inside or

¹ Antonina Vallentin (1893–1957), author of biographies of Picasso, H. G. Wells, and da Vinci, among others

outside. As I hear, there are already plans to build a new one, which would certainly be about time.

What was the cause for the unhappy marriage of Schreyer's, by the way? Usually it is: either jealousy (founded or unfounded), or neglect of the woman by the man, or political or religious differences of opinion.

Lately (actually since Autumn) I have had a lot to do, as I already wrote you. Health-wise I am doing well. As I see you do not have any real desire to come to Hannover. Perhaps you could come to Hannover for 10 days and then I to Vienna for 10 days? Regarding the time, July or August would be best since I am, as you will have heard from A., fairly sensitive to chills. I assume Rudi wants to take a vacation in early summer.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 29./III. 1956.

122.

Dearest Mama!

You will certainly be surprised that we have not written you about Mother Porkert's arrival yet. But it is as always: I have much to do and Adele started a letter but didn't finish it. Naturally she has much more to do now. Caring for an 88 year old woman does create a lot of work even when she has her wits about her, relatively speaking. Aside from that Adele is plagued still by her sciatica. Mama Porkert withstood the trip astonishingly well. The airplane was half empty so she could lie down on 3 seats and sleep. On arrival I saw her from afar running like a weasel to the customs inspection so that I could not believe it was her. Here though she is often tired during the day and sleeps a lot. And she has a hard time finding her way around in our place and often goes into the wrong room. Sometimes she talks as if she were still living on Langeasse. But other than that she seems to like it fine here and she does not disturb us in the least. Adele is very much more content since getting her mother here, and I believe she is right that the conditions in Vienna were untenable.

How are you? Did you also have a sudden drop in temperature? We had so much snow 10 days ago that you could only get the door open with great effort. There has never been anything like that at the end of March before. You will probably have heard that this abnormal weather, here and there, has to do

with spots on the sun which are extraordinarily large and numerous this year. Many thanks for your dear letters N° 244, 245, the spyglass and the Trotzkopf. I have already had a peek inside the latter and was gladdened once again at how nice and true to life that book is written. The crates with my books have arrived in New York Harbor.

I cannot agree that Einstein was particularly attractive as a young man. But I once saw a childhood photo of him at age ca. 12 and he looked really sweet and charming in it. I think it showed his true nature back then which later was pushed more to the background as a result of his life's experiences. I can absolutely not remember the plays Emperor Franz Josef and Empress Elisabeth. Were they interesting? I saw Richard Svedik just briefly before my departure for the U.S.A., because I needed some kind of confirmation or another from a municipal office. Is he married, actually? He must be going on sixty now. (Unbelievable). I hope that Uncle Karl's visit came to pass and that you had another pleasant diversion. Please convey warm regards to him from me if he is still in Vienna.

The matter with Dr Böhm¹ is not quite clear to me. Something else must be behind it than his visit to America. For that sort of thing is often the case, e.g. with opera singers and can at the very most be only interpreted as flattery for him and for the Vienna Opera. I have no reason for getting in touch with Herr Ortner, aside from any others simply because I have not worked in the area of the theory of relativity since 1951. Unfortunately I forgot to ask Margot Einstein about that Anton. Vallent. By the way, she is traveling to Italy in several weeks and is looking very much forward to the famous mosaics in Ravenna that she hasn't seen yet. She herself works as an artist (drawing and sculpting). I don't think Eisenhower looks changed at all. He is a bit thinner, but that is clearly intentional (on the advice of the doctors) and his voice is as powerful as ever. The political situation, I think, aside from the looming threat of war against Israel, is also not so bad. I do not understand the antipathy of the Europeans toward the Americans anymore now. Is it because they are too anti-communist or too little? I will close this letter so that Adele can bring it to the post office right away. I will write soon to Rudi and about Hannover.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt
Much love also from Adele and Mother Porkert

¹ Karl Böhm, named music director of the reopened Vienna Opera in 1954, made his America debut in 1956 with the Chicago Symphony. Despite his prominence conducting under the Nazis in Austria and Germany, he went on to a long career at the Metropolitan Opera beginning in 1957

Princeton, 6./V. 1956.

123.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you both heartily for the birthday wishes and the little package. Especially charming are the little bonbons. They truly belong in a doll house. My 50th birthday was spent pretty quietly. In the Institute it is not common to celebrate each other's birthdays. The Morgensterns were here for tea and brought me flowers and a mechanical pencil with a gold sheath. Adele gave me among other things an enormous birthday cake and glorious flower arrangement. I got a long birthday letter from the Vienna Municipal Council for Culture and Cultural Education. An essay about my works along with a picture of me is to appear in a magazine. But otherwise nothing else went on.

When this letter arrives you will probably already be back from Kronichhof and perhaps have seen Uncle Karl, too. Trudl and her husband will have probably been to see you frequently. So I am curious what you will write. Why is Trudl not happy with her husband? It is a common occurrence, after all, that husbands have a lot to do at work. Does Trudl have particular interests that she would like to share with him?

Now I remember the play Emperor Franz Josef, particularly the scene on the terrace that you describe in which was portrayed how his audiences were held. As I hear, there is now a new Crown Prince Rudolf movie in Vienna. To gauge by the playbill that Adele brought home it must be very good. When I say that in the young picture of Einstein his true nature was expressed, what I mean by that is his good heart and his cheery character, which were both no longer so clearly visible later thanks to the experiences he had had with his fellow humans. I think it would be a very good idea to write your memoirs. On the one hand it would be a pleasant pastime for you and on the other hand interesting for us. Delightful that an actress slapped a critic and called him a filthy bastard. Was she at least right? I still remember clearly the “spitting story” that occurred between two female Viennese opera singers. Vienna changes but slowly, it seems.

Here, everything is beginning to bloom and as I write, there is a thunderstorm. This year the cold weather lasted long enough. My books have arrived. Touching some things after such a long time has a very peculiar effect on me, e.g. the mementos from the First World War. I learned about Antonina Vallentin that she was a friend of Einstein's wife. So she has everything first hand, so to speak. By the way, I did not know at all that there were entire conversational dictionaries among my books and I had forgotten about some books altogether. I still have not unpacked one large suitcase at all. I am quite

curious what all it will disgorge. Also I wanted to say that, to gauge by the program of the Crown Prince Rudolf movie, it seems that the piece was dramatically well structured and staged. Also the depiction of the causes of his suicide is very sensible by dint of today's knowledge. Of course whether or not any further secrets are behind it that may never be known is another question. By the way is Christiana Wessely as well-known an actress as Paula? The latter must not be acting any more at all now? Perhaps the Crown Prince Rudolf movie will also come to New-York. Recently the opera Don Juan was at the movies in German. Did you perhaps also see it in Vienna? As to my Europe trip I am enclosing a couple of lines to Rudi. I send you much love on Mother's Day and remain

with thousand *Bussis* ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 7./V. 1956.

123a

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for the birthday wishes and your letter of February. As I already wrote to Mama, I would like not to come to Europe before mid-summer. I can't travel with Morgenstern for the simple reason that I would like to fly. I would like to avoid if possible getting seasick, catching a chill, etc. The costs of the journey to Hannover and back and the stay there will be paid by the Institute. I have already spoken to the director. Regarding getting together with you two, it would probably be best if I simply come to Vienna. I would be very grateful to you if you could send me a Baedecker about Hannover. What kind of current does the electricity in Vienna have? (120 volt?) How was it in Paris and where will this year's summer trip take you?

With warm regards

Your Kurt.

P.S. Warm regards to you both and all the best on Mother's Day also from Adele. She began writing a second letter and says that she will definitely send this one off.

Princeton, 26./VI. 1956.

124.

Dearest Mama!

I just now noticed by re-reading Rudi's letter that you wanted to be back in Vienna on 18./VI. I thought that you would stay away at least a month; otherwise I would already have written long ago. There were however also other reasons at hand, e.g. my work, though in particular that I cannot say anything you will want to hear about my coming. My doctor (and in addition the Director of the Institute) have advised me against traveling in the summer. The former apparently because he thinks I need rest more than any exertion. The latter because in summertime everything is overfull and travel is very unpleasant. I of course do not want to do anything in direct opposition to the advice of this doctor in whom I have the greatest trust. Perhaps he has other reasons than my health, for I actually feel quite good and actually went to him for an insignificant matter. But of course this does not mean that I am giving up on my intent to come. So don't be sad! I thank you for your dear letter N° 248, and the one from Grünwaldhof. I only wish you had told me more about your trip. Hopefully it went just as nicely as the previous ones. I was very happy to see your handwriting looking even fresher and more youthful than ever, especially in your last two letters. You must have written them in a good frame of mind. That there is some movement regarding the villa is very good indeed. That must certainly have to do with the new line of the Communist politics and should not take too long at all. The book about Bismarck's wife would interest me very much. The book about the Vienna Circle you once sent me was recently of great use to me. There are interesting quotations from treatises of Schlick's. The birthday wallet is very attractive and has just the right shape and kinds of dividers. I think I will put it to use soon since my current one is no longer particularly good anymore. Unfortunately a good deal of my books and papers are missing, among them 8 vols Mathematics, 6 vols Deussen History of Philosophy and my entire memorabilia and letters from Middle School. Who could have been interested in that?? I am closing this letter because I want to put send it express early tomorrow and it's already 12.30 a.m. Warm regards to Rudi and many thanks for his letter.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Warm regards too from Adele and Mama Porkert

P.S. Please write me exactly when this letter arrived. An express letter shouldn't take longer than 2 days, so nearly as fast as a telegram. Mama

Porkert is doing well. She seems to be gradually getting used to the new surroundings. I can send the letter from the Vienna Municipal Council for Culture to you shortly, if it interests you.

Another thousand *Bussi*

Your Kurt

Princeton, 24./VIII. 1956.

125.

Dearest Mama!

Last week I began writing a letter to you, but then abandoned it. My hand does not want to write this time. It weighs on me that I have had to disappoint you a second time about my coming. This time the fault lies the very least with me. At this point I cannot even say when I will be able to come except that the doctor said it would be best next Spring. But it's still quite a long time till then. It is splendid that I can have a room directly beneath you two. I will certainly take you up on that. Today I had a strange dream about you. We were in New York together in an enormous hotel and kept riding up and down in the elevator. By the end we were balancing together on an exterior window sill on the 20th floor. But nothing happened. The color picture that you sent is a very good one of both of you. Only the colors are a bit dull. The negative probably has lighter colors. Your trip must have once again been really lovely to conclude from your description of Gardone. I did not go away this summer. It was so cold that you could scarcely bathe here at the seaside, and the resort guests even fled. I have not ever seen the likes of it in the 14 years I have been here. But we do live in the countryside here, and since we've had the attic fan, good air is always in the place. I found a good spot for all my books, because Adele brought along the little bookshelf that used to be in my room in Grinzing, and I put the very old things up in the attic.

It does not seem likely to me that books of mine would be in the second crate at your place, unless Rudi might have brought them there from Hegelgasse. Among my things were two notes about books that Rudi had taken out in 1940 and 1943. But those are only a couple of Reklam vols, a Weininger biography 2 vols Auernheimer, 3 childrens' calendars. What else is missing is ca. 20 vol. and the slide rule.

I mainly did not send you the piece about me in *Scientific American*¹ because my picture is so miserable. A press photographer came to see me at the Institute and took ca. 50 shots of me, supposedly to be sure that at least one really good one would be among them. In fact they apparently chose the worst one. For there were some really good ones among which I was sent one.

I am glad that Morgenstern's visit offered you a pleasant diversion and that he told you so much about me and so vividly. That little Karl is very nice and well behaved, that is true. I did not even write you yet that our parakeets have a chick, which now is already all grown up and quite tame. It flies onto one's finger and one can pet it. Is that not charming? When it arrived it was only 2 cm long and lay the entire time with its beak on the floor of the incubator. Now it is the fattest and strongest of all three of them.

Adele's mother is doing very well and she likes it here very much. Adele let go of the girl and the gardener and does all the work alone. And she even is painting the kitchen furniture and renovating the cellar so that I cannot explain to myself where she gets the energy for all that.

Yesterday I saw Eisenhower on the television, when he held the speech on the occasion of his nomination. He looks stronger and more energetic than ever despite his two illnesses. What do you have to say about the collision of the Andrea Doria? Both the ships supposedly diverted toward the same side. Is that not ludicrous?

Enclosed I am sending you the congratulatory message from the Vienna Municipal Council. So far not one of my letters to you have gotten lost. If you want, you can send it back by registered mail, by the way.

Thousand *Bussis*, also from Adele and her mother
ever Your Kurt.

P.S. Of course Adele is neglecting her correspondence entirely as a result of all the work, even to her relatives and friends.

[vertically in margin:] A check for \$50.- is en route

¹ Ernst Nagel and James R. Newman, "Gödel's Proof," *Scientific American*, June 1956, the first popular explanation of the incompleteness theorem

Princeton, 30./IX. 1956.

126.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for the book about Johanna v. Bismarck and the picture of Papa. Also your letters № 254, 255 arrived and I see that once again a whole month has passed since my last letter. I would like to write to you more often. But once again many different work-related items had to be accomplished that took away my time and my desire to do anything else. Tomorrow the semester starts up again with its faculty meetings, etc., which in and of itself already makes me nervous. I often think with regret back to the lovely time when I didn't have the honor of being a professor at the Institute. But the trade-off is that the salary is higher now!

Papa looks astonishing young in that picture. That is not how I remember him at all. His hair in the last years was already heavily greying, whereas in this picture it is still quite black. But otherwise the picture is very good. At any rate I am happy to have at least one picture of Papa here. What you write about the villa and Frau Blondiaux is in part quite good news. If our things are still there, then one should surely get permission to send them to Vienna until these questions are settled legally, which should be the case now soon. That the villa is still in such good shape is actually astonishing if you consider that it has been standing 42 years and experienced 2 world wars and 4 political upheavals.

Castle Klesheim must be very lovely indeed. I had no idea of the existence of this brother of Emperor Franz Joseph. St. Wolfgang did always have those dusty streets. I don't know St. Gilgen. At least I can't recall it. Is it lovely?

Did you get the issue of Scientific American? If not, I can send you one from here. I am surprised that you find my picture quite good.

But I have another one of those taken at the same time, in which I really do look quite good. I will send that to you soon. It is enormous; I think I will have it reduced.

To the City of Vienna I naturally wrote a very nice reply, along the lines that I for my part of course have the University of Vienna to thank for my scientific education.

Health-wise I am doing well, as overall in the entire last two years. I lose a little weight and then gain it back again, but that does not affect my wellbeing at all.

How are you doing with your eyes? Now there are often surprisingly effective medications for such small issues. I have not had the flu for many years now and not even the sniffles because I have taken penicillin a couple of times.

Morgenstern has already come to visit us and talked about you, especially that you are still as lively and fresh as 8 years ago when he saw you last. I did not even realize that it had been so long ago.

It is really no wonder that I have no money now. After all the shipping for Mama Porkert's things and my books cost \$500.- and then we had to also make some investments in the house, e.g. a washstand in her room. But now Adele is categorically much more content and these additional expenses will be made up for with savings elsewhere in no time.

As I glean from the book about Bismarck's wife, the Anti-Catholic laws resulted in a whole number of threatening letters and in addition one actual and two attempted assassinations. That is really very interesting and belongs to the category of things that are usually hushed up. Also the pictures are interesting, especially those of him in the later years.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Warm regards from Mamma Porkert and Adele

A week ago I sent \$30.- for Sept.

Princeton, 7./XI. 1956.

127.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for both of your letters N° 256, 257 and the birthday wishes for Mama Porkert. She and Adele were both enormously pleased. Adele has now composed a long letter for you. I hope she also actually sends it off soon. Mama Porkert is still astonishingly clear in the head for her age. (It really was her 89th birthday). She sits in front of the television set all day and pokes great fun at everything, for which no knowledge of the English language is necessary. There are indeed e.g. very many *Mickimaus* movies now. On her birthday M^{rs} Mayer was here and Adele made a glorious birthday cake. M^{rs} Mayer has left for Europe now, by the way, and will also be coming to Vienna sometime in the winter.

I brought the picture of me to the photographer who makes reproductions today, and will then send it to you right away. I am looking forward to the pictures you promised me very much. Are the old photos all in Brünn? and also all your books and sheet music? Clothing and bed linen you left there are

probably no longer in existence. But Frau Blondiaux should actually know what is still there.

The charming little cuckoo clock is still hanging above my desk. But it hasn't run for a long time, because I just now discovered that you have to turn to the left when winding it. Now it runs very well.

The song "O mein Papa" could be heard one or two years ago very frequently on the television, radio etc. It is really a very lovely melody and I am sorry that it has disappeared from the offerings. Overall that is what it is like here, that again and again "new" and often very attractive pop songs come and then disappear. I would like to see the woolen suit that you bought yourself from the birthday money. Could you not send me a photo?

How is L. Brausewetter doing? Where did that happen, actually? in the city? The owner of the dog should really be liable. It is scandalous that your central heating does not give enough warmth. Is that the case with all central heating in Vienna? I do not understand at all why an electric heater would not be permitted. Isn't the wiring adequate enough?

I can understand Tante Mizzi's hesitating to write. We really did not write to her all that much. Last year at Christmas she sent us a very nice Brünn calendar (with pictures of Spielberg, etc.) but I am not sure if we thanked her, since I apparently expected Adele to do it and Adele expected me to. In addition Adele does not always send the letters that she writes. We always are very happy to get something from Aunt Mizzi and Adele has grown particularly fond of her, but replying to letters has its difficulties. By the way, what is the older of the two Mosing daughters doing?

It is not clear to me why the same article about my work should be appearing in an Italian magazine. Such things are generally not translated.

It is true that Bismarck looks like a hardened criminal in that last picture. That probably has to do with the political leanings of the painter. As you know, I am thoroughly anti-nationalistic but I do believe one cannot deny men like Bismarck's honest intent to do good.

So the election here happily turned out well and Eisenhower got significantly more votes than expected. That probably had to do with the fact that he said quite openly that one could not apply any different yardstick to an English breach of the peace than to a Russian one. Today I finally send that \$100.- off to Switzerland. Since Rudi did not leave, hopefully he did not need it any earlier. Unfortunately I cannot think of any Christmas present for myself this year.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards also from Adele and Ma. Porkert

Princeton, 12./XII. 1956.

128.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters № 258, 259 and most of all for the charming family portrait from 1910. It is really delightful and everyone looks so good in it, you in particular look really pretty. I vaguely recall that this picture as hanging on the wall in a frame in a room at home. Very pretty, too, the Christmas card with the real sparkling lights. For the time being I am looking forward to the Christmas package. You write that a second one was sent off to us from "Augarten" but I don't know what that means. The many interesting photos you have in Vienna must all be from the very old album of Uncle August's. Do you have nothing from the newer albums since 1920? It seems to me I already asked you that very same thing once before.

Now to the political situation. I do not believe that things are so dire that one needs to fear letter traffic with America could cease. It may be true that in such cases the pessimists have been right up to date, but everything points to it being an exception this time around.

1. World War III would be premature. Only 17 years have passed since the beginning of II and there were, after all, 25 years between I and II. 2. Everyone is terrified of a world war due to the atom bomb. 3. We have a man like Eisenhower at the helm which really only happens once every couple of hundred years.

Another president might have exploited the events in Hungary as reason to intervene militarily. But it is also the case that a fuse to unleash a world war might not always function. How true what is stated in the newspaper clipping you sent is I don't know. Here it only was said that a yellow alert was announced for the fleet. At any rate this has nothing to do with the events in Hungary but rather with the initial refusal of the English to call back their Egyptian expedition. Eisenhower has explained countless times that he strives to democratize the Communist regime via peaceful means, as e.g. was done in Poland. The boundless rage directed toward him on the part of the Hungarian revolutionaries is therefore entirely unfounded. On the other hand America guaranteed the territorial integrity of Egypt and Eisenhower is in favor of upholding treaties. How one can maintain that he had a stroke I don't understand, though certainly many Hungarian patriots would wish it. All in all I believe that the world will get off lightly in this situation. In the Orient, surely a war between Israel and the Arabs is unavoidable sooner or later, since neither the one nor the other wants to agree to sensible conditions. That that will scarcely turn into a world war even if volunteers will probably be sent from various countries. It looks bad regarding oil in Europe. But the amount

needed to heat buildings is likely low relative to other uses and will probably will take priority. What you write about Steffi Redlich is sad. By the way, I cannot remember her at all anymore, don't even know whether I ever met her personally or not.

As I see this letter has become very less "Christmasy" due to political circumstances. Hopefully the enclosed Christmas card will provide a small counterweight. I will send my picture off simultaneously. They promised it for 15./XI. Happily, it was finished today (which by the way is very un-American). We are all fine, especially me, health-wise.

Adele and Mama Porkert send their warm regards. From me thousand Christmas *Bussis* and many regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 18./I. 1957.

129.

Dearest Mama!

I am enormously sorry you had another unpleasant episode with a boil. It is my hope that everything is already back in order by now. If I remember correctly you had something similar twice before. I had a boil once too here that was lanced with a needle, as Adele describes it. I attribute that to when we had a cat and a dog but you have not ever really had anything to do with animals. Once again many thanks for the Christmas packages. Also very charming is the Christmas card with the real sparkling lights and Santa Claus in his sled; and the rococo calendar is incredibly sweet. The picture of Papa is excellent. Unfortunately a bit blurry, but perhaps it is all the more striking that way. You write that I should send back some of the pictures, but I do not know which ones. The large picture of me is the original, I kept a copy. So you think it's good? For Christmas we had a particularly lovely tree this year. On New Year's Eve an acquaintance from Graz was at our house who is at the Institute this year. He is a very nice person named Kreisel¹ and is from one of the families who apparently were very wealthy before the war. I deduce from Aunt Mizzi's letters that she is not doing well financially, at any rate worse

¹ George Kreisel (1923–2015), Austrian-born mathematician and logician; he regularly visited Gödel at IAS through the 1960s to keep him informed of developments in mathematical foundations

than before. Probably rent is too high. Didn't she live for free at the rectory? It is true that the money sent in Dec. was for Nov. Also, the \$100.- for which I placed an order in Nov. were not sent before Dec., in error. According to the bank statement they were sent out on 14./XII. You wrote once that one (or two) small boxes with things of mine are at your house. Can't they be sent by mail? I am happy to pay the postage (or with a shipping company if that is cheaper). The political situation since I last wrote has fortunately eased up somewhat after all. I hope to hear from you soon that you are doing fine again. By now you will probably have already seen Mrs. Mayer. I do not have much to write about and will close with thousand *Bussis*.

Ever Your Kurt

Warm greetings to Rudi

[vertically in margin:] Just now a letter arrived from M^{rs} Mayer in which she writes about her visit with you two

Princeton, 7.II. 1957.

130.

Dearest Mama!

I was very glad to learn from your last letter (Nº 261) that you spent New Year's Eve at Kronichhof, and with a nice movie performance to boot. I imagine it to have been very romantic and a good start to the New Year. So M^{rs} Mayer told you a lot about us again and has even set herself the task of accompanying you here. That would be very lovely and I would of course be happy to pay for the trip, but someone you could fly back with would have to be found. You probably would not want to stay here very long anyway. I never brought up this possibility because I considered it out of the question for you to come without Rudi (or that Rudi would let you.) When does M^{rs} Mayer actually want to come here? You should of course fly and I would pay M^{rs} Mayer the difference. Acquaintances are now coming from Germany who will prob. be returning in the summer, so that would be one possibility.* But in the event that I come to Europe in the Spring as planned that would make everything moot.

In my last letter I completely forgot to mention the charming picture of the Strauss house that you sent. It is really sweet and hangs above my desk across from the picture that was taken of you on the boat in Bled. Adele devoured the book about Strauss with much interest. What she did not like about it was that

it was more poetry than truth¹. We recently also saw a very good movie here called “Anastasia” with Ingrid Bergman. That is the story of the Czar’s daughter who supposedly escaped execution and fled to Paris. Ingrid Bergman acts very well, but I think she has lost much of her beauty since she has been married countless times and had a zillion children. New movies never are on television. What kind of royalties would movie producers demand if a movie were shown to 20 million people simultaneously? You can frequently see acrobatic acts. The clipping about Eisenhower that you sent is very interesting and exactly what is to be expected. As you see I was right about Hungary. About the war between Israel and its neighbors I will, as it is now looking, also be right. The political circumstances in the old world are really a horrible thing. Recently I read a report by eyewitnesses about what happened with the professors of the German University in Prague after the overthrow in 1945. They were simply arrested and put to work on roadcrews. The ones who couldn’t work or didn’t want to were simply left to starve, among them a world-famous young mathematician. Such things are probably only explicable by how Hitler dealt with the occupied territories. Recently someone told me about a famous new Austrian writer, von Doderer². Have you ever heard of him? The name, Austrian enough at any rate, strongly sounds like that of a Styrian. It is somewhat exaggerated to say that in Princeton a glowing Christmas tree stands in every house. We had one this year but many houses had none. This year there was on the whole no real Christmas atmosphere. I sent you the Christmas picture because it contains a really friendly sunny atmosphere. Don’t you think so too? As for a hearing aid, I do think you should have one if you feel the situation as it now stands to be unpleasant. The theater is really less important. By the way, you do go frequently to see sound movies. Do you have a hard time understanding them too? I had the grippe for the past few days but it is more or less over, probably thanks to the Terramycin that I took. Adele sends hearty greetings. Did you get both of her letters?

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

* She is a psychotherapist, so tailor-made for you

¹ An allusion to the title of Goethe’s famous autobiography *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, “Poetry and Truth”

² Heimito von Doderer (1896–1996), Viennese poet and novelist. Banned from publishing immediately after the war due to his Nazi Party activities, he subsequently became famous for his 1951 novel *Die Strudlhofstiege*

Princeton, 7./II.1957.

130a

Dear Rudi!

I wish you all the best on your 55th birthday. How are you ? I have not heard directly from you in an interminably long time. What are your plans for next Spring and Summer? I fear war will break out with Israel and as a result political unrest in France and Italy so that one should probably not travel there. Please write to me what you think about a visit of Mama's in Princeton.

Warm regards, also from Adele

Your Kurt

Princeton, 23./III. 1957.

131.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 262, 263 as well as the one to Adele that she will, I hope, soon reply to. We are now all healthy again. In February we all three had a grippé that I unfortunately brought into the house. The doctor immediately gave Adele's mother 2 Penicillin injections and then she, and also Adele, took a lot of Aureomycin.

Papa's watch is here but I do not wear it. Two years ago Adele bought me a very attractive little wristwatch that is also an alarm clock. It chirps like a cricket as a reminder to take my bicarbonate. If I happen to be with anyone, they are somewhat surprised but it's not as bad as in the novella by Thoma¹. I never particularly liked reading Ganghofer², so know very little by him as a result. But the Baumbach novellas, especially those in verse, I liked very much. What's the name of the one that has that Zorika song? We already talked about the relationship of art and kitsch once before, I believe. It is

¹ Ludwig Thoma (1867–1921), German editor, novelist, and short-story writer, popular for his satirical tales of Bavarian peasant life

² Ludwig Ganghofer (1855–1920), German novelist and playwright, best known for his “Heimat novels” that sentimentally depicted rural Alpine life

similar to that between light and serious music. One can scarcely claim that all good music must be tragic?

When is Aunt Mizzi coming to Vienna? Currently Natkin¹ (of the Schlick circle) is in America and I met with him and Feigl² in New York. Those Schlick evenings are 30 years in the past but the two of them have actually changed very little. Whether that is the case with me, I do not know.

Regarding the pictures of Papa and of Hilde's wedding I already wrote you I will send both of them back at the same time. If you have the one of Papa reproduced, please send me a copy.

In politics it is not looking so good due to Israel and the Arab countries. I believe that it will come to a local war there and to unrest in the entire world since the Jewish question is pertinent everywhere, after all. In the English papers they speak of Eisenhower as if he had already died but I believe everything is actually fine. Please congratulate Rudi on the new car. M^{rs} Mayer writes that it is very elegant-looking. Just now your letter N° 264 came. Yes, it is sadly true that once again I have not written for a long time. We are, as I already wrote above, all healthy; acquaintances even tell me that I now look particularly well. But there are always enough things in the Institute that keep me from writing. Besides you wanted to hear something about my plans and it's always hard to write something definite about that. Your traveling with Frau Mayer unfortunately is not a consideration at all for various reasons. The arrangement would have been very favorable insofar as the acquaintances from Germany are going back* the beginning of May, but you would naturally not want to travel without Rudi. What D^r Ehrmann will have to say this year about my traveling to Europe, I do not know yet. And you two possibly coming in the Fall is fairly far away yet. A room in a larger hotel should cost 8-10 \$ per night and person. But there is also a small very nice hotel in which Institute members often stay before they find something more permanent. I will look into it more closely. Why that money once again ended up going to Switzerland, I do not understand. I expressly instructed that it should be sent to the credit association. The coffeetable books of Brünn arrived. I only could

¹ Marcel Natkin (1904–1963), close friend of KG when they were students together at the University of Vienna. After earning his Ph.D. in 1928, with a thesis on the role of simplicity in scientific theory, he moved to Paris and became an important artistic and portrait photographer

² Herbert Feigl (1902–1988), Austrian-born philosopher and KG's other close friend as a student in Vienna. Coming to the U.S. in 1930 to escape rising anti-Semitism in Austria, he subsequently founded at the University of Minnesota one of the leading centers for the study of philosophy of science

find the roof of the neighboring villa. What else did Richard Svedik talk about, aside from his ex-wife?

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt
Many greetings from Adele and mother

* by ship, however

Princeton, 30./IV. 1957. 132.

Dearest Mama!

Many *Bussis* for your birthday wishes and the package that made me very glad. I began immediately to read *Zlatarog*. Yes, Baumbach¹ was truly a poet. Many Goethe poems seem stiff and forced to me in comparison. The two other Baumbach books are, by the way, the very same edition that we had in Brünn. The book about Franz Joseph will interest Adele in particular. I am curious what is in it about the death of the Crown Prince. I was surprised that it is the third volume of a work on Franz Joseph. Can one even write that much about him? In addition, the same author wrote a thick volume about Empress Elisabeth.

Health-wise I am doing quite well and your dream doesn't mean anything. You often have dreams like that, by the way. Do you never have pleasant dreams? At times I had some in which objects were strikingly three-dimensional and vividly colorful. There are apparently certain smells that produce such dreams. We were alone on my birthday this year, as usual these past few years. Adele bought me a wonderful chaise longue for the yard, a real sofa. Yes, one cannot believe that Eva is already 60, even less that Hilda Wengefeld must be about the same age too. Nowadays women at 60 often look like 40, by the way. Or is that only here? I did write to you about Hilde's wedding picture recently that unfortunately almost all of us had our eyes closed. I am the noted exception but I look so unlike myself. Or did I really look like that back then? Our stay in Bled is now 24 years ago. That was the same year I went to America for the first time. I still recall swimming across

¹ Rudolf Baumbach (1840–1905), German poet who gained popular success with a collection of drinking songs and the Alpine legend “Zlatarog”

the lake. I am sure I could not do that any longer now. Thanks for the pretty violets. They stayed particularly fresh this time. So in Velden it was very lovely again, though too cold, but that was to be expected, after all. Is it true that the Resurrection was celebrated in Brünn on Holy Saturday? and afterward the Easter promenade was taken on Saturday? In a Lutheran church in Brünn anything may be possible but that would really surprise me.

Why do you write that it looks sad for Eisenhower and that there is not any more hope? He is actually doing very well, health-wise, and if he is not murdered for political reasons, he will surely live to the end of his term (i.e. 1960). I very much hope so, also for political reasons. God only knows what else will come of the conflict in the Orient. The money I send is always for the previous month, but I will send another 60 \$ soon, to get it straightened out. I will ask my doctor (whom I have not seen in $\frac{1}{2}$ year by the way) in the near future about a trip to Europe. If I come, I think it is best if I come directly to Vienna. I have already looked into hotel prices here. Off-season prices go until 15 Sept. A lovely two-bed room with bath in a large hotel costs 12 \$, in the smaller one I wrote about, 9.50 \$. The latter is even cheaper by the week.

In our yard everything is already green and the fruit blossom time is already nearly over. We found a wonderful gardener, a Negro from the good old days, who perhaps once was a footman in a rich family and who looks like an aristocrat himself. But he is not expensive in the least.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Adele sends thousand *Bussis* and says she is about ready to slap herself because she still hasn't answered you.

Princeton, 12./V. 1957.

133.

Dearest Mama!

I wanted to send you a pretty Mother's Day card but I couldn't find any. So I am sending you the attached little flowers from our yard with thousand *Bussis*. Today was a pretty day and we laid outdoors. It is already quite summery and the fruit blossom time is over. Now the moon has come out and looks like a lantern behind the trees. Did you see the comet 14 days ago?

Adele and mother send many greetings as well and all the best for Mother's Day.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. I will write one more time in May

Princeton, 28./V. 1957.

134.

Dear Rudi!

Heartfelt thanks for the course catalogue and Papa's picture.
Unfortunately, I was unable to go to the doctor last week as planned and therefore cannot write anything definitive. I do not know if this letter will still reach you in Vienna, but wish you at any rate a good trip and rest.

I wanted to write you the following, however: in mid-July a professor from Princeton named E. A. Lowe¹ is coming to Vienna. He is 78 (born in 1879), his subject is paleography. He suffers from coronary insufficiency and so will stay in Sanatorium Fango. His doctor is D^r Wilh. Breu. He asked if you perhaps know of a more suitable sanatorium for his condition. He is not coming to Vienna for treatment but instead wants to work at the National Library. He would certainly be glad to get to know you and Mama. His wife translated several works of Thomas Mann into English; she won't be coming along, she is even less well than he is and besides which he is not on good terms with her apparently.

With warm regards
Your Kurt

P.S. Thousand *Bussi* to Mama. [Adele] also sends warm regards and sends an attached picture of her mother. She will soon be taking photos of the yard again and send them to you two

¹ E. A. Lowe (1879–1969), Russian-born expert on medieval Latin manuscripts, appointed as one of IAS's first professors in 1936

RADIOGRAM

11 VIII 57

MARIENNE GOEDEL NERCHENSENZERSTR 81 VIENNA
DUE TO UNEXPECTED CIRCUMSTANCES VIENNA TRIP OR COMING
HERE UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS IMPOSSIBLE COULD WRITE
NOTHING DEFINITIVE HEALTH NORMAL LETTER FOLLOWS
REGARDS

KURT

Princeton, 9./VIII. 1957.

135.

Dearest Mama!

Please do not be angry that I have not written in so long. But the pen literally balked at writing that this summer a meeting between us is impossible again as it seems. Though the Dr. didn't advise me against it this time. He merely stated I should not stay in Vienna but if possible at 1000 m elevation. I was just about to order my ticket and to telegraph you two but then a series of unpleasant things came about that made it impossible for me to leave and which in addition cost quite a bit of money. The least of them is the fact that someone wanted to build next to us, in fact so close that one could almost have shaken hands from one window to another. So we initiated a case and then ended up buying the piece of land next door. The money was supposed to be through a mortgage from the bank but there are also plenty of expenses associated with it that are not paid off yet at all. The other things are partly of a professional nature, partly to do with the events of 1936 among others.¹

Regarding your coming here, I will of course very gladly have you here any time and can pay your travel costs and a stay of several weeks* but currently could not contribute to Rudi's travel costs and one can scarcely demand of him that he pay 700-800 \$ out of his own pocket for that. In addition, Adele is currently not doing all that well and therefore not up to having guests. So apparently everything is conspiring against us. Otherwise I would already have written you long ago.

¹ In 1936 KG was in sanatoriums in Vienna for four months from January to May for treatment of a severe psychological breakdown. Then, in June, Moritz Schlick was murdered, an event which KG's brother said had affected him deeply at the time

Many thanks for your letters N° 268–270 and the postcard from Lugano. The trip must have been very nice and interesting yet again. I remember the Ziller valley and also that I experienced my first love there. I think she was called Marie. Health-wise I am doing quite well, even though I have lost weight. Recently I nearly crushed my thumb in a car door. But it wasn't as bad as it looked and after a week was healed up again. It is true that I am already heavily grey, but oddly enough much more on one side. Did Prof. Lowe already visit you two? How is Rudi? Hopefully his gallbladder business will have settled down on the trip. I do not understand how nails can become ingrown from a pedicure. That is supposed to prevent that from happening! Morgenstern, as far as I know, spoke on the "Voice of America" program. That is as you know the anti-Communist broadcast meant for Europe. At any rate I am glad that I have nothing to do with it. It could have easily happened that I would have been asked to do it. If you send me the promised picture in the woolen suit, it will make me very happy. The summer this year, in contrast to last year, is quite hot again (apparently just like there?) and those mosquitos are back that were completely gone last year. I will close for today and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

* except that I have completely exhausted my funds now for the property, but I should get the money back from the bank in a week

P.S. Warm regards to Rudi from me and from Adele and mother to you both
P.S. In reading through the letter I see that I expressed myself fairly vaguely in several points. The professional things have to do with a piece I have to turn in and with a book in which two of my earlier works are to be reprinted. We submitted the complaint on 22 May against the municipality of Princeton which wanted to allow the construction. In the beginning of July we made a down payment on the property and bought it the end of July. So there was always something happening with it. I will most likely get the money from the bank, but if e.g. the person who wanted to build the house initiates a case against the previous owner because he did not sell it to him (despite a down payment) but rather to us, that could jeopardize the whole thing. As to the things from 1936, I spoke to a competent person recently and they were also not so absolutely sure if it is advisable for me to travel over there* (especially now). A further item that has to be taken care of now of all times is turning Adele's mother's visitor visa into a permanent visa. That is not so easy here. You need a senator who applies for an exception to the existing rules, which has already happened. Please do not think that the things mentioned have

somehow put me off balance. Adele of course was much more upset about the property incident than I was. I could of course have written you all this before, but unpleasant news comes soon enough and I always hope to be able to write something nice for a change re our get-together.

Another thousand *Bussi*

Your Kurt

* not because of anything that could happen in Austria.

Princeton, 27./VIII. 1957.

136.

Dearest Mama!

All the best and thousand *Bussi* for your birthday. I am ordering a check at the same time. Hopefully you two will have a nice stay at Mondsee.

Unfortunately, I once again can only convey my birthday wishes from afar, but I certainly do not believe one should give up hoping for a reunion. I do hope constantly that my life will begin to calm down which would require my sensitivity to food and chills to cease, and that unexpected things not keep cropping up continuously. You do not have to be concerned about the court case. It has been consigned to the past since we bought the property; unless the original interested party begins a new court case. But that is unlikely. This piece of property cannot mean that much to him; besides which, he would have scant chances of winning. So there is no motivation to reverse anything. Yes, if we had a firewall, it would be a different matter. But the new house would stand directly opposite the windows of the bedroom and my room at a distance of several meters.

Where is the monument to Franz Joseph to be erected? Prof. Lowe surely expected Rudi to call him. Couldn't you two still do that? You both have always enjoyed talking to acquaintances from Princeton and I also told him so. I already wrote you before regarding those professional things. They have not got anything to do with 1936. I received all your letters. I am sorry that your feet are still bothering you and I wish you for you that it improves soon. I had another bout of grippé but it was essentially over in three days with Achromycin. I am just a little phlegmy in the throat.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

P.S. Best wishes on your birthday also from Adele and Mammi. A little airmail package from her is on its way.

Princeton, 20./X. 1957.

137.

Dearest Mama!

I wanted to write you 14 days ago and something always came up. The semester has also started once again and the time passes so quickly. Many thanks for your letters № 272, 273 and the enclosed postcards. Your stay in the Villa in St Gilgen you describe again very romantically. That kind of thing always reminds me of our stay at "Aflenzerhof" where we were also all on our own and in a rather large hotel to boot. The statue of the Emperor seems to be very attractive, but that he has his back to the Ring is really odd. In the book about Franz Joseph, I have read only the chapter about Crown Prince Rudolf so far. It more or less agrees with other things written about it. But at the end there is a piece of paper inserted which reports that a series of articles appeared in the "Wochenpresse" (Vienna, vol. 10, № 35 and following, 27 Aug. 1955) in which the contents of private files of the then-Chief of Police of Vienna were published. There ought to be some interesting things in that, and it should be easily procurable in Vienna. Didn't you hear anything about it? The letters of the young Emperor to his mother would interest Adele very much. Did they recently appear, so that one could procure them from the publisher? To say that Austria begrudged Germany its victory of the '70s is putting it very mildly. It would have much rather participated on the side of France. The Habsburgers had an ancient claim to the German Emperor's crown and the number of wars between Prussia and Austria is astonishing large. However good (or bad) the agreement between Austria and Germany was in the First World War is also not completely clear. Emperor Wilhelm's declaration of war on Russia and France certainly did not occur in agreement with Emperor Franz Joseph. That the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima after the end of the war is of course nonsense. One could maintain that it wouldn't have been necessary any longer, but I believe that would have also been wrong. Because the Japanese probably would have fought to the last drop of blood. I hear Morgenstern was in Vienna again. What did you all talk about together? The chill I caught here because in the evening it was often very hot

this summer and in the early morning noticeably cool, so that a light blanket was too little. It has been very strange weather all in all. September was much warmer than August, really hot. I am now getting injections of Vitamin B12 to stimulate appetite and will as a result very soon have caught up with my loss of weight. It never came to a real court case about the property, since the matter was mediated before any kind of trial had taken place. The only thing that is not right is that I still have not received the money back from the bank, because the lawyer still has not delivered the papers. But I do not know what is actually behind all that. Adele has repeatedly requested it to be done; now I must have a firm talk with him myself.

As to servants, they are even harder to get here. No one at all can afford having one every day (at least in our circles). M^{rs} Mayer is in Princeton now once again and often comes to dinner at our house. The situation in the Orient does not look good. Something like last year in the Fall could easily happen this year. We saw the English Queen speak on the television. She is very appealing. Adele and mother send warm greetings.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 11./XI. 1957.

138.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for both your letters N° 274, 275. I am writing you today mainly because a wonderful opportunity has come about as to how you could visit us here. Morgenstern's sister wants to come here for a month and you could easily come with her and then fly back again. You get on the plane in Vienna and get off in New York. So that would not be any big deal. Besides, Morgenstern tells me that you two see his sister quite frequently. So you wouldn't feel alone on the trip at all. You could either stay here with us or with M^{rs} Mayer, who is staying in Princeton the whole winter this year. From a medical standpoint there certainly is not anything that argues against the trip? There is really nothing seriously wrong with you. We would be enormously happy to have you here and Christmas or Jan. would be a good time, because I have less to do at the Institute. So give it some thought. I already got the money back from the bank. You suggest I should come to Vienna for several days. But in several days we could certainly could not

begin to tell each other everything we have to say to one another, and the travel costs would be put to very ill use.

I wanted to say thank you very much for the greetings from Else. Does she have a profession actually or does she live only off the pension? I do not understand why Hilde can be doing so poorly. He surely made a good living and must have paid in on a pension and life insurance for her.

Sputnik's political significance is being exaggerated. No one would have much benefit from it in a war and that is probably why no one here focused on its construction. I also do not consider the Zhukov¹ matter to be very important. In Russia such change among personages is the order of the day. The danger of a war currently lies in the tense relations between Israel and the Arabs. I don't think that it can be held off for long, but a world war won't be the end result.

The flu is really going around here too, but I am protected by the injections. Being a doctor, Rudi could quite easily get vaccinated. But otherwise this "Asian" flu does seem to be entirely harmless. My health is completely back to normal and so you do not have to worry. Regarding Adele's wishes I could only get out of her that she would like to have Dorset buttons that are absolutely impossible to procure here. I would be happy to get the last (5th) volume by Überweg, History of Philosophy. (That is Foreign Philosophy in the 19th Century). But probably it is already too late for that. Adele's mother was fortunately never seriously ill up to now, except that she did once have a bad cold. But with modern medicine it was over in a couple of days. For her 90th birthday Adele bought her a wheelchair, since she tires very quickly from walking, especially since she has gained a significant amount of weight here. I do not get together particularly frequently with Morgenstern. He is constantly on a trip and, when he is here, he has much to do. He is only to be seen if he happens to come by around dawn or dusk, and that happens fairly seldomly. By the way, what is going on in East Germany? You alluded to something.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Many greetings from Adele and mother. Adele is in the process of writing a letter to you. And thank you so much for the birthday wishes

¹ Marshal Georgy Zhukov, a commander of Soviet forces in the Battle of Berlin, became Minister of Defense under Khrushchev and was abruptly relieved of duty in October 1957

Princeton, 12./XII. 1957.

139.

Dearest Mama!

I thank you for the pretty Christmas card and enclose one in this letter too. Another year over! Each one literally passes quicker than the one before. I am glad that your state of health is essentially in order. Of course a doctor should decide whether a journey by plane or by ship is preferable. I would say plane by all means and Morgenstern also had nothing against it re his sister. To go by your letter the conclusion seems to be that neither in Winter or Spring does she want to travel, which I do not understand. As regards Rudi, I would naturally like to see him as much as I would you, but since I cannot reimburse him for the travel costs, I did not want to speak of it. For that would look as if I wanted to require him to come here at his own cost. I am sorry that you injured your thumb. How are you doing with that? In the case of mine, the nail that grew back in split from side to side. But now it looks almost normal again. Mama Porkert was not feeling well recently and vomited. But since she was back to normal the next day after a laxative, it must not have been anything serious. An X-ray was taken at any rate. She had had previous issues with her gallbladder before. Eisenhower's illness seems to have been nothing. But his enemies, of which there are no small number, take the least opportunity to envision him lying in his grave. I am doing completely well health-wise. The flu has also ebbed significantly now after ca. 17 million cases. I do not believe that the newspaper reporters are to blame for the Sputnik disgrace. Those people are quite decent here in my experience. It's much more likely that the entire thing is a ploy to extort more money for arms buildup. It's true that they are considering consulting Oppenheimer again. I believe that is probably how it will all end up. So is it true that widows in the East Zone [of Germany] are better off than in the West? Morgenstern emigrated ca. 1938 due to Hitler. He did have in Vienna an excellent position as Professor at the University and head of the Institute for Economic Research. It is certainly correct that in Princeton cultural stimulation is to be found. But mainly it is classical music and erudite comedies, and I am not fond of either. The newspaper clipping about the goals the Russians sought with Sputnik is very interesting. If it is true, it would confirm a suspicion re the Einsteinian theory I have always had and commented on, too. This letter is once again going out with a bit of a delay because in the past few days a professor from Holland has been here visiting who gave 3 lectures and whom I was partially in charge of. We were in New York often lately and went to see a few things. There is a special movie theater there now (called Cinerama) with a cylindrically bulged-out screen so that the pictures give a very three-dimensional impression. Is there not one in Vienna yet? Then recently we

went to see the “Quartier Latin” where there are skyscrapers right next to idyllic houses like in Grinzing. Also in the center of the city there is a large park with a main promenade where horse-drawn carriages (!) drive up and down. Soon we want to go see the building of the “United Nations.” I will close for today and send you thousand Christmas *Bussis*. Warm Christmas wishes and regards also to Rudi.

ever Your Kurt.

Warm Christmas wishes and regards also from Adele and mother. Adele is in the process of writing a letter to you. Letters 276, 277 arrived.

Princeton, 12./I. 1958.

140.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks to you and Rudi for the lovely Christmas presents. The chandelier is already hanging between the beds. It was perfect timing since we have just put the beds against a different wall. The dear little donkey is terribly charming and gets the first prize of all the things you have sent up to now. Its dear little ears are the very picture of gentleness. Adele and mother also thank you heartily for the bonbons and Adele very especially for the book. I also had a look into it and found something interesting right away. On page 302 he speaks of Napoleon III as an “arch-scoundrel”* and besides which views the Austrian parliamentary system as a mere figurehead, since “the power still remained in his hand.” That did change later quite a bit, however. From Aunt Mizzi we received a very sweet letter and I got another very nice Brünn calendar. This time the title page is the view down onto the city and the cathedral, which is exactly the one from our yard. It made me think how we used to look at the decorations on the cathedral with the telescope! Aunt Mizzi writes that she spent New Year’s Eve with 5 old acquaintances from Brünn. Who could that have been? Unbelievable that Uncle Karl is already 80 years old! For his age he seems to be doing very well health-wise. I do not know if I wrote you that we got together with Klepetar again in New York a couple of months ago. He now works for an organization that enforces Jewish reparation claims against Germany. Germany (in contrast to Austria) has as you know set aside a huge sum of money for this purpose. As I hear (from another source), the German government is said to be very conciliatory, quite unlike the Jewish

authority that was to check the claims but supposedly prioritizes the fraudulent claims over the legitimate ones. The claims are of course greatly overexaggerated in many instances. The documents were largely destroyed during the war after all.

This year we were all alone on New Year's Eve, on Christmas Mrs Mayer was here. I naturally prefer eating the homemade Christmas baked goods, too. Adele made vanilla crescents this year that tasted just the way they used to at home. Did you ever see either of the two Sputniks? It is absolutely not the case that reporters here exaggerate everything. If two trains crash on a bridge and both fall into the water there are ordinarily 2½ fatalities and 3½ injured. Unfortunately, I could not retract the money for January, but will do so for February. If you come with Rudi it does not matter if and when Miss Morgenstern comes over. But it would be so expensive that Rudi could almost buy a second car for that. The winter this year is fairly cold here and colds are more common than usual. How is it there? Today I received your letter № 278 (of 24./XII.). If Rudi answers all the Christmas cards that is certainly a lot of work. Adele always writes many cards, too. I will close for today and remain with thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi.

ever Your Kurt

* I do not want to dispute that he was right about that

P.S. Adele and mother also send warm regards. Adele is already looking forward to a letter from you.

Princeton, 14./II. 1958.

141.

Dearest Mama!

Thank you very much for your letter № 279. Your Christmas package arrived a week before Christmas, the other one even earlier. But naturally we waited to open it at Christmas. Adele says many thanks indeed for your letter. She already has started writing her letter in reply. The article about the Emperor is very nicely written and contains much that is true. I return it herein. It is really no wonder that the Emperor developed an evil stare in the last years of his life, since he in fact always had the best of intentions and yet was doomed to unleash the most horrid war in 2000 years. I definitely do not believe that he hated humanity in general, but quite possibly certain

individuals. I am quite curious to see the promised segment about the Crown Prince. I have not heard anything yet about the book by Egk. Why do you write that it is very difficult for laymen to understand? Could you perhaps not briefly summarize the content? I have very little time for extraneous activities. Particularly in the last few weeks there was, as always at this time of year, much to do at the Institute. Hence my long break from writing. The past two nights I was up late and now have a headache as a result.

The things one hears lately about crimes by young people is incredible. Recently a 15 year old lad threw a 7 year old girl from the 14th floor because he had an “irresistible urge” to do so. One often hears of rapes among similar age groups. I have the impression that the management of the schools in New York is largely to blame for this state of affairs. Things seem to have gone to the dogs for political reasons after the death of La Guardia (whose name you will probably know). Eisenhower did in fact look really bad for a while but now I think he looks all back to normal again. One should not forget that career officers are usually quite strong by disposition and by dint of their upbringing. This is the first year you write about how you two always celebrate New Year's Eve. It looks very romantic and positively ritzy.

It is unbelievable that Aunt Mizzi receives 1800 S[chillings] per month. The biggest part of that has to be her pension and hence has nothing to do with the difference between Germany and Austria, but instead probably due to the fact that you, being a homeowner in Czechosl. are considered a capitalist. Did you two actually ever submit anything to the Czech officials? As to the state of things regarding reparations for the Jews, this information did not come to me from Klepetar. As an employee of this company he is not permitted to express that kind of opinion. What do you say to the fact that Americans perhaps will rocket to the moon yet this year? That is probably to make up for what Sputnik did to them. I am surprised that no war has broken out yet in the Orient. Indeed it would be good if I were wrong in my prophecy*, but I hold out little hope. As to you two visiting here, Morgenstern recently suggested Rudi could attend a med. convention here which would give him the right to deduct the travel costs from his income tax. In the next few days, I will ask around regarding med. conventions. Is inc-tx. also as high there as here (20% minimum)? So I will have the money transfers continue.

With thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Many regards also from Adele and Mother

* even though on the other hand, wars with few victims and more favorable results do exist.

Princeton, 1./IV. 1958.

142.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 282, 283. I believe it is a good idea that you want to stay in a hotel. You need not tap your savings for that. However, there is no hotel near us. The one you are thinking of was across from our previous apartment. But the nicest hotel (Nassau Tavern) has a direct bus connection to us and taxis are also not very expensive. The rooms are expensive, though. They have gone up significantly in price over the past two years. A double with bath 15-16 \$. But I will gladly pay your share. ~~Decent~~ Appealing cheaper hotels no longer exist, unfortunately. It would yet be possible to take 2 rooms with bath and separate entrance as a sublet (or a furnished two-room apartment*). There are many rooms sublet (by the week) here and among them a number of lovely ones. I assume it would be fine with you for me to find something suitable. If not write me as soon as possible. Naturally I would like to take something on ground level since the steps are usually fairly steep. I will close for today so the letter gets into the mail as soon as possible.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Many regards also from Adele and mother

* there is of course the problem with getting a maid

P.S. There are 2 smaller hotels where rooms with bath cost \$10.- but I do not believe that they would be to your taste. Also one has to climb steps there

Princeton, 8./V. 1958.

143.

Dearest Mama!

Today the enclosed letter to Rudi arrived from Eva. The one from Uncle Karl to you I found at the Institute, where I hadn't been for a week. It is too bad that we cannot read both these letters together here. Adele and I were hugely happy about your visit and think it was a success in every regard. But afterward it is naturally somewhat depressing to be alone again. We hope to hear from you both soon about how the return trip was. The weather was the most awful in months as you know. Not till this afternoon did it improve. Now the sun is shining and the new bed at my window is glowing in splendid

colors. Adele is working outside. I am eager to see how your stay together in Paris goes. It would be lovely if we could get a card from you from Paris. Unfortunately I totally forgot to ask Rudi for your Paris address so I cannot write to you there. It all went by so quickly that one could not even get one's breath.

At the Institute it is fairly lonely now that most of the members have already gone away. Recently I met a specialist on Austrian history on the New York train with whom I also spoke about the Crown Prince. He told me* that the papal nuncio at the time maintained that it had not been a suicide but rather a murder. That was deduced by the fact that the pistol had not belonged to the Crown Prince and that the bullet transected the head from left to right. But I have very little trust in the love of truth of papal nunci.

I will close for today and send you thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

Thousand *Bussis* also from Adele. She says that your stay was far too short

* To be more exact, he gave me a treatise in which that was reported based on documents

10./V. 1958.

144.

Dearest Mama!

Enclosed I finally am sending you the picture of the Empire State Building that arrived yesterday. Adele thinks that I have never had such a friendly expression on my face in any picture before. I think that you look especially good in it. Unfortunately we have not received any word from you two yet from Paris. I did almost fear that the airplane had had to land somewhere off-route and you had arrived with great delay (as was the case once with Adele). But Pan American just reported to me that the flight went according to schedule. I hope you will have a lovely stay in Paris. My Mother's Day wishes will not get there on time now but I send you nonetheless thousand extra *Bussis* and all the best.

Ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 7.VI. 1958.

145.

Dear Rudi!

I am very glad that you were satisfied with your stay in U.S.A and that you liked it at our house. Also I am very happy that we got to see one another again after so many years and still think back often to your visit and our mutual excursions to New York. Where have the days gone when we discussed Chamberlain's book about Goethe and his relationship to natural sciences in the woods around Marienbad!

I hope you are well health-wise and that you have recovered once again from the strain of so many trips. If even you do not take these things well, how would it have been if I had come over there. I am definitely much more susceptible. I only hope that some time my state of health will improve through some treatment or other and I can return your visit.

Many warm regards

ever Your Kurt

[in Adele's hand, with a hand-drawn weeping heart:] Thousand Bussis

Princeton, 7.VI. 1958.

146.

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for the card from Paris and the two letters N° 284, 285. It is a pity that Rudi could not stay longer in Paris if he had been interested in doing so. The hotels were perhaps so over-full due to the national holiday, most of all though due to the De Gaulle issue. There were 35,000 soldiers and police on duty. Hotels probl. had to be requisitioned. And then all the politicians too who were involved! Here, even in normal times one frequently has to wait for a reserved hotel room if one arrives before 3 o'clock, which is the official time for changing out rooms.

I am quite curious about the photos that Rudi will send. The ones that were developed here turned out very charming. Adele now wants to do color photos of the yard too and send them to you two.

It is quite right that one is somewhat depressed after such a reunion. That is visible even in Adele who cries for you very much. The dream with the defeated crocodile is so charming. But why a crocodile of all things? The little frog is still doing his jolly hops and the key is also perfect for the little donkey. I am glad you had a lovely end to your journey in Salzkammergut.

There it is doubtlessly even lovelier than in the environs of Princeton. The letter from Uncle Karl is very amusingly written. But it is definitely not justified of him to accuse the Americans of laziness. I believe half of the wealth of America rests on the hard work of Americans and the other half on the orderly political circumstances (in contrast to the constant wars in Europe). I have already read some of the book by Robert Jungk¹. I think there is much that is correctly depicted in it and it is also not so anti-American, at least in the parts I read. It is exaggerated to say it snowed in New York. That was probably in another part of America. But it is true that the summer here does not want to begin at all this year. In May it is usually already hot and muggy, at least part of the time. But this year it is still ice cold in June. You saw for yourselves how it is with the weather here. But I was right about De Gaulle. My other prophecies will also come true soon, namely war with the Arabs even if it does not look like it now. But a world war will not emerge.

What was the cause of Rudi's dizzy spell? Adele is very worried about that. I myself believe it must be something harmless. Rudi has stayed so youthful that one cannot understand why he should be "worn out." If you compare him with Papa at the same age, you have to admit he looks incomparably healthier and younger. I think he took too much on in these last few weeks: Princeton, New York, Philadelphia, Paris, Salzkammergut, Salzburg. On top of that he never had the food he is accustomed to anywhere. Whenever I eat things that do not agree with me it often manifests itself as a feeling of fatigue and weakness. By the way, it seems to me you once wrote something similar years ago. Can that be?

Just now I got off the phone with Morgenstern who often asked after you and about the continued progression of your trip. He told me that he had not heard anything from his sister for 5 weeks, which he could not explain. Have you two seen her lately? Adele's mother has much phlegm in her throat but otherwise she is doing quite fine.

Thousand *Bussis* from all of us ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Enclosed Adele sends another little picture of the garden

P.S. The thing that made me the happiest about your visit is that you have not changed at all. It seemed to me as if I had seen you only yesterday, and it was also the same with Rudi.

¹ Austrian writer and journalist, author of a number of books about nuclear weapons

Princeton, 6./VII. 1958.

147.

Dearest Mama!

Today it is exactly 2 months since you left and already an entire month since I last wrote! I have since then received only one letter (Nº 286), which is also dated 6./VI., from you. In the interim the packages you sent arrived with goodies, seeds, and coffee machine. Adele and I thank you both warmly for it. Adele has already planted everything but the Edelweiss. The machine makes a very good coffee even though I have not yet tried it with the very finely ground kind recommended in the instructions but which we have never used. I am quite curious what you two will write about your second vacation trip, and whether you saw Uncle Karl. I am glad that you liked America so much. You will recall that I quite raved to you about it from the very start, i.e. since 1933. However in some aspects it was even better back then than it is now, as I said to you here. You really do not have to have any concerns regarding my eating. You yourselves had to admit after all that I eat quite fine, and that holds true even more so for breakfast, where you never were along. Our yard, and particularly the flowers in it, is now very pretty. Recently I was admiring a two-toned rose (dark red and pink) the likes of which I had never seen before. The old tree near the street is a maple, as I recently determined. It brought back vivid memories of our plant classification book that we used in Marienbad. Does it still exist? Last Sunday Dr Hulbeck¹ came to visit us with his wife and his son and they also thought it was very nice here. His wife is especially delightful. She conversed a great deal with Adele while I showed him and his son around Princeton, i.e., particularly the Institute and the Graduate College. His son is surprisingly young (26 years) and just completed his university studies in History.

We took a number of color photos in the yard 14 days ago but they are not yet ready. This year was unbelievably cool until the end of June, it was only a couple of days ago the heat started. Adele's mother is now doing much better, knock wood. She is now back to her old self except that she eats far less. But that is nothing but good for her and yet she is not losing much weight at all. The cough which sometimes lasted a half hour and sometimes led to vomiting, ceased completely. Perhaps her symptoms had to do with the digitalis she was taking. Digitalis is known to have unpleasant effects while taking it and the success is not noticeable till later. Adele misses you both very much. She has

¹ Dr. Charles R. Hulbeck (1892–1974), a New York psychiatrist whom KG consulted as a patient. Under his given name Richard Huelsenbeck, he was one of the founders of the Dada movement, and continued to work as an artist and poet alongside his fashionable psychiatric practice at 88 Central Park West in New York

as usual much to do in the yard. She now wears as her hairstyle a little "horsetail," that suits her very well. I also had much to do again lately. First I had to evaluate a long paper and then write a contribution for an anniversary volume. The latter I will be submitting in the next few days. This letter is written with your Ballpoint fountain pen, which I like very much. One writes much easier with it; it moves as if on its own. Of the baked goods naturally many pieces were broken but they taste no worse for it.

Thousand *Bussi* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt
Bussi and regards also from Adele and mother

Princeton, 11./VIII. 1958. 148.

Dearest Mama!

The flower greetings from Pichl-Anhof were wonderfully pretty. Such lovely and large posies as you have never sent before and they still looked quite fresh. I received the letter from Vienna № 288 too. Adele wrote to you two about 14 days ago and also sent color photos. She sent a package a couple of weeks ago. You should have long received all of that by now. Adele is stewing over the fact that you are not writing. Hopefully you are both doing well and Rudi's gallbladder and tooth business were both over with soon.

Many thanks for the detailed description of your trip together to Munich and Ansbach. Hadn't you ever been to that region by car? Odd that is seems to me as if you had once written about Rothenburg an der Tauber. The place where Trudl lives must be itty-bitty. Her Rudi must be the sole doctor in the area and must travel far to his patients. I cannot recall the name Pichl-Anhof at all. So it is at Mondsee? My coffee filters have unfortunately all run out. There were all told only some 50 in the box and I do need two per day. I have found a method by which the coffee tastes quite excellent even without having to be finely ground. I let it run through three times (which doesn't take more than $\frac{1}{2}$ minute). Adele thinks that I am looking better these past few weeks. It is quite possible that it is due to that good coffee. The filters that one gets here in Princeton are miserable so that the coffee turns out too strong or too bitter. Probably one could get better ones in a specialty store in New York but in New York one has other things to do than to ride around on the subway for hours at a time. So please send me one pack of filters via airmail and then

perhaps 5 packs by regular mail. I fed myself off your good baking for a long time. They became oddly better and better the longer they laid around. That Anni arrived just as you were thinking of her is a well-known parapsychological phenomenon. Was she not surprised that you had been in the U.S.A. and did you tell her all about it? Is that her first husband she's now married to?

The view at midnight from the balcony you had must have been very romantic. I quite like such "genre pictures" of metropolises (e.g., the view from Vienna's Metropolitan Railway).

Adele's mother is knock wood doing very well again. Her appetite is now back to normal again. Adele built a wonderful metal cover to go above our Frigidaire. It simultaneously intercepts the soot and mutes the sound. In addition, a charming little cellar window was added. M^r Cebin, the husband of our maid, made it very lovely and really cheaply. He is also a carpenter and recently made a glorious commode for Adele's mother out of an old armchair for 25\$. In a store it would have cost at least three times as much. Our piano was tuned and now has a truly good tone. I don't know why that was not possible until now. That the son of Dr Hulbeck finished his studies at the age of 26 is of course nothing noteworthy. I only meant that he is relatively young in comparison to his father. The crisis in Lebanon I view as quite innocuous. Indeed, America will distance itself from any kind of involvement that could lead to a world war (thanks to Eisenhower). I totally forgot about the enlargement of the photo. This last month was once again very hectic. I had to quickly read several papers and finish one of my own (I submitted it 3 weeks ago.) Just now writing the letter to you, I am waking up to daily life as if out of a dream. By the way, I am [*rest of letter missing*]

Princeton, 26./VIII. 1958.

148a

Dearest Mama!

Most of all, much love and thousand *Bussis* on your birthday from Adele, mother, and me. Enclosed a small gift from Adele. A larger package and a money transfer will follow after. We hope you are well and that you long remain as perky and strong as we found you to be during your visit. Hearty thanks for the filters that arrived after only a few days and for the letters N° 289, 290. I will reply in detail in the next letter. In contrast to Vienna, this year

there was no particularly hot summer here this year. The past few nights were even downright cold. You two know our weather here. I became a Dozent in 1933.

I will close for today and send you another thousand *Bussi*
ever Your Kurt
Warm regards to Rudi too

Princeton, 22./IX. 1958.

149.

Dearest Mama!

Most of all I thank you both warmly for the many nice things that were in the package. The goodies were as always, excellent, but it really wasn't necessary for you to go to all the trouble to wrap up each individual one. The crescents taste just as good even when they are crumbled. The other things largely remained intact. The little box for bicarbonate will come in very handy. I took it with me recently when I was in New York with Adele. The book really looks very interesting. Adele tells me that she saw the movie in Vienna but that the book goes into greater detail. The package actually arrived surprisingly quickly, in not quite 3 weeks. It came on the very day that I used the last of the old filters. It would have been sheer insanity to send it via airmail. I will write to you in time whenever I need new filters. Hopefully the package from Adele that she sent 14 days ago will be dispatched just as quickly. The 3-time pouring through of the coffee is not complicated at all, because it goes very quickly the first two times.

Thank you for both of your letters of 27./VIII & 3./IX (which both are numbered 291), as well as for Rudi's postcard from Velden. I hope you two still got sunny bathing weather. The weather this year seems to be quite abnormal there. First the heat that you wrote about and then the flooding. You write "whole forests covered villages." What does that mean? That looks almost like Judgement Day. Here one reads nothing of it. This year is apparently a year of catastrophes, in fact. Those airplane crashes! And a couple of days ago in New York two cars of a local train fell into the Hudson River—50 dead. The train went over a bridge that can be raised to let ships through in the very instant a ship passed.

I am sorry that, as you write, you two are both having issues with your stomachs, and I hope that the rest in Velden did you two good in this regard.

You need not worry that I sit in my room too much. I laid outside much this year and in addition we do have the attic fan that one only need turn up and in a few seconds the good air from outside is in the room. When you were here there was unfortunately no opportunity to demonstrate it to you, since the heat was still on. Lately I have been eating that good beefsteak often too and it did not hurt me at all. But I believe the local (dark) lamb meat here is just as healthy.

I am glad that you two liked it here so well that you keep thinking back to when you were here. I believe it's due in large part to the character of the country. One feels at home here right away, because the people, the houses, the environs and everything else is so nice and friendly. At least that is how it went for me back when I came here. America is not called "The New World" for nothing. Admittedly, it would be lovely if you two could come back for half a year. But the farewell and the sorrow afterward would be just as bad.

The day before yesterday we celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary. I bought Adele a large bouquet of flowers and a small remembrance and she was very happy. On our 10th wedding anniversary we went "*drahns*"¹ in New York. You will recall the record that we sent to you back then. This time we were in New York a few days in advance and saw a really fabulous show in Radio-[rest of letter missing]

Warm regards too from Mama Porkert

Princeton, 18./XI. 1958.

150.

Dearest Mama!

Those several days that Adele spoke of have now once again turned into 2½ weeks! But when Adele writes then you know for a fact that everything is fine here with us. Many thanks for your letters № 292, 293. I unfortunately have the impression that you are in a rather melancholy frame of mind. It is really very sad that we have been so far apart for so many years, but I do firmly believe that we will not have seen each other for the last time this past Spring.

Adele and mother say thank you very much for the fabulous bonbons and the birthday greetings. Adele will write again soon herself. The package from

¹ Short for *durchdrahns*, Austrian expression for "partying all night"

you also took exactly 20 days, strangely enough, just like ours. Mama Porkert is in point of fact only 91. She is doing astonishingly well again (knock wood!). The color photo of you and Penny is truly excellent. I think it is just as good as the ones from here. Adele immediately hung it in a frame over my desk. For the other pictures Adele recently bought a wonderful device to look through that lights up inside, in which the pictures look very large and three-dimensional. Your wanting to send me a different coffee machine is sheer insanity. The coffee with mine turns out very well indeed and I should only be drinking filtered coffee. As for whipped cream, I drink mine every day with powdered enriched milk that is at least as nutritious as whipped cream.

Your room in Velden must have really been wonderful to go by your description, and it is much lovelier and more convenient to enjoy the good air that way. If you celebrated Rudi's "*Medizinalrat*"¹ at the Prater it was certainly more romantic than at Sacher. I always liked the Prater immensely. Especially if one goes a bit further out into the meadows there is wonderful scenery. The title of the movie "Im Prater blühm wieder die Bäume"² seems so familiar to me. Isn't that an old movie? How do you like the new record player? In music, romance has certainly not died out yet. What do you say to the new Pope? I think he looks downright charming. He does seem to be very liberal and sensible, which happens rarely with popes. I recently noticed that apparently no successor for Innitzer was named. What cause is there for that? Regarding the weather catastrophes, it is gradually being conceded that it could have to do with the atom bombs. A couple of them would suffice to melt the entire ice cap off the North Pole. It is truly unbelievable what kind of weather incidents have occurred in the last couple of years. There have been any number of highest and lowest temperatures exceeded and recently a thunderstorm with 200 flashes of lightning within 2 hours in England, which had never occurred there before.

The continuing "misses" on the moon are really quite too stupid. But that happens because they have gotten it into their heads to photograph the far side at any price. Recently I read an interesting article about Brazil. Did you know that there are still enormous virgin forests (with Indian tribes in them) that no human has set foot in? Now a road is being built through it. Driving through it

¹ "Medical Councilor," one of the numerous honorary professional titles awarded by the Austrian government for meritorious service to the country

² "In the Prater the Trees are Blooming Again," a 1958 romantic film directed by Paula Wessely. The title no doubt sounded familiar to KG because it was taken from the name of a popular 1916 Viennese song

will be really very romantic! The book "Der Engel mit der Posaune"¹ was very interesting to Adele. I unfortunately had no time to read it. The pictures of me that you want enlarged are now lying where I put them on my desk so I do not forget again. With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] *Bussi* and many regards from Adele

Princeton 19./XII. 1958.

151.

Dearest Mama!

Enclosed I am sending you the picture that hung over my desk and that you liked so well. I had set aside the picture with Einstein on purpose but now it has suddenly disappeared. But it will surely turn up soon. Rudi's device that enlarges the pictures to 1 x 1 m must be a projection device? Did he not already have one previously? Your letters all arrived, but in my last letter I erroneously confirmed 292/293 instead of 293/294. That you would be worried about me whenever a letter comes from Adele is really excessive. I was only seriously ill twice in all the 19 years since I have been here. That means only once every ten years. That is really not much. I am doing quite well health-wise. Food tastes better to me in the last few months than before. That could also be because Adele now cooks particularly well. But I do not believe that that is the sole reason. Why do you say that powdered milk is not natural? So preserved fruit would not be as nutritious as fresh. But besides, in this powdered milk those very elements are concentrated that have a favorable effect on the stomach walls. I hope that you are also doing well with your intestine once again.

Here it has been very cold in the past few weeks and there was quite a bit of snow, so that we probably will have a white Christmas this year. They have illuminated Christmas trees quite a bit of time before Christmas. Has this custom not been introduced from America?

If you say that Richard Strauss was the last great composer that can only be true of "heavy" music. I find that many new melodies have been composed in the last 10–15 years that are just as good if not better than Lehar or Johann Strauss, and are not at all "racy." I unfortunately only know the English titles,

¹ See also Letter, 16 April 1949

e.g., Harbour Lights or The Wheel of Fortune. There have got to be the same melodies there with different lyrics. Did M^{rs} Mayer get in touch with you two yet? Morgenstern's sister supposedly arrived here yesterday. I fear Adele will have little time for her now, since our help fell ill just before Christmas. She is 60 and suffers from high blood pressure, probably due to the upset she had over a legal battle with her neighbors. So I hope she will be better soon.

The Berlin crisis I believe to be just as innocuous as the one over Formosa that I prophesied to you would peter out. Algiers and De Gaulle is quite another matter. One has to be surprised that it hasn't blown up long ago. Is it true that Berliners were not Nazi-friendly? But even if that is the case, there was scarcely any difference as far as other countries were concerned between Nazis and other militarists.

What is going on with Kronichhof that Rudi no longer wants to travel there? Weren't you both there constantly before?

The jet planes are supposedly fabulous. One does not feel the least bumpiness and hears no noise. It must be as if one flew (a lovely word!)¹ on the clouds. If it is 12 o'clock midnight there, it is 6 o'clock in the evening here. At that time I always think of you two on New Year's Eve.

We all wish you both a lovely Christmas and a happy New Year
 With thousand *Bussis*
 ever Your Kurt

Dear Rudi!

I hope you are doing well, health-wise and otherwise. How was the "Van Swieten Convention" Mama recently wrote about?

With warm regards
 Your Kurt

¹ KG uses the rare (and self-consciously erudite) subjunctive form of the verb to fly, *flöge*: thus the "lovely" word he refers to

Princeton, 15./I. 1959

152

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for the beautiful book about Renoir, which interested me very much. There are some wonderful pictures in it, e.g. "Young Woman in the Meadow" on p. 45. Too bad that all his nude models suffer from obesity. Mama asked in her next to last letter if I already answered your letter. But I unfortunately did not receive one. Morgenstern's sister when she departed had very much praised you that you were so nice to her. She seems to be very interested in her job and she also drew my attention to some recently published bibliographies. That Kronichhof is so crowded now is likely to do with the upswing in the Austrian economy. The Reichsmark will soon probably become more of a valued hard currency than the dollar.

Many warm regards

Your Kurt.

P.S. Please send me another box of coffee filters soon. Airmail is not necessary, as I can hold out 3–4 weeks more with the old ones.

P.S. I would be very grateful to you if you could enclose a current list from the Göschen Library in the next letter you send. It surely seems to have taken a large upswing lately.

Princeton, 15./I. 1959.

152a

Dearest Mama!

First of all I thank you two warmly for the lovely Christmas present. The Lilliputian bonbons and the dear little ducky are terribly charming. The baked goods were excellent and disappeared very quickly. And I was very glad to get the D^r diploma. It gave me a very spooky feeling, since it is was like seeing an image in the mirror of myself from that time.

We are very glad that our presents were to your liking too. We celebrated here, too, at the time of your New Year's Eve and thought of you both. Our Christmas Adele described to you in a letter that is to go into the mail tomorrow. I would like only to add that she made an effort to get really all bones out of the carp, so that it was the first boneless carp that I had ever eaten in my life. The "Desk Encyclopedia" that she gave me was a very good idea. It is something like a substitute for the little reference work that Rudi once gave

me but that unfortunately was stolen. The snow we had at the beginning of Dec. melted before Christmas unfortunately. The figures in the yard were made of wood and can be set up every year anew. We like Morgenstern's sister very much. She was at our house twice for *Jause*.¹ In addition I showed her around the Institute and we may also even go to New York together some time. Currently she is at acquaintances in Boston, then traveling on to Washington and will be back by 11./II. So her stay here will not be very long at all. She was very pleased with your letter and talked about you two, e.g. that Grete Blondiaux is often at your house, which I did not know at all. How is she doing? Did the airplane that had the accident in Vienna come from America, actually? Why was there trouble at your place on New Year's Eve? Penny is doing well. Since she was operated on, she is even more affectionate. Your record player must be a pleasant pastime.

Thousand *Bussis* from us all

ever Your Kurt

The letters 295, 297 arrived but nothing in between

P.S. Adele is quite looking forward to writing you soon and enclosing color photos of our Christmas. This year we have in front of the house along with illuminated Christmas tree also 2 reindeer and a Santa Claus. Many *Bussi* also from Adele.

Princeton 8./III. 1959.

153.

Dear Rudi!

Your [and Mama's] trip here will unfortunately not be possible. Adele's mother's illness will certainly eat up much money and aside from that, though Adele did not buy many new things at all, we saved very little, since quite a bit of money went for the leveling and planting of the property and other previous acquisitions had to be paid off. As I glean from your letter, the trip would not suit you this year particularly well either.

As to Adele's mother's illness, it is a thrombosis in her left leg. The foot is black-and-blue up to the knee. An operation is out of the question for the time being due to the condition of her heart. Her heart may have been somewhat

¹ A distinctly Austrian term for a between-meal refreshment or snack

strengthened in the past few days by means of digitalis, oxygen etc., but the doctors hold out little hope to us for a favorable outcome.

I thank you very much for the Göschen list. As I see the pre-war status of the collection has not been achieved yet by a long shot and besides everything has become 3 times more expensive. I am glad that you like the tie I picked out so well that you wear it to formal occasions.

With many warm regards

Your Kurt

Dearest Mama!

I have intended for a long time now to write to you but was kept from it by all sorts of things, the latest being Mother Porkert's illness. So now I only want to write to you that the lamp is very sweet and long been in service (on my desk.) Then I want to also thank you for the filters and the goodies. The former make an even better coffee than the previous ones and the latter arrived much less broken this time. I hope to be able to write to you in detail soon.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Many warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 3./IV. 1959.

154.

Dearest Mama!

I no longer know when I wrote to you in detail the last time. In the meantime your letters N° 298, 299, 300 arrived. I had a touch of the grippé in February which was soon over thanks to the new miracle drugs. Then came the illness of Adele's mother, which dragged out a full 3 weeks. That is now thank goodness over, but the aftereffects are of course still there, even if Adele has gotten past the worst and is relatively calm. Her mother has a very lovely plot in the local, very large and well-maintained cemetery. I thank you for the 4-leaf clover as well as for the many coffee filters that you enclosed in the letters. They lasted so long that I only had to go without for one day. The large box took a full 4 weeks this time. Adele was very pleased with the oilcloth and the book. Perhaps it will give her something else to think about. The Diamond Mandarin Oranges you write of are really quite especially good and also

stimulate the appetite for the next meal. I am sorry that you had issues with your stomach again in the last few months. The last few years you did not really notice it much at all. I hope that you are once again doing well now. Was Morgenstern's sister actually enthused about every aspect of America?? I have not yet heard of the road to Mexico, oddly enough, even though I do read the newspaper regularly. The records were chosen by Adele. I did not listen to them since our (old) record player is not built for the new slowly rotating ones. It is very good to hear that you did receive arrears of your pension after all, and seems to prove that the Commun. governments are not such robbers as generally claimed. Subject matter fails me today, since I have not had any detailed little letter from you for a long time. With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Many regards and *Bussis* from Adele, she will very soon answer your letter

Princeton, 7./V. 1959.

154a

Dearest Mama!

I wish you all the best on Mother's Day and am glad that you are spending it in such lovely surroundings once again. You certainly write quite a bit about your last trips together where you surely have seen such picturesque things again: the ruins, the wine tavern Kuenberger, Holy Mary shrines and the trip through the Wachau valley and all of it in Spring. I imagine spending the night in the Starkenberger Castle to be especially interesting.

I thank you for the birthday wises and in advance for the package that has not yet arrived. Here in Princeton and its surroundings it is now also very lovely, as you know from your own experience. Just today, when I came on the train from New York I noticed how delightful this landscape is with the trees in bloom. It had just rained and everything (the houses too) looked so spic and span as if they just came out of a box. In our yard there are of course already many flowers and blossoming trees and Adele finds her diversion there. Now a little statue of the Virgin is being set up in memory of her mother that looks very charming and actually cost surprisingly little.

The death of M^{rs} Mayer's sister is a great blow to the family, not least of which because she was the only wealthy one among her sisters. We have not

heard anything about when M^{rs} Mayer means to come here and her other acquaintances here know nothing about it either. I did want to ask who your girlfriend is in the rest home in Germany. You probably talked about her before sometimes.

Thousand *Bussis* and as many extra for Mother's Day
ever Your Kurt

Warm regards to Rudi and many thanks for his birthday wishes. Adele sends you many *Bussis* for Mother's Day too

Princeton, 7.VI/1959.

155.

Dearest Mama!

Today is has been exactly one month that I wrote you last. But I hope the time passed quickly with your trips together. I thank you for the two letters (303, 304) and both the postcards that you sent me from your Spring trip together and from which I gleaned that it once again was a great success.

Many thanks for the baking and the book. The latter seems to be very charming to conclude from the pictures. Who is the authoress, H. Singer? Did she write anything more? That you purchased your own desk for yourself was, I believe, a very good idea. I cannot imagine that it would seem somehow objectionable in the room, since it is small after all and in addition is surely a lovely piece. Here with us everything is fine. Our newest acquisition is a stone stork which Adele set up in the middle of the large flowerbed opposite my window. She painted the wings pink and black and painted the beak black. It really looks terribly charming especially when the sun shines on it. Then it gives the impression as if it were made of glass and illuminated from within.

M^{rs} Mayer left again after being here a week and went to her summer house in Littleton. Adele wants to visit her there for a couple of weeks, but I believe it is still somewhat too cold in this region. M^{rs} Mayer told me about her visits to see you two. I find by the way that she looks better now than before, despite her illness. As I hear she intends to go back to Vienna permanently but up to now she hasn't made any movement in that direction.

The Morgensterns, children and all, left for Switzerland. That must really be rather complicated with such a small child. He apparently won't be coming to Vienna.

That Hilde is so lonely is really very sad. Where does the widow of Fritz live with whom she spent so much time? I can still recall the name Rowohlt very well indeed. I have a vague memory as though she did not enjoy a particularly good reputation but have forgotten the details. As I hear there was a great scandal at the Vienna Opera* because they hired a bad American singer (Sullivan). But you will know more there. You ask me what I have to say about politics. You probably primarily mean the conference in Geneva. Now there I find it particularly odd that the world powers are negotiating with Russia about a unification of Germany, though both prefer to have Germany divided. The whole thing seems to me very much like a comedy. But otherwise there are indeed many interesting things. E.g. that Adenauer wants to dictate to his party whom they make President and Prime Minister and that moreover he will most likely get his way. Also, the fact that the Pope now quite openly prescribes for Catholic voters what they should vote for or not, something they tried to avoid up to now. I was surprised that the Social Democrats in Austria almost got a majority in the last elections. So they really should get one in the next elections if nothing unusual happens in the meantime. That the Sudeten Germans have chosen Social-Democratic Vienna of all places for their convention is also odd. Or do they want to re-establish the Austro-Hungarian monarchy? De Gaulle has external successes but I do not believe that the sham-solution in Algiers will hold up long. Recently I saw in the paper that even the animals in the zoo are getting premature arteriosclerosis due to the stresses of modern life! So, now I have had a nice long chat with you.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Many regards to Rudi and from Adele to you both. She says thank you very much for the handkerchiefs.

* I always think of the “*Spuck story*”¹ in the Vienna opera. Who was that actress, anyway?

¹ See following letter

Princeton, 30./VII. 1959.

156.

Dearest Mama!

Lately I have really dived into work again prompted by Adele's absence. Hence my long break from writing. Adele has now been gone 3½ weeks and is to return this evening. It is very good that she was not present during the horrendous heat here. Such a hot summer has not happened for 20 years, but the heat does not bother me or at the very most does me good. Adele is very enthused about the "White Mountains" (= *Weisse Berge*) and writes it is just as lovely there as in Tyrol which seems to be true to go by the postcards.

When you get this letter you will have just gotten back again from Germany and I am quite curious what you have to tell about Uncle Karl. About Hilde's jealousy of Else I knew nothing. Was that a mere figment of imagination? The article about Polish philosophy that you two sent was very interesting to me (quite apart from the mention of my name). Many thanks for it. One sees from it that a very liberal Communist regime is in power in Poland now. I am very anxious to see the picture of your desk. The last box of goodies arrived quite pulverized but it does not hurt the taste at all. Adele read the book about the Viennese coffeehouse with great interest during her summer vacation. I have just leafed through it up to now a bit. Your letters to me all arrived. 306 was the last one, to Adele the one of 12./V. from Bad Schachen, but perhaps she took a later one with her to Littleton to answer it there. Where did the 3 letters from you to me from the years 1937–39 turn up? I ask because I still hope that some day something of my papers and books that I miss here will turn up. I am glad that you liked it in Kronichhof so well again this time. Was it not bad up there for a time? I do not think it justified that you are depressed when you get back to the city. City and country both have their good sides after all and the right thing would actually be to live ½ year in one and ½ year the other. When I wrote about the *Spuck* story in the opera, I meant one with *ck*¹ thus the story when one opera singer spat at another out of petty jealousies. But who was that? Who was actually this Paula Rowohlt? I remember nothing more than her bad reputation. The story of the girl that was murdered and buried at Schwarzenbergplatz, you must tell me more about that. It is not readily comprehensible. I sadly cannot drink chocolate because it constipates me. But if one thickens milk with powdered milk (which I do), then it is just as nutritious. Did you not see the villa of Slezak before? The President Roosevelt from whom he received the award is probably the one who made himself famous through his lion hunting and other extravagancies. How is the summer there this year? I walk around at home in swimming

¹ I.e., *Spuck* meaning "spit," versus *Spuk* meaning "ghost"

trunks and, if necessary, dressing gown, nothing more. I have not heard anything in detail from Rudi for quite some time. How is he doing? Did he get some rest in his Spring and Summer trip? I will close for today, in the evening I will go to pick up Adele at the train.

Thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 25./VIII. 1959.

157.

Dearest Mama!

Most of all Adele and I wish you all best and love on your birthday. You did write we should not send any birthday greetings but even if one wants no special notice taken, one must treat this birthday the same as all the others. Adele could not be deterred from buying you something particularly lovely (the golden heart) and I hope that you like it. I am glad that your visit to Uncle Karl and Aunt Mizzi satisfied you. You may have written that the trip was strenuous, yet one notices nothing of exhaustion in your handwriting and your manner of expression. Probably the great heat was mainly to blame. We also have not had such a summer in 20 years now. But not the atom bomb but probably the unusually large sun spots are to blame.

The fact that there are still ruins in Munich is astonishing. In the face of all the economic upswing in Germany that should certainly not be necessary. Perhaps there is also a tendentious intent behind it (so that it is not forgotten too quickly). The Autobahns in Germany are surely very good. That reminds me. You used to have an acquaintance named Else in Munich in the First World War. Did you not ever hear anything from her ever again?

I also liked the pictures from Littleton very much. I thought the sunset was particularly splendid. That kind of thing does not exist there at home. But in exchange, the mountains are higher, however. It would have been too cold for me there and I also did not get along badly in Princeton either. I was gladdened every day by our stork and the lovely flowers, and was in the library a lot. Your aversion to powdered milk is incomprehensible to me. It comes from the same fat cows as the other, only it is more concentrated. What do you say to how Eisenhower is looking now? His enemies predicted imminent death for him for years, but it did not help. Recently I heard that

some houses here have swimming pools in the cellars in order to be able to use them in the winter.

I close with thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Dear Rudi!

What with the trip, as Mama describes it and what with the heat it is no wonder that you lost 1½ kg. Your primary destination this time seems to have been Würzburg, but Mama unfortunately writes nothing about what there was to see there. Was the radiology convention interesting?

Many warm regards
Your Kurt.

Warm regards also from Adele. She is in the process of canning the plums from our yard. She wants to reply to your letter soon.

Princeton, 8./XI. 1959.

158.

Dear Mama!

Adele writes me that you two are complaining of not having heard from me so long; but I cannot understand how that is possible. I did write a letter on ca. 25./IX and one in mid-October. So I wrote more frequently than usual. Your last letter is N° 309 of 4./X. Ca. one week ago an envelope came with filters*, but without any other content. I believe that your letter was accidentally not put inside but nothing else has arrived to date.

Adele was very happy that you two took her along on 2 car excursions and treated her to dinner. She writes that she recently spent nearly the entire day with you two at home. Apparently she likes Vienna very much indeed. Her relatives do have a car and she takes the loveliest trips to mountains that I do not even know by name (e.g. the Peilstein). It is very good indeed for her to have a bit of a change of scenery. For, since I do not travel, she never gets to go anywhere here, except this year to New Hampshire, which was spoiled by M^{rs} Mayer. How are you two doing? I have not heard from you in so long, but I glean from Adele's letters that everything is fine with you both. Here everything is going along as normal. The servant cooks very good chickens

and is also very clean. She merely talks a bit too loudly and too much and such gibberish to boot that no one can understand (she is from Italy). But that is not so important after all.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* for which I thank you kindly

Princeton, 6./XII. 1959.

160.

Dearest Mama!

I am glad that my letter of 8./XI. did get there after all. It is really incredible that the very letters of mine from the 15./X. and from the end of Sept. in which I wrote about Adele's trip, or travel plans, were the ones to get lost.* There is actually nothing special about Adele's trip, if one considers that some of my colleagues go over almost every year and take along their wives. It is true that they then usually get their travel costs covered by lectures over there. But since I do not do that, I do not want Adele to be deprived, especially this year when she needed a diversion after the death of her mother. I am sorry that the matter made you feel sad, as I can see by your digging through old memories and reading *Trotzkopf*¹. But probably that was much contributed to by the fact that you were completely without any news from me. Adele's excursion to Germany seems to have been a very great success and especially Aunt Mizzi was quite happy about it, as was clear by the letter you sent. To go by what Adele writes to me, two letters from me to her must have gotten lost, too, by the way. But perhaps she just misplaced them. For, if that were true, one could only explain it by someone at the post office specifically having it in for our letters. Now Adele will be back soon (she wants to depart on the 18th) and I have the impression that the stay did her good in every regard. Her cousin seems to be extremely nice; but you did get to know her yourselves after all.

That the Morgensterns want to sell their house (or actually already have sold it) I heard from him, too. Even though they had just built on a room for her mother recently. But when he bought the first house, he apparently had not

¹ See note to Letter, 18 December 1955

counted on 2 children. By the way, I also do not understand why they did that at their age. The story that I am particularly interested in Karin must come from my having asked Morgenstern whether there was a difference in the mental development during the first years between boys and girls. Some people claim large distinctions for the correct methods of raising the two sexes. Morgenstern recently came to visit me. He has now written a letter about arms buildup, disarmament etc., and gave me a copy of it. He is mainly working in this field now and therefore is constantly at conferences in Washington, etc.

It is grotesque that Adele claims Rudi resembles Aunt Mizzi. How could that be explained? Thank you for the big package of filters. The big ones and the small ones both fit. Many thanks too for the rug. Which one is it? How did Rudi improve his room, that you christened it Schönbrunn? I hope you have a decent maid again. Still, it is probably easier for you to get them than for us here.

Trudi's demand is really strange. In politics it is once again not looking good, in regard to Algiers. I fear the prophecy that I wrote you two years ago will come to pass after all. I got your letters N° 310, 311, 312 just fine. Here there are also Christmas trees already in the city.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* I certainly did mail them

Part 4

Other Worlds

1960–1975

The very first of the 23 famous unsolved problems in mathematics that David Hilbert in 1900 challenged his colleagues to solve was one that would occupy Gödel on and off for the last four decades of his life. In the late nineteenth century the German mathematician Georg Cantor (1845–1918) had established the surprising fact that there are different levels of infinity. The smallest infinite set is the set of counting numbers (1, 2, 3...). But Cantor incisively demonstrated that there are a series of “larger” infinities as well, notably the set of all real numbers (that is, all numbers including fractions and irrational numbers like the square root of 2): he showed that no attempt to make an ordered list of the real numbers can ever include all of the reals.

Cantor’s famous “continuum hypothesis” posited that the set of real numbers is the smallest infinity greater than the set of counting numbers. Hilbert’s No. 1 challenge to his colleagues was to prove Cantor’s hypothesis either true or false.

In 1940, Gödel, in his last major published result in pure mathematics, established that Cantor’s continuum hypothesis is at least *consistent* with the basic axioms of set theory: that is, its *negation* cannot be derived from the axioms—thus it cannot be disproved. For the next 35 years, Gödel continued to work on the second part of the problem: trying to establish whether the hypothesis *can* be proved. In 1963, Paul Cohen, a young American mathematician, sent Gödel his revolutionary proof showing that the continuum hypothesis is in fact independent of the axioms of set theory; that is, it cannot be derived from them. Thus within standard set theory, the continuum hypothesis is a formally undecidable proposition of exactly the kind that Gödel’s famous incompleteness theorem foresaw: a mathematical statement for which neither the statement itself nor its negation can be established.

Gödel reacted with characteristic generosity to being beaten to the result that had so long eluded him. He expressed nothing but excitement and pleasure at Cohen’s discovery, and threw himself immediately into a careful study of the proof, which he then enthusiastically forwarded to the National Academy of

Sciences with his endorsement for publication in the Academy's *Proceedings*. Cohen's work is today regarded as second only to Gödel's as a milestone of twentieth century work on the foundations of mathematics and set theory.

Four of the letters below, written from July to October 1961, are striking for setting out Gödel's religious beliefs—in particular his view that “other worlds,” including an afterlife, exist. He justifies this chiefly by insisting that “that the world and everything in it has meaning and reason . . . So, it follows directly that our earthly existence, since it in and of itself has at most a very dubious meaning, can only be a means to an end for another existence.” It is perhaps characteristic that his argument rests on negative arguments and appeals to consistency. The primitive state of modern philosophy and the scorn of philosophers for even exploring such questions (“after all 90% of today's philosophers see their primary task to be beating thoughts of religion out of peoples' heads, and thus having the same effect in this sense as the bad churches”), he argues, explains why a completely scientific proof of “the theological world view” has not yet been achieved; even so, such a world view, he says, is not inconsistent with “all known facts.”

Referring to a recently published essay in an Austrian Catholic theological journal, he also makes the interesting observation that “it was to be expected” that his incompleteness proof “would be made useful for religion sooner or later, for that is doubtlessly supportable in a certain sense”¹—suggesting that Gödel himself was more open to embracing philosophical ramifications of his theorem than have been his fellow logicians and philosophers, who are almost uniformly critical of such endeavors (though admittedly often with good reason, given the extravagant misuse of Gödel's proof in popular culture in recent years).

Gödel's spiritual views and belief that philosophy and the humanities were more important than science in advancing mankind reinforced his strong antipathy to the Cold War arms race and even to the huge flood of U.S. government funding for science and mathematics unleashed following the shock of the Soviets' launch of Sputnik. As he wrote his mother, “If the progress made in History, Law, Political Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Literature, Art etc. were as large as that in Physics no danger of an atomic war would exist.”² The hardline policies of the Truman Administration in confronting the Soviet Union still loomed large in his political thinking; he appears to have even voted for Richard Nixon for president in 1960, viewing him as the most likely to continue what he considered Eisenhower's far more peaceful policies than those offered by the Democrats. Four months into Kennedy's presidency he

¹ Letter, 20 October 1963

² Letter, 17 March 1962

foresaw with considerable insight where the nation was heading: “As to the new president, one already sees quite clearly where his policies are leading: war in Vietnam, war in Cuba, the Nazis or Fascists here (in the shape of “anti-Communist” organizations) on the rise, more arms build-up, less freedom of the press, no negotiations with Krushchev, etc.”¹ In 1965 he added: “Did you hear about the demonstrations against the war in Vietnam here? They are right!”²

Though his health continued to have ups and downs—and his constant abuse of self-prescribed antibiotics and laxatives were hardly a help—he still found ample time for simple and at times even boyish pleasures and diversions: rereading old sentimental Austrian novels, enjoying Christmas displays of colored lights and the windup toy animals and other kitschy gifts his mother sent, and nostalgically reminiscing over toy catalogues from famous Viennese stores that he asked his mother to send (and from which as boys he and Rudi had been allowed to pick out a Christmas present each year). Though he characteristically had never heard of (his fellow Viennese!) composer Gustav Mahler or Franz Kafka (“a modern writer previously unknown to me”³) he also took a keen interest in and appreciation of modern art that surprised his brother when they took several trips to the Guggenheim and Museum of Modern Art in New York during Rudi’s visits.

Adele was now spending more time traveling on her own, or with friends—to the Jersey Shore, to the White Mountains of New Hampshire, to the spa resort island of Ischia in Italy, to visit her relatives in Vienna—which Gödel insisted he never minded. On the contrary, he explained that he enjoyed the chance to read in solitude; there were, as well, occasional signs of strains in their marital relations which no doubt made her absence a welcome break. In retrospect, his increasing disinclination to travel even for the summer visits to the seaside he had previously set much store by and his growing reclusiveness and social and intellectual isolation were both warning signs of, and contributing factors to, the far more serious descent into paranoid delusion that would overtake his final years.

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¹ Letter, 30 April 1961

² Letter, 21 October 1965

³ Letter, 4 July 1962

Princeton, 3./I. 1960.

161

Dearest Mama!

Yesterday the long awaited letter from you finally came. I had not heard at all from you since 25./XI. and was already worrying that something with your health is not in order and now I hear that it is actually the case. But fortunately, I glean from your letter that it is probably only a cold. Adele was also so hoarse when she got here that she almost could not talk, and it took 1½ weeks until it passed. She said that it is going around in Vienna and that Martha had the same thing.

The bear that you sent is really enormously charming. He stops now and then and looks around. But devouring someone is not something you can imagine of him. Adele was very happy about the Viennese cigarettes and smoked them all up in a short time. We have already been notified of the shipping of the rug. Before Christmas it was of course quite a hunting expedition here, since Adele came home so shortly beforehand and was sick on top of that. That is also the reason why I only sent a Christmas card up to now. You write by the way nothing of whether you received it and also nothing of my letter that I sent ca. on 10./XII. Hopefully not everything that I send gets lost. Adele wrote to you two a couple of days ago. We had a really delightful tree in spite of everything. I found it to be the loveliest of many years, because it was exactly the right size (1½ m with the stand). Adele is much more content since her return. She really needed this diversion. The book by Nachtmann must be very interesting. In which century does it begin? and does he say something about the origin of the city?

I hope to hear from you soon that you are once again quite well and remain with thousand *Bussis*.

ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards also to Rudi and Eva.

[vertically in margin:] Adele sends thousand *Bussi* too

Princeton, 7.II. 1960.

163

Dearest Mama!

I wanted to set it up so that Adele and I write to you alternatingly so you get news more frequently but since I once again have not written for a month, I will put one of mine into this letter of Adele's. The fact that the mail to Vienna is functioning so irregularly now and my Christmas card and my letter from Dec. were lost once again is really quite baffling to me. Your letters (on the basis of the numbers) all arrived up to now. (315 was the last one.) The enclosed color pictures are really wonderful, especially the one where you are sitting at the desk and the one with Rudi; an excellent likeness of Rudi in it, too. Was that taken with an automatic shutter? Going by these pictures one would absolutely not say that you feel old, and also Adele did not find that from your appearance either. The desk also looks very sweet. What kind of charming little creature is that on it? And what is the row of identically-bound books in Rudi's bookcase?

Adele scrubbed the rug splendidly, with "Glamourine." Does that exist there too? It seems to me it is much more beautiful now than it ever was at our house. It now looks much more even. If I remember correctly, wasn't it on the floor of the study in the villa? So the lexicons from the bookcase that stood next to it are also here now, too. I would never have dreamt it back then when I went to "*Realgymnasium*." As to the book by Nachtmann, I can imagine that it was interesting for you, since you experienced much of it yourself. For me the most interesting would be mainly the very oldest history but there is probably very little about that in it. But there are at any rate interesting questions how and when the Teutons, or rather the Czechs, came into these countries, that then probably are answered differently by German and Czech historians. You mention a "Swastika Affair" but there have been very many of those lately. I did already write you the connection I see there. De Gaulle himself may not be any anti-Semite and perhaps even a man with good intentions, but fascism remains fascism and leads to nothing good, even if the connections sometimes are not obvious.

That the *Berliner Schnauze*¹ still exists after all that has happened is astonishing.

The colored lights on the Christmas trees I actually always found quite pretty and picturesque, provided the colors are well-chosen. The only thing lacking is the pine needle aroma of the burning candles that only then conjure up the true ambiance of Christmas. What is the topic of the "Tiger-Bay"

¹ The stereotypical rudeness and outspokenness of native Berliners

movie¹ that you praise so? You haven't written anything specific about your travel plans yet.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards to Rudi. I hope our birthday telegram did not also get lost.

Princeton, 6./III.1960.

164

Dearest Mama!

I will write to you only very briefly so this letter will get mailed yet today. Of the two guidebooks that Rudi asked for the one about Washington is unfortunately out of print (perhaps I can get it in a used-book store). The one for Florida I will send today via airmail. You will presumably already have received Adele's package. Adele feared that Aunt Mizzi is ill since she is not writing to Martha. But surely you two would know that.

Thousand *Bussis* from me and Adele and hopefully until we see each other again soon

ever Your Kurt

P.S. Adele will write to you two soon, too.

Princeton, 6./VII. 1960

165

Dearest Mama!

Just now your little letter № 323 from Kreuzstein and Vienna arrived and I want to answer it immediately this time, for you are once again 14 days without news from us and you are obviously very worried. Adele composed a letter to you a week ago but then the final copying and posting was delayed. I collated all the latest letters from you and see that the numbering has gotten a

¹ 1959 British crime drama starring Horst Buchholz (known as "the German James Dean")

bit out of order. Also there seems to be something missing in your last letter (323), since one page has no matching continuation. But probably you were merely interrupted while writing. I unfortunately have the impression that you are rather melancholy and depressed, and assume that has to do with my state of health. Now, that is of course quite understandable, but on the other hand you must consider that what you principally have in mind are the small quantities I eat. But here you saw in addition that I eat with an excellent appetite and that I do not feel at all weak or depressed. Yes, I even believe that I was in better spirits than during your first stay. Also my mental capability is greater than ever (which surprises even myself). So what I eat does seem to suffice in keeping me up to speed (although to this point not for gaining weight). I still keep up with lying out in the yard and eat somewhat more from time to time. Many thanks for the enema tube and the Pancreon. I have found something lately that works almost as well as an enema, namely Milk of Magnesia on an empty stomach (before, I took it after breakfast). But I will soon also try enemas. I go to Dr. Ehrenreich tomorrow. The card from Kreuzstein is wonderful. What a pity that you two had to escape the weather. But with that notorious Salzkammergut you two actually had great good fortune if that had never happened to you before. I am already looking forward to both the books that are sure to interest me very much.

Mimi I must have probably met in person once (I even seem to recall it vaguely), hence her allusion to the “unknown woman” of mathematicians. It is sad that Trudl is so nervous and worn down. That must have to do (as in most of the cases) with pecuniary difficulties? Adele got nothing from her yet. In the part of Faust that you quote and which I of course remember very clearly from my schooldays, the devil makes a rather benevolent and harmless impression, as we know. There is a good side to the Japanese protesting the “arms build-up agreement” with America. One sees that pacifism is increasing. Also that the nations are starting to get along (as e.g. the Khrushchev visit in Vienna and the conciliatory editorial that you sent me show), about which I also find nothing bad. That in Austria there are “Communist masses” is news to me, by the way. Before, one could count the Communists on one hand. The art magazine that came for Rudi from the Metropolitan Museum we sent off via airmail a few days ago. How did the rest of the colored pictures turn out and above all the movies that Rudi did here?

Yes, that was indeed nice whenever we laid about on the sofa together all wrapped up! But now we have at least a sweet memory to keep us going and besides which America and Europe are getting closer to one another all the time, after all. It is already (unbelievable!) actually so that one can have *Jause* in Paris and supper (on the same day) in New York (however the time

difference does play a part). Many thousand *Bussis* (also from Adele)
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Today and yesterday I had a very good appetite and ate very much chicken meat with chicken soup, toast and lots of butter.
Many warm regards to Rudi from Adele and me.

Radiogram

31 VIII 60

marianne goedel 81 Lerchenfelder strasse Vienna
happy birthday thanks for long letter I am still getting along fine thousand
bussis kurt and adele

Princeton, 11./IX. 1960.

166

Dearest Mama!

Today I want to finally answer your long letters N° 324, 325 (of 10. July and 16. Aug) just as extensively (since then I unfortunately have not received anything from you). I am sorry to hear that you are not doing well with your intestine again. I presume that this is mainly due to nerves and probably connected with your America trip etc. For something like that is in one sense an “upset” even if a pleasant one. I notice by the way that particularly in the last letters, you have an especially lovely and even hand, by which one would take you for 50 at the most and completely healthy. I am now doing, as I already wrote, just fine with my stomach and I also notice that I have gained a bit of weight. My lifestyle did change a bit, insofar as I lie in the yard a couple of hours every day. This year there was by the way quite exceptionally good weather. For usually it is oppressively muggy by day in the summer and in the evening the mosquitos come. Both were not at all the case this year. Such a

summer I have really never ever experienced in Princeton (which my acquaintances confirm too).

I have now read some of the book about Brünn. You say that A[unt] Pauline's landlord (what was his name, actually? Habermann??) wrote it but there were actually any number of different authors, of whom each one only contributed a very small part, which however was not an issue. Regarding the immigration of the Czechs, I found interesting that they came as "unfree ones" into the country, i.e., obviously that they were made slaves by the Teutons or Huns or Auar during raids and then bought or otherwise "acquired" by Germans living in Bohemia. The word "*Slawe*" is obviously linguistically the same as "*Sklave*"¹. Naturally all that must have happened in the mists of time about which one has no kind of clear information. Aside from the first chapters I only had a look at the one about education and lessons. That contains an interesting segment about the first German *Gymnasium*. This had a surprisingly long and glorious past, was founded as early as 1578! Regarding the *Realgymnasium* however, not a word! Probably its past is insufficiently glorious or even inglorious, which would, given the conditions at the time I attended it, not surprise me at all. I do find, however, it is an error that nothing at all about it is in there. It should at least be said on which impetus and on whose behest it was founded, how it developed, etc. In fact I think the information in the book is often quite incomplete. About the gymnastics club, the rescue company etc. there is a long segment, but the name of Grandpapa is, as far as I saw, only mentioned once and without any commentary. Very lovely is the insert with pictures. The entire thing is very German-nationalistic and is meant to be a preparation for a re-occupation of Brünn by the Germans after conquest of Czechoslovakia. See the motto on page 341 "As long as history speaks, iniquity never has the last word etc." One can of course never know what kind of surprises world history still holds but until then it can still take quite a long time, anyway.

That Hilde turned 60 is again one of those unbelievable facts. I would really enormously like to read a letter of hers sometime. Where is the large apartment of her cousin with the terrace? and why can she afford it? via the rent control? Yes, I still remember those good apricot dumplings, too! What tastes best to me is the mixture of breadcrumbs, butter, and sugar with which they were covered. In fact over the course of time, one comes to realize that the simplest foods are the best ones. E.g. I found recently that butter mixed with the right proportions of powdered sugar tastes better than the finest torte

¹ "Slav" and "Slave"

crème*. And then women stand there and mix according to a recipe a hundred things and stir them, heat them, cool them off etc. and all that is redundant.

That Veblen died is quite sad. He was the last professor from the old guard i.e. of those who were instrumental in founding the Institute. The only other one who is still alive¹ broke off his relationship with the Institute many years ago.

If I understood you correctly, I am to send back the book about Brünn. Please write me something definite about that!

12./IX. Just now came your letter 325 (up to) of 7./IX. Since you have been here twice it is no longer justifiable for you to complain that I do not come to Vienna. Actually it was in fact much nicer and more interesting for you than if I had come over there!

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

*of course only if the butter is as good as here

P.S. I still think wistfully of our cozy afternoon chats in the little room. If you came here again now you would certainly think of a number of other things you could tell me.

Another thousand *Bussis*
from your Kurt

Princeton, 18./XI. 1960

167

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letter of 20./X. I heard about your boil from Adele, who also wrote me soon afterward that it was over again quickly. You had boils to deal with at least 3 times before. The salve that you used was probably an antibiotic. Those are these new miracle drugs that made the abscess beneath my nail disappear in no time. Last time I forgot to enclose Hilde's letter, so I will do it today. That my last letter was written in a cranky tone is absolutely a false impression. For I was not cranky at all when I wrote it, I merely feared

¹ The mathematician James Waddell Alexander (1888–1971), who after his retirement from IAS in 1951 cut off all contact with the mathematical world, in part because of his left-wing political views that had brought him under suspicion in the McCarthy era

that another disagreement could come about between you two and Adele, which then naturally would have a very unfavorable effect on our life here. I admit that some things about Adele can be criticized but the trips to Vienna are the least of them. Besides which it is unfortunately altogether wrong if one seeks to correct these things by reproaching her, which, given her abnormal attitude, only makes it ten times worse. By the way it would be good if you now write me nothing more about it for Adele is coming back very soon, I believe ca. on the 5./XII. At any rate I was very happy that you all, as Adele writes, spent a very nice Sunday afternoon with her at her relatives. I think it really very pleasant to have the kind of relatives that are not in constant financial straits. Did you have a look at the printing press and their two houses? The elections here unfortunately did not go in favor of the man who would have continued Eisenhower policies to a certain degree. However, they want to do "recounts" in 8 states because the majority is so close, so that the results could still turn themselves around. Perhaps that will at least have the result that one will have to consider the views of the other party. That could have the consequence that absolutely nothing happens, which in foreign policy is in many cases the best thing anyway. You write that Chr. walked in the footsteps of Hitler, but I do not know who that is. I believe by the way that the danger lies rather in the German-nationalists, in the sense of Wilhelm II, coming back to power one day, particularly if America should be come distracted due to inner disputes. I now have had the 8 pictures that Rudi shot here copied and send you one as a sample (Please return it). I find that the colors turned out rather well, at any rate better than on the copies of Rudi's that I saw till now. With my stomach I am doing tolerably well, I take less bicarbonate than before. At any rate it seems to me that I am looking somewhat better in the past few weeks. D^r Hulbeck also told me that when I saw him recently. I would like to send back the book about Brünn and Rudi's picture whenever Adele is back here since making little packages is her specialty. By the way, I got a letter from Uncle Karl and one from Aunt Mizzi to you here that you probably would like to have back?

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. I find the enclosed picture is also particularly pretty aside from the colors.

Princeton, 16./XII. 1960.

168

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for both your letters of 3. and 27./XI. You already heard about Adele's trip and arrival from her herself. The trip in the sleeping car to Frankfurt was apparently so unpleasant due to the same storm that prevented the jet from taking off. One still has to be astonished at the speed of jets. It departed at 2.30 p.m. European time from Frankfurt and arrived here at 5.10 New York time. Unbelievable! She liked her relatives in Frankfurt very much, especially the child, but due to the disrupted arrangement she naturally did not see much of them. I find Adele looking very fresh and chipper and she says that she feels much better now than before. I am of course very happy that she is cooking for me again. Lately I have been eating almost only eggs but yesterday and today I took delight in a splendid chicken. By the way I unfortunately had a touch of the gripe right after Adele's return, with temperature and nausea, but it was over in two days with antibiotics and now I actually feel better than before, as always when I take antibiotics. Adele naturally told me quite a lot about Vienna, how nice the shows and theater visits and the afternoon in Baden were, and above all the trip to Germany. She also regretted that she saw you so little during her entire stay. She has also been to the theater here once already, and of course I am very happy that she entertains herself. It was something very funny, a parody of Shakespeare staged by students. About the movie "Wild Cats" you unfortunately write nothing further. Here we are battling natural disasters. We were also snowed in, so that no taxi and no milk could make it to our house. Now it is fine again but it is already starting to snow once more and the grocery stores are besieged and one cannot get what one wants. The picture whose copy I sent I too liked particularly much, but not due to the colors but instead because it was such a good likeness of all of us (even of me) and everyone is looking into the camera so friendly and "happy." It is really uncommonly good and that must be visible even on a poorer copy. But I will at any rate have another one made here. The Christmas mood is of course quite disrupted by the storm. You have to be glad if you get a taxi or milk. This year there was rather "overly" white Christmas. But I hope that by Christmas it will all be fine again. I only hope that no political turmoil breaks out over the election fraud. Pure nylon shirts Adele was unable to scare up. They are clearly out of stock here too. But I will

ask in a quite elegant shop. Who is “Mahler” whose widow’s¹ birthday is on 31./VIII.? What is actually wrong with Hanna Morgensten that she never makes an appearance? As to the local political situation there is only the one good thing, that we still have Eisenhower. He would nip any unrest in the bud immediately. I think in fact that one underestimates what he has done in the past 8 years for humanity. When he leaves some things will take a turn for the worse, particularly regarding world peace.

Adele and I wish you and Rudi a lovely and enjoyable Christmas and a Happy New Year.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for you dear letter. Do choose the pictures primarily for how good they are please. Really good pictures of people are something I like very much. *Ceteris paribus*² pictures from New York are my favorite.

With many warm regards from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 25./I. 1961

162

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for both your letters of 2 and 12 Jan. and the letters to Adele. Adele will reply to you somewhat later, so you get news from us every 14 days. Many *Bussi* also for the wonderfully beautiful neckscarf. Christmas and New Year’s Eve we celebrated as usual alone and cozy and Adele particularly enjoyed it due to the new television set. The Christmas card to you I was unable to choose myself this year, unfortunately, because at that point I was in bed with the gripe and could not go out several days afterward either due to

¹ Alma Mahler (1879–1964), Viennese writer, composer, society figure, widow of composer Gustav Mahler, whom KG characteristically had never heard of. She was subsequently married to the architect Walter Gropius and the poet Franz Werfel

² Latin: “other things equal”

the weather. So I took it from among the cards that Adele had purchased, but found it quite sweet, even if not specifically American. As to the attack of the grippé (or whatever it was), it is really unbelievable how well it worked out. I now am eating substantially more lately even frequently a second breakfast and a "night" meal at 3 am. I no longer feel the acidic pain in the night but rather merely hunger pangs and whenever I eat something, breakfast still tastes just as good. Today and yesterday I had wiener schnitzel for lunch with mashed potatoes and compote and felt very good afterward. I take significantly less bicarbonate and my digestion mainly functions normally again, i.e., laxatives do not result in diarrhea. The improvement did, as a matter of fact, set in for the most part quite suddenly after the (?)flu. I felt so nauseous that one day from early in the morning till the evening I constantly thought I would have to vomit, then I just had diarrhea and at the same time 37.5 [99.5 F] Some toxin or another must have disgorged itself, even if the doctors would probably deny it.

The New Year's Eve you two spent must have been quite entertaining and similar to those that we sometimes had many years ago. That you are brooding and living in the past is a very old phenomenon for you. As to the Badhausgasse, I cannot recall having found it so horrible. Quite the opposite: I find such "idylls" in cities to be quaint.

Rudi's pictures arrived today and we are already looking forward to having a look at them with the Argus Viewer. I brought the pictures from you in for copying yesterday and will send them off right away to you together with the book about Brünn. Please excuse that it has taken so long. Was Rudi able to get any good out of that nylon shirt that was too big? There was only one left of the right size and none could be ordered because they are no longer being made. (Why??). We could still send a few of the larger ones. What is actually the matter with Trudl, that her behavior has changed so?? Is it not in the final analysis simply the financial straits in which she finds herself, after all? The fact that the stores there were overrun at Christmas is truly nothing but a good sign, if one compares it with pre-war times. Then did not those cranky and careworn faces that one sees everywhere on the streets of Vienna transform themselves for the better? What you write about the tiger and the crocodile in the movie is really unbelievable and must have been very interesting. I did not know that a tiger is so intelligent.

The weather here is horrible this year. In some locations it is 35° degrees below zero [-31 F] and even here today it was [-]15° [5 F] and it is also snowing a lot so apparently the opposite of the weather you two are having. Now I plan to attend the theater more frequently. There is now to be a Shakespeare series. So I want to see Hamlet which I have never seen. In

addition the old movie “The Phantom of the Opera” will be shown, too. That was indeed a particularly good movie; do you not recall? For today nothing more interesting occurs to me to write. Until the next time Kennedy will likely see to it I do.

With thousand *Bussis* from both of us
ever Your Kurt
[in Adele's hand:] and ever Your Adele

Princeton, 18./III. 1961.

169

Dearest Mama!

So this is the promised letter. I certainly let you wait long enough this time, but entirely contrary to my intent. Adele was quite well-behaved, in that she already composed one to you 10 days after my last letter, but then the posting was delayed due to the “breakdown” in the typewriter. Many thanks for your letters N° 331, 332. With my stomach I am continuing to do well. Now I only take one (instead of 2) Gelucil tablets per day without negative effects. And today I began again with the whole grain bread because I noticed that white bread constipates very much and even that does not affect me except that it improves my appetite even more. I also always go to bed very early (just like Rudi) but in exchange I get up fairly earlier and go to the Institute an hour earlier than I used to. I am actually much more content with this way of life than with my previous one. The winter does not want to quit here this year. Now it was [-] 7° again [19 F]. But I'm used to that. Then overnight it suddenly gets not get warm but hot. Did they really make a movie of Faust with the word for word text by Goethe?? That would certainly prove that it is possible to use cinema for true art. I still recall lively discussions with you two in which you both contested it. The plot in “Phantom of the Opera” is entirely silly but the makeup is very good in several scenes and really horrific. But unfortunately they cut those very parts out of the film here. I can absolutely not recall having ever read and liked Der Klosterjäger by Ganghofer¹. Are you not mistaken? I did not see Hamlet since the cast was not good. I prefer to read it, since one gets more out of that anyway.

¹ “The Monastery's Hunter,” a historical novel set in 14th century Bavaria; see also note to Letter, 23 March 1957

At public occasions here (and in England) there is much praying. I wrote you before, during my first stay in the U.S.A., that the attitude toward religion here is a very different one, which has alone resulted in no fewer than 5 religions (or sects) having been founded here over the last 100 years with as many 100 000 and some with millions of followers. One should conclude by the wealth here and the general upward mobility that this attitude has favorable results. In Europe religion is making itself more noticeable, though not as a conviction but rather in the form of Catholic political parties, which is clearly harmful.

It completely escaped my memory that I had promised you the Seelog¹ book about Einstein. I have both his books in the German edition here. In one of them I am not mentioned but in the other one quite briefly in the contribution by Ernst Strauss². Probably you have seen a new edition of this book ("Helle Zeit, dunkle Zeit") ["Bright Time, Dark Time"]. I think it very odd, by the way, that my letters were published³ without asking me. I would have dearly loved to have been there for the clearing out of old photos! I do like to dig around in the past, too. Were there any others among them taken on the trips with Uncle Gustav and the first pictures of the yard? As to the political-military activity of Morgenstern, to which he has devoted himself in the past few years almost as his main career, I have to say that it does not make me happy at all. I do not want to malign his good intentions, but what he says usually boils down to increased arms buildup and aggression against Russia, which I deem harmful in the current situation. I hope your bladder inflammation was soon over. That sort of thing can be quickly rid of today with antibiotics.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Adele sends you likewise many *Bussis* and little caresses

¹ Carl Seelig (1894–1962), Swiss journalist, novelist, and critic; author and editor of several books about Einstein

² Ernst Straus (1922–1983), German born mathematician who was Einstein's assistant at IAS, 1944–1948

³ Seelig wrote to KG in 1955 asking about his association with Einstein and quoted his replies at length in his 1960 book *Albert Einstein: Leben und Werk eines Genies unserer Zeit* ["Life and Work of a Genius of Our Time"]

Princeton, 20./III. 1961

170

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your [last] letter and the pretty photos. The 8 color films you left here I will be sending now via airmail along with the copies. How is it going now with the Radiology Inst.? Is it being relocated? You are quite right that a gen[etic] predisposition of Trudl would more likely be possible from the clinical side; but as to Hans I always heard that he committed suicide due to an encroaching paralysis. Or was that only an excuse?? Trude's suggestion to Mama was also highly odd. She is intelligent, so how could she believe that there was some kind of chance for success with that??

With many warm regards

Your Kurt

Many warm regards also from Adele

P.S. It would interest me when Adele's last letter arrived. I put it into the mail Thursday 9./III. in New York and it should have been in your hands on Friday 10./III.

Princeton, 30./IV. 1961

171

Dearest Mama!

Most of all I thank you for the birthday wishes, the pictures and the letter with the charming four leaf clovers that even up to now look quite fresh. I don't understand that you still did not have Adele's letter yet on the 21st, but surely it will be there before you two leave on the 26th. You probably were not happy with us not going to Otto's gathering. But since I in fact practically never go to parties, attending only this one would have looked rather odd. Oppenheimer was invited too by the way and did not go, even without declining, and here, especially at the Institute, people don't have much time for aristocracy. I do not believe Morgenstern wants to join the government, but his subject itself puts him into contact with these things, in particular the direction to which the late Prof of the Institute, v. Neumann, had pushed him.

I was enormously happy about the pictures that you two sent, even if such old memories always naturally make one very sad. I had already completely forgotten that these pictures were so sweet. The view into the valley of Obřan, e.g. is really quiet delightful as is the picture where you are sitting up in the

garden under the umbrella. Also the distance shot of Lutz's car is very charming. Yes, now I am already 55 and have lived longer in our house here than I did in the villa! But nonetheless the duration of time back then seems much longer than the one here. The last visit you two made here has already been a year ago!

A Wachau trip in Spring must indeed be lovely. Were you not also on Hauptallee? Hopefully you had lovely weather in Salzburg and Kitzbühel.

Here the cold is lasting incredibly long this year. There is still no prospect of lying outdoors, and one always needs a warm coat if one goes out. You should be well-satisfied by Adele's letter that I am really doing much better health-wise.

So now I have actually read Hamlet, but find it not to be a particularly gripping or interesting play. The most interesting about it is that the various critics and literary historians are still so at odds in their interpretation of Hamlet's character. Entire inkpots were expended writing about it, so they say. Some maintain that he was a weakling, yet others say that he was right in hesitating and that he was destroyed by the unfortunate chain of events and as a result of being torn between a Christian and a Germanic *Weltanschauung*. It seems to me that the second interpretation is much more justified and deeper. Naturally, Goethe positions himself, as usual, on the wrong side. Recently I read an interesting assessment by a philosopher of Faust Part II, by the way. He says it was a garbage can into which Goethe threw all the reminiscences from his life and reading combined. I cannot judge that for myself because I did not read it. But it could very well be correct, for the same philosopher gives an extremely favorable assessment of Faust Part I, therefore he is clearly not predisposed against Goethe. As to Hamlet, there is also a psychoanalytic interpretation, by the way, which ascribes Hamlet's indecision to the Oedipus complex, but Shakespeare will scarcely have thought of that, not even in his subconscious. Just today the Sunday paper said that recently another book with a new Hamlet interpretation was published and that this one has been used as the basis for the recent performances in New York. It does not concur exactly with either of the two abovementioned ones, but is much closer to the second one.

Why was Mami reported by a seamstress? You absolutely have to write me the details on that! As to the new president, one already sees quite clearly where his policies are leading: war in Vietnam, war in Cuba, the Nazis or Fascists here (in the shape of "anti-Communist" organizations) on the rise, more arms build-up, less freedom of the press, no negotiations with Krushchev, etc. In our yard everything really looks spic and span and the magnolia blossom time was glorious.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi
 ever Your Kurt
 Thousand *Bussis* also from Adele

Radiogram
 14 V 61
 marianne goedel 81 Lechenfelderstr vienna
 much love for mother's day 1000 kisses
 kurt and adele

Princeton, 28./V. 1961. 172

Dearest Mama!

I was very happy that the stay you two had in Kitzbühel was such a success. Just living in a villa is something in and of itself, which thrills me too; in Aflent we had similar lodgings. Where did you actually eat usually? Yes, I remember the name "Achernsee" very well from my childhood, however even more the sandheap where I always played in Mayrhofen.

As to politics, my view is being ever more confirmed. For yet another revolution (in Korea) has taken place. Something like would have had no point under Eisenhower, because he would have very soon reestablished law and order, e.g., just as he did during the Suez crisis in 1956 even against the will of France and England. But Kennedy is rather lax with law and order. Now he is to even pay you a visit there in Vienna soon. I read recently that there are not enough hotels for the 2000 reporters and that many must lodge privately (with bugs?). That the mail service with the U.S. is to be disrupted in the coming years I definitely do not believe, for each side is too afraid of a large war. Here it is finally starting to warm up, but yesterday in many places it was again below freezing (already nearly June!). I am always surprised anew how lovely and lush the green is here in the Spring; I believe something like that does not exist at home at all. Yes, the local beauties of Nature I wrote you about back in 1933 have remained, the others have sadly disappeared in large part as you two saw, e.g., in the filthy train from Princeton to Princeton Junction. Among these things also belongs e.g. the fact that an advertisement "white maid sought" is not accepted by the newspapers because that could be

discrimination against the Negroes. If one then asks on the telephone if the person in question is white or black, everyone says “black” because the whites are afraid to use their race to their advantage (that is seen as unfair).

Something like that would have been quite impossible even in 1933. Since the second World War the general circumstances are approximating Europe more and more and Kennedy will probably make the still-existent differences disappear.

Adele has taken back the same maid that she had before Mary. She is honest and works very obediently. She only has the unpleasant habit of speaking much too loudly but Adele can escape that by going into the yard or into town.

The newspaper clipping concerns an issue that occurs 100 times. If that were a correct solution of Fermat’s Conjecture¹, the person in question would only have to go to the Mathemat. Seminar on Strudelhofgasse, and if he speaks sensibly he could certainly make himself heard. For it would certainly be good advertising for Austria if this problem could be solved by an actual Austrian. But usually one sees from the speeches of these people from the outset or from the first pages of their papers or from the information about their person that they understand nothing of the matter or that they are such muddle-heads that one can expect nothing of them.

Recently I read a novella by Gogol and was quite surprised at how good it was. I once previously started reading Dostojewski but found that his art mainly consists of depressing his readers, but that is something a person can gladly do without. I do not believe at any rate that German literature is the best of world literature. What do you have to say about Castro wanting to release his prisoners in exchange for delivery of tractors? Something quite similar Hitler is said to have offered regarding the Jews, which Eichmann mentions in his defense.

I hope that you and your intestine and Rudi and his cough are fine once again. How one can return from Tyrolia, with its good air, with a cough I do not understand.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Many *Bussis* and regards also from Adele to you and Rudi. Our yard is more beautiful than ever again this year.

¹ The proposition of the French mathematician Pierre de Fermat (1607–1665) that no three positive integers a , b , and c can satisfy the equation $a^n + b^n = c^n$ for any integer n greater than 2. It was finally proved in 1994

Princeton, 25./VI. 1961.

173

Dearest Mama!

If I am not mistaken, my last letter was on 27./V., thus exactly 4 weeks ago. The first 3 weeks of this time I had a fat book to read that was loaned out from a libr. in Washington for only a limited time; and since a week ago a man is here for 14 days whose work builds directly on mine and with whom I therefore have much to discuss. Both kept me extremely busy, naturally. Health-wise I continue doing thoroughly fine. I can eat whole grain bread and soup without it harming me and I could probably already start up again with coffee but tea with milk now tastes better to me.

Since my last letter I received 3 letters (336, 337 and the one from Velden) from you of which the first one crossed mine.

You two have had two other lovely stays at Semmering and in Velden since then. Rudi's postcard from Velden was particularly pretty and your description of the balcony in the hotel as always very enticing. You probably always stay in the same hotel?

You write about Hilde that she acted oddly at Else's, but not how and why. I had the impression that she had just become more contented via her religiosity and therefore was viewing life more normally than before.

Car accidents exist here aplenty too. Now they are experimenting with steering the cars automatically from a central location by wireless telegraphy for the streets with the most traffic, so that one only has to get in and turn on the mechanism; but I cannot imagine that one would feel particularly safe doing so.

You are right in that it is difficult to find a connection to Shakespeare. One always forgets that he lived 1564–1616, so almost still in the Middle Ages. Back then the *Weltanschauung* and the problems that occupied humanity were quite different ones. Some things by Gogol are really quite horrific, but others only depict, in part caricatured, the societal circumstances in Russia and thus are very interesting. Many thanks for Uncle Karl's letter, that I am returning enclosed. We recently got a very kind letter from him and A[unt] Trude, in which they wrote, among other things, that little Trude's depressions had finally been overcome, which was very good to hear, indeed.

I find the Eichmann trial (going by the little I have heard about it) not particularly of interest. He is surely right that previous good Nazis now occupy high positions in Germany. Today I read that many millions of dollars are in Switzerland whose owners and descendants were killed in the concentration camps. So the government of Israel now means to claim them. But how can they prove in individual cases who the owner was or is, if one was able to open accounts under random assumed names? Will one even learn

the truth about the origin of Rockefeller's wealth in the book you mentioned? To my knowledge it was oil wells. But perhaps he siphoned off extensive properties bit by bit from the government or private persons for easy money, back when he already knew oil was to be had there. You are right that Kennedy has a very likable boyish face. It does seem in fact that he is a "enfant terrible" in his own party, which is not the worst thing, because the parties themselves are often very bad. Whether or not he will become somewhat too "terrible" also for those on the outside is another question. By the way he now looks much more appealing than before the election and I believe Adele is right that he sometimes has a rather furtive expression in his eyes. As to Oppenheimer's not declining, it is quite in keeping with the local customs. Please do not worry yourself over my birthday. We only rarely ever sent anything to Rudi, after all. In response to your question about my wish list, it would make me very happy if you could send me in the Fall the price catalogue (or at least brochures) from Mühlhauser or Niessner or their successors. It would interest me greatly to see what kind of progress the toy industry has made in the last 45 years. Are there not also already little atom bombs for children? Penny is still just as charming as ever and greets Adele every morning. I only see her rarely, however.

Thanks very much for the lovely picture taken on the balcony. I think that is the best picture that was ever taken of me. Is that from 1939?

Adele does want to visit her acquaintance in Ischia. To conclude from a postcard it must be really very lovely there and indeed, Italy is quite worth seeing. Adele would like to travel by ship. The voyage to Italy in the summer is usually quite calm, so that one can truly enjoy it. I believe the change of scenery and the new impressions would do her much good. The last few weeks she unfortunately had bursitis in her arm (probabl. due to too much work in the yard). Thankfully the pain was only intense during the first days. I hope you and Rudi are doing well health-wise and otherwise too

and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

Many *Bussis* from Adele. She will also write soon.

Princeton, 23./VII. 1961.

174

Dearest Mama!

Your letter of 11./VII. got here at the right time. I was beginning to worry due to the long break in writing whether in the end something was perhaps not right with your health, but thankfully everything seems to be in order. I hope you were not unpleasantly surprised about Adele's Italy trip. Actually, it is nothing special to travel somewhere once a year. Before, I always went with Adele to the seaside after all, which was also not cheap. Since I no longer do that, it is surely quite natural that she go on her own. I already saw Italy myself and am well cared for here. A couple of days ago our temporary help made me a fish that was really quite excellent and did my stomach better than anything else had for a long time. For this year a very hot and long summer is forecast and so I am doubly glad that Adele is not here, for the heat always makes her very nervous, as I already wrote you. Of the trip and of Ischia, Adele wrote very enthusiastically. In Ischia she likes it so well that for the time being she has no desire to go anywhere else. She eats at M^{rs} Sasso's and lives at her brother's who by the way seems to have a fairly large house. Probably they are taking great care over her well-being which certainly will have a favorable effect on her spirits (even after her return), just as M^{rs} Sasso (even here) always has a surprisingly favorable influence on her. What her further travel plans will be, even she herself does not know. Genoa she saw on the trip over. Naples and Rome she will probably want to see, too. But whether she will come to Vienna is not certain yet. In total she wants to stay away 3 months again, i.e., until beg[inning] October. I live rather alone here and am occupied all day with reading and working, but that is the very way I feel the best. Morgenstern I see lately very seldomly, but whenever I meet him, he is always extremely nice. As to my "normal" food, I naturally do not always eat as much as before this whole business. For lunch e.g. I leave off the vegetable soup that I always had before. But at any rate I eat enough to gain weight and that is the thing that matters. I have not replied to Uncle Karl yet. He probably does not expect an immediate answer, for he also just wrote a few months ago, after all. Why do you write that Hilde is not religious? Did you not tell me that she had joined some kind of a sect? Regarding Berlin, I have no fear that a war could break out. For Krushchev will definitely not risk any world war. Much more dangerous is Algiers and Tunis, for that could remain a local war (in Tunis it has already begun).

As to toys, there surely must be some kind of large stores with catalogues (in case Mühlhauser and Niessner no longer exist). Pichler's widow was a third, by the way. Probably the Vienna phone book has a business section, too, where one could find the addresses.

So Richard already has managed to get where his father was back when we had dealings with him. How quickly that goes!

You pose in your last letter the momentous question if I believe that we shall meet again¹. About that I can only say the following: If the world is set up rationally and has a meaning, then that must be so. For what kind of a sense would there be in bringing forth a creature (man), who has such a broad field of possibilities of his own development and of relationships to others, and then not allow him to achieve 1/1000 of it. That would be approximately as if someone laid the foundation for a house with much effort and expenditure of money, then let everything go to ruin again. Does one have a reason to assume that the world is set up rationally? I believe so. For it is certainly not chaotic and arbitrary, but rather, as science shows, the greatest regularity and order reign in everything. Order is, however, a form of rationality. How is another life to be imagined? About that there is of course only conjecture. But it is interesting that it should be modern science that offers support for it. For it shows that this world of ours with all the stars and planets that are in it, had a beginning, and with all likelihood will also have an end.* Why should there then be but only this one world? and since we found ourselves in this world one fine day without knowing why and from where, the same thing can repeat itself the same way in another one. Science confirms at any rate the end of the world prophesied in the last book of the Bible and leaves room for that which will then follow: "And God created a new Heaven and a new Earth." Naturally one can ask: why this duplication if the world has been set up rationally? But for this too there are very good answers. So, now I have given you a philosophical lecture and hope you found it comprehensible.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

* i.e., literally will become “nothing”

P.S. Adele also sends warm regards to you two; she also already wrote you both a card. Her address is c/o Mrs. Mary Sasso, Via Antonio de Luca No. 5, Casalauro, Isola d'Ischia, Prov. di Napoli, Italy

¹ I.e., in an afterlife

Princeton, 14./VIII. 1961. 175

Dearest Mama!

Your long little letter N° 339 I received and thank you for the pretty winter photos of the yard. Yes, sledding was my passion back then, I still recall it well. You need not give yourself any worries about my being poorly cared for here. The girl is a very good cook. Besides, she herself has stomach issues and therefore knows how one must cook so that is easily digestible. Fish, chicken, and lamb cutlets are always very tender and also tasty, even though made entirely without spices. There is no question therefore of my having to subsist on canned goods or eggs. The loud talking of Mrs. Ruberto* (that is her name) does also not bother me, for in the morning I am at the Institute till 2 o'clock and after lunch I lie down on the sofa in my room.

Adele still likes it very much in Pension Europa. She does now pay 8\$, however, because she cannot tolerate the constant "seafood" which I can well understand. I also think that is not at all expensive. She writes, though, that all else and every little thing is very expensive and therefore wants to come back earlier (i.e., mid-September) — And she does not want to travel to Vienna or Germany under the circumstances either.

Morgenstern, who visited me yesterday, told me that he is going to Vienna at the beginning of September for 8 days.

The letter to the press that you sent is indeed really scandalous, but in the end there are always going to be chauvinists everywhere and that scarcely can be the general opinion in Italy (except insofar as it is forced, like under Hitler).

I am glad that Trudl's depressions have given way. What brought about that reversal? —If someone hates Catholics the way you describe Hilde doing, then that almost always is caused by another strong religious conviction. When was that in fact, that she spoke to Fritzl's picture? But surely after his death? What do you two hear from Eva? Please give her my warm regards! In Berlin it is getting ever worse. What I wrote about Eisenhower and peace is unfortunately proving to be very true. Here the expenditures for armament and for the standing troops are increasing more and more, whereas under Eisenhower the opposite was the case. That a man goes to the moon without getting out there could very probably already be done now, but it would be dangerous and they want to take every precaution.

When you write that you worship creation then you probably mean that the world is lovely wherever man does not reach etc. But that very thing could contain the clue to the puzzle of why there are two worlds. Animals and plants, in contrast to man, have only a limited capacity to learn, lifeless things none at all. Only man can achieve a better existence, i.e., give his life more meaning, by learning. One, and often the sole, method of learning is in doing it

wrong first, however. And that happens in this world truly in sufficient quantity. Now one naturally can ask: Why did God not create human beings so that they do everything right from the outset? But that this question seems justified to us could very easily have its sole reason in the incredible ignorance in which we still find ourselves even today. We not only do not know from where and why we are here, but also not what we are (namely in our essence and seen from within). If one could just look deep enough within oneself with scientific methods of self-observation in order to answer this question, it would probably turn out that each of us is a something with quite definite attributes. I.e., each could then say of himself: Among all possible creatures, "I" am this such and so combination of attributes. When however among these attributes is that we do not do everything correctly right away, but rather only on the basis of experience, therefore it follows that, if God had created in our place creatures who need to learn nothing,[†] we would simply not have been these creatures. That is, we would then not exist at all. So according to the usual conception, the question "What am I?" would be answered that I am a something that in and of itself has no attributes at all, something like a coat rack where one can hang any sort of clothing. One could naturally say much more about all these things. I believe much more reason lies in religion, even if not in churches, than one commonly thinks, but we[‡] are raised from earliest youth against it, via the schools, the poor religion classes, through books and experiences.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

* which by the way is an Italian national attribute.

† It is of course to be assumed that such (or nearly such) creatures also exist somewhere or will exist.

‡ i.e., the middle class of society to which we belong, or at least most of the people in this class

Austrian Post and Telegraph Administration

31. VIII. 61

MARIANNE GOEDEL

LERCHENSELERSTR 81 VIENNA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THOUSAND BUSSI EVER YOUR = KUR

Princeton, 12./IX. 1961.

176

Dearest Mama!

I received your letter N° 340 from Mondsee and the one before that. In the latter you say you will write again soon. Therefore I waited with my answer because you had not answered my last letter. Thus the interval again became longer than I intended.

So you two only wanted to stay very briefly at Mondsee. But at least a pleasant change of scenery if one stays in a lovely hotel, as I assume. Morgenstern wanted as you know to come to Vienna on the 4th for a week, so you will probably have missed him.

Regarding who is “attending to” me and that I am very well cared for, I already wrote you last time. With the condition of my stomach I am also quite content. The heat did not bother me at all. I like it warm, after all, and if it gets too bad, I go around in my swim trunks at home. So, Adele will arrive on 19./IX. on the ship “Cristoforo Colombo.” That is a very lovely and modern ship of the Italian line, apparently better and not more expensive than the American ones that sail to Italy. You write that everyone condemns her for being gone so long. But if I have nothing against it and am well cared for, then I do not know what there is to object to. Traveling to Europe for 4–6 weeks makes very little sense what with the high travel costs and the long trip (17 days there and back) and here in America Adele has no one after all with whom or to whom she could travel.

Did my birthday telegram actually arrive on time? At any rate, I did send it off in time.

Is there anything in the book about Stefan Zweig about his death? That would primarily interest me since it is apparently incomprehensible why he committed suicide. He did indeed live in South America for a long time by the way. Otherwise if you want to know what I would most wish for, good books about philosophy, also classic works. E.g. I would quite like to have “Critique of Judgement” by Kant or also the “Critique of Pure Reason” at home to be able to always read it whenever I happen to have time. The wall they have erected in Berlin is really quite the limit. But the Russians are probably right that saboteurs and spies came in from the West. Or do you doubt that? I do not believe in any real danger of war from this side.

Your having had difficulty understanding the “theological” part of my last letter is certainly quite understandable and has nothing to do with your age. I did keep it very brief and touched on some rather profound philosophical questions. At first glance this whole view that I laid out for you does seem highly unlikely. But I believe if one thinks about it more closely, it proves to be quite possible and rational. In particular one has to imagine that the

“learning” in large part will not take place until the next world, namely by means of us recalling our experiences in this world and only then really understanding these so that our experiences here are so to speak the raw material for learning. For what could, e.g., a cancer patient learn here from his pain? It is, however, certainly conceivable that it will become clear to him in the second world which errors on his part (not in the hygienic sense, but in rather quite a different one) caused this illness and that he thus learns not only to understand the relation to his illness but simultaneously other similar connections. Naturally that presupposes that many connections exist of which today’s science and book learning could not even dream. But I am convinced of this, even independently of any theology. Did not even the atheist Schopenhauer write an article about the “apparent purposefulness in the fate of the individual.” If one objects that it would be impossible for us to recall in another world the experiences of this one, then it is quite unjustified, for we could be born with these latent memories in the other world. In addition, one must naturally assume that our understanding there will be significantly better there than here so that we recognize everything of importance with the same unerring certitude as $2 \times 2 = 4$ * where delusion is objectively out of the question. Thus we could then also be absolutely certain of having experienced everything that we remember. But I fear I am veering off somewhat too much into philosophy again. I do not know if the last 10 lines are even comprehensible without having studied philosophy. N.B. even today’s study of philosophy does not help much toward the understanding of such questions since after all 90% of today’s philosophers see their primary task to be beating thoughts of religion out of peoples’ heads, and thus having the same effect in this sense as the bad churches.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.
Many warm greetings to Rudi

* Otherwise we could for example not know at all if we will not also die in the other world

Princeton, 6./X. 1961.

177

Dearest Mama!

Your long dear letter of 22./IX. (Nº 341) I got 1½ weeks ago and was happy to hear from you in detail again. You answered every letter of mine up to now, but that one time your letter was almost finished when mine arrived so that you were only able to respond to the content of my letter in a few lines.

So Mondsee suited you once again very well, as was to be expected, aside from your upset stomach; but what do you actually think you ate to cause it? I know very well the inconvenience that goes with having to be very careful about food, but it is still much better to take it into account than to get an upset stomach. I continue to do well. At any rate, Adele thought that I did not look worse when she returned than when she departed, but in the 14 days since she has been here, I even gained a little weight again, I believe even beforehand. Mary came back at the same time Adele and now is working for her again. Adele brought back lovely pictures from Rome etc. and also several books about Rome, Pompeii and Ischia. She found Italy very lovely and interesting, but what she did not like were the Italians and the miserable and unhygienic dwellings where they live in many towns. In Ischia, which apparently was originally a poor fishing village, that seems to be especially bad and they are not restoring these quarters of town with the health-cure tourists in mind. It also seems to be less than gratifying how the foreigners (and especially the Americans) are being exploited.

I think it strange that one cannot see Wagner's grave and the Villa Wahnfried. Was that the case even before World War II? It is surprising that everything in Germany and in particular the food (!?) is much better than in Austria. But that cannot possibly hold true for the good restaurants in Vienna or at Mondsee, surely? Recently I read that the *Reichsdeutschen* made themselves so unpopular in Austria through Hitler that no one was in favor of the *Anschluss* any longer. Is that true? That Trudl is "bright-eyed and bushytailed" makes me happy to hear. I believe I already asked you once before whether one knows or can guess at what precipitated the turnaround.

As to politics, my opinion has proven to be true that Berlin is not dangerous to world peace. That Krushčev would be indulging only in saber rattling is intended to emphatically point out what a nuclear war could entail, which however neither of the two parties wants.

I really do not believe that Stefan Zweig was such an enormous idealist that he committed suicide only due to the sorrowful political conditions in Europe, and that would also be quite irrational after all even from the standpoint of an idealist. More likely the death of most of his friends, the loss of his library as well as his manuscripts and excerpts, the loss of his familiar

surroundings etc. would have been the deciding factors. But the true reason is usually not something anyone ever finds out.

That Hammerskjold's airplane "accidentally" crashed no one believes¹.

The religious views about which I wrote you have nothing to do with occultism. Religious occultism is comprised of conjuring up the ghost of the Apostle Paul or the Archangel Michael etc. in spiritualist sessions and obtaining information from them about religious questions. What I wrote you is indeed nothing but a simple depiction and ~~so to speak an adaptation~~ alignment of our current way of thinking with certain theological teachings which have been preached for 2000 years, albeit mixed with much nonsense. If one reads what has been presented and is still being asserted as dogma over the course of time in the various churches one has to wonder indeed. E.g., according to Catholic dogma omnibenevolent God created most human beings exclusively for the purpose of sending them to Hell for all eternity, that is all except the good Catholics, who even among the Catholics are only a fraction. I do not believe that the application of reason in any area is something unhealthy (as you allude). It would be quite unjustified to say that in this area in particular one cannot align anything with reason. For who would have believed 3000 years ago that one will be able to determine of the distant stars how large, how heavy, how hot and how far distant they are and that many of them are 100 times larger than the sun. Or who would have believed that they would build television sets? When the first teaching was posited 2500 years ago that the body was comprised of atoms that must have seemed just as fantastical and unfounded back then as religious teachings appear to many today. For back then literally no single observational fact was known that could have led to the positing of the theory of the atom, but instead occurred out of purely philosophical reasoning. At any rate, this theory has been borne out gloriously and has become the foundation for a very large part of modern science.

We are naturally very far today from being able to scientifically prove the theological world view, but I believe it should indeed be possible today (without basing oneself on the faith of any particular religion) to realize purely intellectually that the theological world view is thoroughly compatible with all known facts (including the with the circumstances that prevail on Earth). 250 years ago the famous philosopher and mathematician Leibniz already attempted to do this and that is also what I tried to do in my last letters. What I call theological world view is the concept that the world and everything in it

¹ Dag Hammerskjöld (1905–1961), Secretary-General of the UN, died in an airplane crash on September 18

has meaning and reason, in fact a good and indubitable meaning. So, it follows directly that our earthly existence, since it in and of itself has at most a very dubious meaning, can only be a means to an end for another existence. The concept that everything in the world has a meaning is, after all, analogous to the principle that everything has a cause, upon which all of science rests.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt.

Warm regards to Rudi. How is he doing? — I would be very happy to once again read a letter from Hilde

Princeton, 12./XI. 1961.

178

Dearest Mama!

Adele was very glad to get your and Rudi's letter and will answer you very soon. Rudi's letter to me and the Christmas catalogues arrived too and I thank you warmly. Quite particularly nice is the catalogue with the trains. In our time colored pictures did not exist yet at all.

I have already written you quite often that I am doing well now health-wise. I also am drinking orange juice again and eating applesauce and both do me very much good. I have not started up yet with coffee but only because tea tastes so good to me. Not long ago a letter came from Aunt Mizzi in which she wrote, among other things, that she would very much like to come to Vienna again. It must be now 5 years (or longer??) since she was there last. I still have not replied to Uncle Karl's letter, but want to do so soon now. Thank you for Hilde's letter that I return enclosed. I think she writes very nicely and endearingly. It is always refreshing to see that people still exist who have retained a certain degree of idealism.

I once took a trip in our car to Eisenstadt. There is a lovely castle of Esterházy there with a large park, as you know. However, I do not know if it is open to the public. Here we had quite summer-like weather a week ago so that one could have lain out in the yard. But now it is really very cold and everything bare. The political questions regarding Berlin are in fact growing less and less of interest, because both parties gradually are coming to their senses. However there is still enough lack of sense in other parts of the world, e.g. in France and China. But these things will not lead to a world war. I

unfortunately have not much material for writing, but you will also soon hear from Adele.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt.

Thousand *Bussis* also from Adele

Princeton, 18./XII. 1961.

179

Dearest Mama!

Unfortunately, I hear very little from you lately. You outdo even me now in this regard. Thus, I also have less material to write about since I always answer your questions conscientiously, as you know.

In addition came a gripe that I dealt with for a week; otherwise you would have heard from me sooner. Many thanks for the Christmas package that has arrived; I have not had a look at the items yet but instead am waiting until Christmas Eve for that.

As to the Berlin crisis, I do believe that the situation is being depicted in the newspapers more dangerous than it actually is. For certain circles it is not at all acceptable, after all, that both sides are leaning toward reason. In the case of the Americans, reason manifests itself by wanting to acknowledge East Germany as an independent state and in the case of the Russians, by wanting to forego annexing West Berlin. These two points are clearly the only basis upon which a settlement is possible. For why should the Western powers be the only ones to have the right to establish an independent German state, seeing as how our democracy is no more a true democracy than the Russian “rule by the people.” The dividing wall between East and West Berlin can remain another 100 years perhaps but one can surely not demand of other peoples that they make up for the fact that half of Germany was conquered by the Russians as a result of Hitlerian jingoism. In regard to the Congo, the uprising was surely incited for the most part by the Europeans.

Here there is not much new. The gripe did not harm my stomach much, except for rather unfavorably affecting the Christmas spirit. But the true Christmas spirit one really only has in one’s childhood, that I was once again reminded of by the lovely toy catalogues. I hope you are doing well and I would be very happy to get a long detailed letter from you.

With thousand *Bussis* and all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year
 to Rudi and you
 ever Your Kurt

Austrian Post and Telegraph Administration

1. II. 62

MARIANNE GOEDEL

LERCHENFELDERSTR 81 VIENNA

ARE VERY CONCERNED CABLE CAME THROUGH OPERATION OK
 REPLY PAID = KURT AND ADELE

[*handwritten reply:*] Prof. Gödel Princeton, New Jersey Linden Lane 29

Operation well over Letter follows

Mama

Princeton, 3./II. 1962.

180

Dearest Mama!

Since your last letter, we are naturally very concerned about Rudi and also about you. Adele would have preferred that I or she fly over there immediately. But thankfully you have someone to take care of you and in all likelihood Rudi will be completely back to normal in a couple of weeks. For bladder stones are really quite common and the operation is not a very difficult one. We had Rudi's 60th birthday on our minds for quite a while, but that he should ruin it through such a stroke of bad luck is of course not what we expected. We are waiting eagerly for the promised letter from you that will give us more information about Rudi's condition, hopefully nothing but good.

We hope you also will be in a better frame of mind by then.

With thousand *Bussis*
 ever Your Kurt

P.S. You did not even write which hospital or sanatorium Rudi is in

Princeton, 14./II. 1962.

181

Dearest Mama!

We thank you warmly for your letters of [February] 2, 3, and 5. It is sweet of you to keep us up to date on Rudi's condition. We were very happy that the temperature was soon over and Rudi seems to be recovering comparatively rapidly, in that he was already allowed to get up a couple of days after the operation. We hope everything else will take a similarly favorable course. An operation that does not involve any infection is of course always quite a different story and one can expect a smooth recovery. In Papa's case of course there was a clearly a long-standing infection that determined the outcome. You must surely also recall the great difference between my appendectomy and Hammerschlag's. It is of course true that one does not recover so rapidly from a bladder operation as following an appendix operation, but that is the normal course of things, which need not give any cause for concern. Did Rudi already decide where he wants to go to recuperate? We received Rudi's letter of 7./II. and send him many warm regards. Adele is just in the process of writing to Rudi, and I will do so soon myself. Unfortunately we are in the midst, as of a week ago, of a big hubbub in the Institute, since the faculty cannot agree on an appointment of a professor and therefore is negotiating back and forth constantly. Nothing like that has ever happened before.

With thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 27./II. 1962.

182

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letter № 349, which arrived today. You had not written to us for really quite a long time before that, but we naturally do not hold that against you at all. Also we had some letters from Rudi that we were very happy about. For these prove even better than your letters that Rudi's recuperation is making good progress. That Rudi does still look bad, I can imagine. It would surely be a miracle if that were not the case. Disorientation can occur after any physical or psychological shock.

Many thanks for the charming little lucky clover. The thing that really quite particularly pleases me about it is the color, a delicate yellow-green. I saw this color somewhere as a child but cannot exactly recall where.

I completely forgot the little cat in my report about Christmas because it was the only present that Adele unwrapped before Christmas. It is enormously charming and is admired by all our acquaintances. It has found its spot* on a rug that depicts a large cat so that the two of them look like mother and child.

Voces over the trans-Atlantic telephone are really unbelievably clear, much better than on the radio.

Glenn's flight is almost a matter of course these days. Only I am curious to see the pictures he took. But it will really become interesting once the first man lands on the moon, which can only take a couple of years now.

By the steady strokes of your handwriting I glean that you are feeling calmer on the whole by now, which makes me very glad.

With thousand *Bussis* from us both
ever Your Kurt

* in front of the television set

Princeton, 17./III. 1962

183

Dearest Mama!

The praise you lavished on our industrious letter-writing in your letter N° 350 no longer applies today, sadly. Adele did start writing a letter but then did not complete it, though I had counted on it. In the interim your letters 350, 351 arrived that to our joy brought good news about Rudi's recuperation. We hope that the further progress was just as good.

Given medications in existence today I do not understand that you cannot get rid of your cough. Aureomycin or Terramycin truly do work wonders in such things and are completely harmless. In the opinion of some doctors it is even advisable for older people to take these drugs from time to time. Here there is also a very good cough syrup similar to our Sirolin that is called Superanahist. Stubborn colds are apparently the order of the day this year, but I got over mine soon thanks to Terramycin. A couple of days ago it was still snowing, but the buds on the magnolias are already enormously large.

That someone would title an autobiography “Mein Lebensmärchen”¹ is really something quite extraordinary, since life is usually not so lovely. But it could be that Slezak simply left out all the unlovely things since it certainly is not so pleasant to write about them. That Richard should be complaining of boredom I do not understand. Only recently he was showing interest in various things, for instance learning Italian without a practical reason to. So probably the main cause of the foul mood is the ban on wine. You are perfectly right that humanity will not be improved by flying to the moon. That has to do with the old battle between “Natural Science” and “Humanities.” If the progress made in History, Law, Political Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Literature, Art etc. were as large as that in Physics no danger of an atomic war would exist. But instead one notices in some of the Humanities significant steps backward. This problem is very topical here, since according to the American tradition in middle schools the Humanities were given preference, which surely played a significant role in America’s ascent over Europe. The influence of Europe along with Russian competition (see: Sputnik) unfortunately reverses this relationship, as American as a whole, to its disadvantage, is becoming more and more like Europe.

With thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt

Austrian Post and Telegraph Administration

19. IV. 62

MARIANNE GODEL
LERCHENFELDERSTR
81 VIENNA

EVERYTHING FINE HERE WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOU COMING
LETTER FOLLOWS HAPPY EASTER = KRT AND ADELE

¹ “My Life’s Fairy Tale,” posthumously published memoir by Leo Slezak (1873–1946), famous Viennese opera singer born in KG’s hometown of Brünn

Princeton, 22./IV. 1962. 184

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters of 28./III and 11./IV. I would have answered you sooner but, as I wrote you in my last letter, this year is a quite unusual year at the Institute. The semester was officially over long ago, but negotiations are still taking place over various things. And due to the sharp differences of opinion the entire situation is highly unpleasant.

We would of course be enormously pleased if you two came the end of May and on top of that with such a cheap trip. This time you would probably stay with us the entire time.

As to the matter of Mayer, there probably is no sense to continue dwelling on it by correspondence. I am sorry that you got upset over it. The matter has only one good aspect, that contact with M^{rs} Mayer is now once and for all at an end.* That indeed already happened twice before, but then M^{rs} Mayer always figured out how to get to Adele again, the last time by claiming that she probably had cancer and will soon die. But then she was soon back on her feet.

I continue to do well, health-wise. The splendid display of things coming into bloom has already partially begun here. In particular the little yellow blossoms that one sees everyone are very pretty. I did not write to you yet at all about us having bought new dining room furniture. It looks very classy. The old set was already 20 years old and had not even been bought new.

It seems to me you two were not at Kronichhof for quite some time now. It is indeed good that you got rid of your cough at Semmering.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards from Adele
ever Your Kurt

* Since return of the brooch we have heard nothing more from her. Adele has much to do in the yard and so does not get around to writing

Princeton, 14./V. 1962 185

Dearest Mama!

As I glean from Rudi's letter of 7./V. this letter will no longer reach you in Vienna but do you never have your mail forwarded? I would like most of all to thank you for the lovely things that you two sent me for my birthday and for

your sweet letter N° 353, both of which arrived exactly on 28./IV. The pictures in the [Hans Christian] Andersen book I find truly delightful. Why does one have to get used to the style? The Slezak biogr. is, as I see, mainly intended as quite humorous. But I doubt if anyone has only ever experienced humorous things. The neck scarf and the tie are very nice. The wonderful bonbons were primarily enjoyed by Adele. For I, you know, do not tolerate very many.

Why does Rudi mention in his letter nothing of my latest letter that I sent ca. 4 weeks ago? We are sorry that nothing will come of the two of you coming here now. But at the end of October usually it is still very nice and sunny here. I have already told you about the wonderful colors that the foliage takes on at that time. Where did the two of you stay overnight in the Wachau? Is there a hotel now near the Dürnstein ruins? The hunting lodge you write of must be similar to the Natural History Museum here. Where is it located, by the way, and to whom does it belong? I knew nothing of your being together in the beginning of May in the Salzkammergut region. Hopefully you had nice weather. Our yard in full bloom was very lovely, especially the little Crap-apple and the fire-red bush by the veranda both were really stunning. We are very sorry about what you write about Eva. How is she doing?

We wish you two a nice stay in Velden and remain with thousand *Bussis*
and many warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt and Adele

P.S. Adele began a letter to you a couple of days ago, but she is now always so tired from the yardwork that she did not finish writing it.

I will write to Rudi soon

Princeton, 4./VII. 1962

186

Dearest Mama!

You must have long received the letter from Adele and my letter and so you at least know that everything is in order with us. But it really seems like forever to me since I last wrote you.* There were all sorts of things going on here, which distracted me from my usual activities. In May we had houseguests for several days, relatives of Adele's who live in Canada. They are very nice people so that their presence was not disruptive for me at all. It was a young married couple with a child and the mother of the wife. But only

the latter slept here, the others next door. We also showed them some of Princeton, of course. Then a short while ago, a young married couple moved into our neighborhood, whose female half is from Graz. So, Adele naturally started keeping company and already threw two garden parties for them and other neighbors. Then finally there also was an Austrian-born mathematician in Princeton in June for another 2½ weeks with whom I had much to discuss. And to add to it all, I came across a philosophy book that particularly interested me. All of this unaccustomed distraction must have been to blame for this letter being so delayed. In the interim I received 3 letters from you. The last N° 356 was indeed an unusually thick one, and I have to in particular express my thanks, too, for the dear little flowers that you sent me from Velden. Many thanks too for the collective postcard. Two signatures on it were unknown to me, a “Karl” and (I think) “Vally”.

As I see, you once again experienced many lovely things in the past weeks. The Salzkammergut and the Wachau in the Spring and then Velden and Mariazell. The view from the hotel room in Velden must have been wonderful. I can easily believe that Annaberg trip reminded you of old times. I felt the same way when I read your letter. However, my memory is not so good that I would recognize all these things you mention, but I do recall the name Laufenstein and also the stomach drops. If I am not mistaken, they did me a great deal of good, so that I went on to use them frequently. Schnitzler is also something that belongs to this era, just as does “Auernheimer,” whose “*Bittersüsse Liebesgeschichten*”¹ I would not mind reading once again. Prof. Kamm who lectured in Princeton about Schnitzler, is the same one with whom I went to *Assentierung*² here in 1943, that I even wrote you about once, I believe. Recently I discovered a modern writer previously unknown to me, “Franz Kafka.” He writes quite insanely, but has a strangely lifelike way of describing things, e.g., his description of a dream had the effect on me of having two lively dreams the next night that I could still remember exactly in the morning, which otherwise never happens with me. That mainly

¹ “Bittersweet Love Stories,” which were actually written by Rudolf Hans Bartsch (1873–1952), Austrian author of nostalgic novels and short stories; see also following letter. For Schnitzler and Auernheimer, see also Letters, 8 January 1951 and 20 February 1953

² An old Austro-Hungarian term meaning to be called up to determine if fit for military service. KG was classified by the local draft board in Princeton in 1943 as 1A, available for duty. IAS Director Frank Aydelotte and Dr. Joseph S. Vanneman, who treated KG for a recurrence of his “mental disturbances” in 1942, wrote to the board explaining his history of nervous disorders, and following a subsequent medical examination he was given a permanent deferment

Wachauites come to the Hotel Dürnstein seems to prove that the foreign visitors do not see the true beauty Austria has to offer at all.

The detailed story of the Marchegg castle interested me greatly. So it first belonged to Dukes Salm and Pallfy and then a "Schönauer" of non-nobility. Presumably the nobility was robbed of its property in the Nazi era. It is quite odd that Hitler came to power with the aid of German and Austrian conservatives, but then proved to be scarcely grateful to them.

In Vienna you had some diversion lately by dint of Aunt Mizzi's visit. The conditions at the Mosings are not entirely clear to me. Also I am surprised that they were supposed to be given notice due to the cats; there must be some other reason. For one can barely detect the cats outside of their apartment.

The picture that Adele sent was taken by Natkin, whom Rudi also knew. Unfortunately, he died a couple of months ago. He was enmeshed in divorce proceedings with his wife and it affected him greatly that he had to give her the children. Supposedly the upset caused him to have a stroke.

Our yard is once again very lovely. Adele had the lower branches cut off of the high firs in the middle so that now one can view the entire area and of course everything gets more lush with every year. Now the previous gardener is working at our place once again, M^r Cebin, whom you two also got to meet. But before Adele decided to do that, she did much of it herself.

Yesterday Adele brought home a couple of really wonderful records with all sorts of Austrian melodies. If you two, as I hope, come here in the autumn you can see for yourselves that one has to come to America in order to hear good Austrian music.

The stock market collapse here is not so dangerous up to now (except for speculators).

Less desirable is the fact that arms build-up is once again on the rise. Under Eisenhower the atom bomb tests were halted for years, now they are occurring by the dozen again. As to Algiers, they want to tell us that everything will be just fine and dandy but the very opposite will come to pass.

Please write us how Eva is doing as soon as you have word and convey many regards to Aunt Mizzi, if she happens still be in Vienna. I hope I have succeeded in compensating you for the hiatus in letters with this lengthy epistle, and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Warm regards too from Adele

Princeton, 19./VII. 1962. 187

Dearest Mama!

We thank you warmly for your l[ast] letter of the 11th. We are sorry to hear that you are having trouble with your veins. But we definitely hope that it will all be over soon, since the cause does seem to be an external injury. In addition, medicine has made great progress in this area, too. At any rate I want to help you pass the time with a letter in case you are still forced to stay in bed. My picture is from the year '57. When you two were here the first time I must have looked much the same way, and I believe it will not take long until I look that way again. We thank you also for the two cards from Mariazell and from Kronichdorf. They were 3 weeks getting here, but that was just right because your break from correspondence was filled up a bit that way. Preschel must be the owner of Kronichhof? You may be right that the "Bittersüsse Liebesgeschichten" are by Bartsch. The ones by Auernheimer may be bittersweet but they are not called that. Maybe the volume is called "Ruine Greifenstein" which was the title of one of the stories. From Kafka you managed to pick out the very most horrible story. I do not believe that he wrote any other like it. But his things would not please you for other reasons, probably. It was, by the way, his wish that his works not be published, but Max Brod¹ released them anyway. It is news to me that doves "grunt." Adele and I really laughed about that. But of course, if they feed flocks of doves at the window that can rouse other parties. In our yard there are always hosts of birds that eat up the leftovers, among them are some really quite pretty ones. We have a small birdhouse outside our door, by the way, that is inhabited every year, namely by very tiny little birds. I.e., the parents are already very small, even more so the young!

With thousand *Bussis* and best wishes for a rapid recovery of your foot
ever Your Kurt

Bussis and regards also from Adele to you both.

¹ Max Brod (1884–1968), Prague-born Jewish writer, close friend and literary executor of Kafka

Princeton, 27./VIII. 1962.

188

Dearest Mama!

Most of all Adele and I send you many thousand birthday *Bussi* and wish you all the best and all our love, especially also that you will soon be back to normal with your health. We are of course looking forward enormously to your two coming here. In Oct. you both will definitely like it very much. That is in fact the famous "Indian Summer" in which it is often still warm but never hot. All in all it is the most pleasant month in the year, climate-wise, with mostly blue skies.

Many thanks for your two letters of 26./VII and 18./VIII. Adele started a letter 14 days ago but then did not send it. That delayed my writing then, since time does pass so quickly.

We are concerned that your foot is still not in order. Rudi wrote on 7./VIII that your phlebitis was still not entirely well. So we thought that it is essentially over. It is at any rate good that exercise does not harm you, otherwise the trip would be impossible. Since the doctors are apparently satisfied with the condition of your foot it is also possible that the pains are in part nervous. The condition of Uncle Karl must have certainly upset you quite a bit. We deeply regret his being so poorly; a year ago he was doing relatively well, after all.

I deem it inconceivable that some kind of medicine used here for phlebitis would not be available to you there. But not all cases are the same and different people respond to different treatments. I do not believe, by the way, that a doctor here would tell me what he prescribed for another patient. They are perhaps more particular about such things here than at home. It would be another matter if Rudi, being a doctor, would ask him. M^{rs} Mayer's doctor was: Dr G. K. Dean, 503 Princeton Road, Plainsboro, N.J. He does not live in Princeton, but rather, near Princeton. Your blood pressure of 200 is in fact not bad at all, approximately 180 is quite normal for your age.* Please write us soon what the other internist said.

I did not know at all that old Kronich was such a famous man. Did I ever actually meet him?

I have not heard anything regarding any television broadcasts from Austria up to this point. But perhaps I missed them, for I watch very little television. Here there was not much new this past summer. Adele was here the entire summer this year for the first time in a long time and decided to utilize the money thus saved for beautifying our house, as I already wrote Rudi. She was also frequently out with her neighbors so that the time did not become too long for her. Aside from several days the summer was (measured by the standards here) not excessively hot. I have already written before to you about what I

think about the Russians' edge in space travel: the more dangerous the Russians are, the more money the army gets. It therefore has no interest whatsoever in particularly pushing ahead with such things as the moon flight, which are, after all, only "showpieces."

We are already enormously looking forward to hopefully seeing you two again soon and remain with thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt & Adele

* that is what they say here
P.S. A birthday-shipment is already en route

Princeton, 16./IX. 1962. 189

Dearest Mama!

I was very happy about your letter of 30./VIII. (Nº 359), since I believe to glean from the tone that you are feeling much better now with your foot. Though you write that you had intestinal trouble again, that is surely for the most part nervous. As for a "collapse of your inner organs," as you put it, on the basis of your letter at any rate there is nothing to be noticed.

Regarding the toilet here you do not have to have any concern. Adele often had diarrhea in the night this year (which she apparently picked up from the oil in Italy), but that does not even wake me up. I am surprised, by the way, that there is not yet today any harmless anti-diarrheal, when one can already get harmless sleeping pills, laxatives, etc. Since you are going to Ansbach on 4./IX. as Rudi wrote, I assume therefore that this letter will reach you back in Vienna. I will close for today for I want to write to Rudi now as well, and the letter needs to be mailed tomorrow morning.

We are already enormously excited about seeing you two again soon
With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Much love and thousand *Bussis* to you both also from Adele. She can barely wait till you two are here!

Radiogram

26 IX 62

dr rudolph goedel Lerchenlsruderstr 81 vienna
room nassau inn not before 4 october reserving princeton inn

Princeton, 10./XI. 1962.

190

Dearest Mama!

It is incredible that nearly four weeks have passed since your departure. Not only your visit but the time afterward passed especially quickly for me. In the meantime Adele wrote you a lengthy letter and I a couple of words with Trudl's letter that I forwarded to you; and two letters arrived from you to me (Nº 361, 362) and one to Adele. It is a pity that the return trip was so unpleasant for you, but the main thing is that it did not bother your foot. I had feared it would since you had to sit almost constantly for nearly 24 hours (including the car trip here). The fact that you are sleeping less well and have less appetite probably has to do with Uncle Karl's condition. What was the telegram that you found when you arrived, by the way? You do not write any details of the visitors from Germany.

I thank you very particularly for the bonbons. Such a charming box I have really never ever seen! You two unfortunately did not enclose the letter from Heinzi Massl, the one from A[unt] Mizzi I return enclosed. A. Mizzi sent us a color photo of the hotel where she lives and marked her window. That looks quite classy indeed. Is she perhaps doing some kind of work in the hotel?

We celebrated Adele's birthday very nicely. It was lovely weather so we went to "River's Edge Restaurant" again and made a stop at the antique dealer's in Hopewell Station where I bought Adele the bottle that she had liked so well last time.

I had our neighbor Federici order me a wonderful dress suit. In addition, the old one was refurbished so that it looks like new again. Moreover I also bought myself a new suit for daily use, that I like very well indeed. I am now equipped for all eventualities. Karl Gödel and his wife will have certainly been very happy about the exhibition of his pictures. Probably he also sold a large number of pictures there, too. I was surprised by his output, by the way: 1000 pictures, that is really something.

From Gitti we received a long letter in which she also writes some about her husband and her brother. So the latter got the issues with his nerves in the war, too. That must have been shellshock? And her husband, too, as I see, has issues with his nerves. But she writes nothing in detail about it but rather merely says that "such an issue with the nerves is really quite horrible."

That Vienna is "overrun" with foreigners I have heard from a Viennese man here who visited there for the first time after 25 years.

As I see, Adele is writing a letter to you today too, and one to Rudi. So you two will get 4 letters at the same time. But it is at least a comfort that more or less the same thing is in all four of them.

Naturally I had a great deal to do after you departed, so that my writing was delayed, and then Adele wrote a lengthy letter. Today is already the 11th (Sunday) and Adele is very hard at work writing letters to all of our acquaintances. For lunch we had an excellent fish baked in the oven, the same kind you ate while you were here. Adele makes beef soup frequently now that is really quite excellent.

It is now 8.30 in the evening and I do not know of anything more to tell you for today. I will therefore close

and remain with thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 24./III. 1963.

191

Dearest Mama!

In your last letter you complain that I write you so little. But I have in fact neglected my entire correspondence in the past months. To you I have written more than to anyone else, in the little appendices to Adele's letters. And besides that, you are well informed about what is new with us via Adele's letters. Regarding Uncle Karl, it is in fact hard to say anything of comfort for you. The best is to keep a fond memory. Of all that we experience, only a memory remains, after all, but that is precisely why all things permanently retain something of their realness. Uncle Karl's last letter I am sending back to you enclosed, as well as Trudl's letter. One could not have wished for a better death. The funeral service must have been very impressive. Your sense of Uncle Karl's never having lived because he asked to be cremated is an interesting illusion that I have never heard before. But in reality a good picture retains more of the realness of the deceased than the buried body.

The winter there must really have been horrible this year. Here such an ongoing kind of severe cold never occurs, for New York is located at the geographic latitude of Naples as you know. In Chicago it is quite different. And I recall that once, the tips of my ears nearly froze off. Now Spring weather is already almost here. Adele already bought flower bulbs and tomorrow M^r Cebin is to begin with the yardwork.

Many thanks for your letters N° 368–393. With the numbering you must have made a mistake. For you could not have written that many letters (25) to me in Feb. and March, even though you were being very good. I thank you warmly for the book by Goethe that I plan to have a closer look at soon. The letter from Heinzi that you sent is fairly insubstantial. What surprised me is that she does not make any mention of me whatsoever, even though she talks a lot about your America trip. But there need not be any particular intent behind that.

The fact that you just received the Mother's Day present from last year is truly strange. In its pattern, the teapot matches very well to the rest of what we have from you. The trip to Semmering you once again describe as very lovely and it will surely have put you in a better frame of mind, too. You must be really feeling quite at home there at this rate. I hope that you are doing well health-wise and that, in particular, your veins are leaving you in peace. Your digestive tract will probably make itself noticed from time to time. As to politics it looked for a time as if any day an atomic war could break out. But thankfully Krushchev and Kennedy are both sensible in this regard. Oddly enough just in the last 3½ months there has been a newspaper strike so that one was very insufficiently informed about events. But perhaps that very thing was a stroke of luck, otherwise war-hysteria could have easily erupted here. I am happy that I was successful today, even if with a week's delay, in writing a long letter to you. Rudi's letter and the four pictures got here long ago. The pictures are very nice but we expected a larger number.

Thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards to Rudi. His letter of 18./III. I will reply to somewhat later, so that the two of you do not always get everything at once.

Radiogram
 LETTER TELEGRAM
 13 IV 63
 marianne goedel lerchenfelderstr 81 vienna
 warm easter greetings we are well we wish you the same letter follows
 thousand bussi
 kurt and adele

Radiogram
 12 V 63
 marianne goedel lerchenfelderstr 81 vienna
 happy mother's day thousand bussis
 kurt and adele

Princeton, 14./V. 1963. 192

Dearest Mama!

Today I finally am getting around to writing you a full letter. The matters at the Institute are not so much nerve-wracking (even though that kind of thing does occur too) as they are time-consuming, insofar as something always has to be accomplished that brooks no deferment. It is odd that it should be this year of all years when all these things converge. E.g. the applications for stipends from the Institute have to be decided on, and therefore the work of the applicants evaluated. This time there were twice as many in my area of expertise than before. Fourteen days after the end of the semester there was another faculty meeting and just now, 14 days ago, someone¹ solved an important problem in my field. This work I had to read immediately, because he, justifiably, wants to publish it as soon as possible with the [National] Academy of Sciences here and I, as member of the Academy, am responsible

¹ American mathematician Paul Cohen (1934–2007); see also introductory comments to Part 4 above, pp. 273–74

for its accuracy if I support its acceptance. Since the problem is difficult, the verification of the accuracy of his solution was time-consuming. Similar things, though not of equal importance, are occurring more and more lately. It is unbelievable what kind of a rapid ascent mathematics has made in the last few years here, that is, since immense amounts of governmental monies are being invested in the sciences due to the competition of Russia. The number of doctoral students in math. has tripled in a few years. In addition to all of this, there are also the current matters specific to the Institute. Controversial points are voted on there and I have to form an opinion for myself and substantiate it. If, as in previous years, the others are mostly in agreement, one can simply follow the majority. But if two parties exist, that does not work and much can depend on one vote. Coming to a well-founded opinion about these things is, in turn, time-consuming. I hope I have now given you an approximate picture of how it stands and why I write so little. But in the summer there will be a respite because most people go away.

I thank you for the 3 letters that you numbered with 392, 375, 376 and for the terribly sweet Easter card, as well as for the dear little flowers and the four-leaved clover. These tiny little squirrels are really something truly unusual again and particularly charming. Very nice too are the postcards and the photograph of the Emperor. What was the death in both your circles of which Aunt Mizzi writes? The granddaughter of the Emperor? I have already expressed my thanks for the lovely birthday presents. The two Goethe books I was not able to have a look at yet. As I see, Rudi got quite carried away with traveling this year (Semmering, Salzkammergut, Dürnstein, Velden, etc.) But he is quite right, one should enjoy one's life, in particular since you had such a lovely Spring there this year. I hope you are doing better again with your intestine. I am always amazed anew by your handwriting, how lovely and steady it is at 84 years of age! Unfortunately, you forgot to enclose the letter of Hilde's you write about. That Morgenstern is coming to Vienna in a few weeks you will likely have learned from his sister. Perhaps he will tell you details about the Institute. For these things are known throughout town, but I do not like to talk out of school. Adele likes it in Canada very much landscape-wise as well as because of the two year old little girl of her acquaintances, who she says is quite charming indeed. I am doing well in every regard.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 7./VIII. 1963.

193

Dearest Mama!

Today I received the pleasant news that the translation (into English) of a paper of mine¹ whose revisions really did cost a lot of time will not appear until later. So I am using the time to write you another long letter again. In the meantime I received letters № 377–381 from you that all arrived and for which I thank you warmly. Adele did write to you frequently during this time so that you remain informed of activities here. Adele returned a couple of days ago from the seaside where she was able to really relax. Now she sleeps a lot; perhaps she spent too much time in the sun? The summer is very hot this year, but if I am dressed lightly it is just the right temperature for me. At the seaside, where I once went to visit Adele, it is quite nice for a day, but in general I do feel much happier at home. Health-wise I am doing quite well and I eat decidedly more than when you were here. Adele says to say thank you warmly for the lovely Edelweiss and the feather; or is the latter for me? The newspaper clippings about the Habsburg question are very interesting. I am surprised that Otto² does not shy from provoking discord between the two parties, which definitely is not conducive for Austria's development. He does seem to live very well in Germany. The picture with Eisenhower and the Pope is delightful. I think they are also quite well matched in fundamental attitudes, too. The essay about Einstein and space flight was surprisingly sensible for a newspaper article.

Many thanks, too, for the letters from Trudl and Hilde that I am returning enclosed along with a previously sent one from Heinzi. From Aunt Mizzi we have heard conspicuously little lately, too. The death of Uncle Karl seems to have hit her very hard. She apparently relived her youth with him in the final weeks. Many thanks for the postcards that you sent me from all over. It is true that you were gone at least twice as much this year as usual. You act sometimes as if traveling were getting to be too much for you, but I believe in actuality you very much like to keep up with it. It is also worth the trouble in such lovely regions and with a car. The book about Goethe and America I have finally had a bit of a look at. The primary part however is about what America thought about Goethe, not the other way around, but one does learn

¹ “On a Hitherto Unutilized Extension of the Finitary Standpoint,” an English translation of KG’s contribution to a 1958 volume honoring the mathematician Paul Bernays, reprinted in *Collected Works*, 2:240–52. For Bernays, see note to Letter, 5 June 1940

² Otto von Habsburg (1912–2011), grandson of Emperor Franz Josef. An Austrian court ruling in May 1963 that Otto met the legal requirement to return to Austria by effectively renouncing any claim to the throne set off a political crisis between conservatives and social democrats

some things about his perspective; in particular that he occupied himself in the last years of his life much with this question, which in and of itself is really very interesting and entirely unknown. Morgenstern is getting along quite well again and he is traveling, as usual, around the country much, but he still looks somewhat exhausted. That must have been quite something. As to the stamp collection, one should probably first determine what it is actually worth.

From your last stay we have only very few pictures, that is to say a mere 4. I hope that Rudi will bring along the other ones, when you come the next time, and also the home movies that he took here so that we can have a look at them here too. With politics I have lost contact somewhat at the moment, since I have gotten around to reading newspapers very little. I was very glad to hear from Morgenstern that you two are looking very good, and hope that you both continue to do well health-wise.

With thousand *Bussis* and warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Many *Bussis* also from Adele

Telegram

NOTE FROM RADIO AUSTRIA

31. VIII. 63

MARIANNE GOEDEL LERCHENFELDERSTRASSE 81 VIENNA
THOUSAND BUSSI AND HAPPY BIRTHDAY
FROM KURT AND ADELE LETTER FOLLOWS

Princeton, 31./VIII. 1963.

194

Dearest Mama!

Here is the letter promised in my birthday telegram. We received your missive N° 382 with the photos. I think that the one picture is an especially good likeness of both of you, because the shot was apparently taken quite unexpectedly. The bank director does indeed look very similar to Professor

Schlick. Perhaps it is a relative of his. Why is he making such a very serious face, by the way? I hope that the lending institution is not going to go bankrupt again. I was glad to hear that Eva appears to be doing well. Hopefully that is one of those cases where the cancer is really cured. How did the matter with her friend get cleared up?

Adele was at the seaside in a smaller town further in the south, where I went with her several times in my "youth." She liked it so well that she stayed there 4 weeks instead of one. Then afterward she took a tour by car the entire length of the coast with a female acquaintance, clear down to the famous "Atlantic City" so that she got to see a great deal of new things. The sun did not bother her. She feels stronger than ever now.

Recently we were in New Hope again, in the elegant restaurant where we once ate with Morgenstern, this time for supper. But the place and its view really only show to advantage by day. But at any rate the food there is good and the car trip at night was also very romantic. For long stretches we were the sole car on the road. We took care of Penny recently for 8 days. I find her to be more charming and obedient all the time.

A shingles rash is a highly unpleasant affair. Good thing that there are quite effective medications for it now. I am doing quite well health-wise.

With thousand *Bussi*
ever Your Kurt

P.S. For Sept. I'll be sending a birthday present and instructions for it

Radiogram

3. X. 63

dr Rudolf goedel 81 lerchenfelderstrasse Vienna
adele very hurt that no congratulations for silver wedding write soon without
mentioning this telegram

regards kurt

Princeton, 20./X. 1963.

195

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters N° 383–86 and the dear little flowers from Mondsee, which still look astonishingly fresh. The two cards from Goisern and from Mondsee are pretty. Especially the latter is really lovely. The hotel is located in the midst of Nature, after all and directly next to the lake. A pity that Rudi's stay in Goisern was disrupted by an issue with a tooth. What was the name of the town where I was with you when my tooth began acting up in 1934; I think Gösing. The temperature that I had off and on for some months afterward was clearly connected to that. For the dentist who filled that tooth (or to put it more exactly, infected it) was the same one who was to blame for a serious jaw operation of Natkin's.

The hotel in which we spent 3 days on our Silver Anniversary is the elegant French one with the lovely view of the river and the bridge. The rooms have an even lovelier view and are very pretty otherwise, too. All in all, the city and the hotel are very appealing and our stay there was a huge success. We also saw an exhibition of pictures there. In the summer there even is a theater directly adjacent to the hotel where headliners often give guest performances.

We also saw an exhibition of actually really very lovely pictures (price: \$250.-) in the "Quartier Latin" in New York. There the pictures were exhibited on the street and one could speak with many of the painters personally.

Today Morgenstern's sister was visiting and brought along the things from you two and conveyed your greetings. We thank you both warmly. Adele is very happy about the pendant. At the moment she is unable to write because she has bursitis in her arm. But this matter is, thanks to some injections, already on the path to recovery.

The essay in "Entschluss"¹ about my work I will still have to read. It was to be expected after all that my proof would be made useful for religion sooner or later, for that is doubtlessly supportable in a certain sense.

The book "Es war einmal" ["Once Upon a Time"] has a nice and homey title. It is astonishing that new books keep appearing about these things. So who is the author and when did it appear?

How is Mimi Peters doing and what is the disease that she suffers from? About the "nice young woman" of 52 years of age, who then unfortunately died, you never ever wrote me much of anything. Did you see her often? Durzi had a brother I believe. What was his name again? and how is he doing? Schlick was most certainly not a Jew. You after all knew him. Even Dr Kuffler

¹ Theological journal published by the Austrian-Swiss organization of Jesuits

does not look at all Jewish. As to politics and the gold reserves in U.S.A., I had little time in the past few months to concern myself with that. But in general, the international situation has certainly improved significantly and Kennedy proved himself to be a better president than was to be expected originally, and after the Cuban adventure. Recently I bought Adele a book by Franz Werfel¹ “Der Abituriententag” [“Class Reunion”]. So I had a look at it myself (I of course do not have time to read it thoroughly) and found that it is apparently very good. Do you know anything more about this author? I believe you would like him, too.

With thousand *Bussis* and many regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Warm regards to both of you and many thanks for her pendant from Adele.

Princeton, 27.I. 1964.

196

Dearest Mama!

Adele is getting quite concerned because we have had no news from you in so long, even though she wrote to you directly after receipt of the Christmas package. But ultimately, one can quite understand your not always being able to reply immediately. I thank you both once again for the many lovely things you sent for Christmas. Especially the gloves will be of great use to me since this kind is very hard to find here. We looked at all the pictures in the books right away and I find that they look much more natural and “modern” than in earlier books of this type. Perhaps a new system of retouching has been used or they are in part from the estate of some recently deceased person at court. Adele is naturally also very happy about the new crossword puzzles.

The new piano that we bought has (in contrast to the previous one that was 50 years old) a very lovely tone, just a lovely as ours in Brünn, and Adele likes to play it very much.

I had my usual gripe over New Year’s, this time particularly awful. But since I took enough of the new medications, it had no bad aftereffects; also none (as always before) on my stomach. A colleague told me that I now look better than before, which is very well possible, since these medications helped

¹ Franz Werfel (1890–1945), Prague-born Austrian Jewish poet, novelist, playwright, third husband of Alma Mahler

me more than the grippre harmed me. That sessions in the toilet etc. do me good, I cannot agree. My improved appearance probably has to do with the fact that I have been taking "Gelucil" for several years, which apparently has quite gradually improved the condition of my stomach.

My fur coat is also an exotic animal, namely a South American llama (Guanaco). But this fur is really unbelievably warm and that was the purpose for which I bought it for myself.

You seem to be downright smitten with Kennedy. But in the end we are now merely harvesting the fruits of what Eisenhower did. In this opinion I am quite alone, however. That the Berliners should be mourning him one can understand after all since he did say: "Ich bin auch ein Berliner." The "Veruntreute Himmel" ["Embezzled Heaven"] by Werfel must be strongly anti-Catholic? It is understandable that a person would view Werfel as unlikeable by the description that an abandoned lover gave of him, but that does not have to have anything to do with reality. In what sense does he become unlikeable to a person?

I hope you two had a nice New Year's Eve at Gitti's. Mine was pretty ruined by the grippre, but we toasted to your health at 6 o'clock in the evening. Was there any real damage anywhere caused by the Viennese earthquake? Adele recalls that there was a strong earthquake in 1938 too. I was in America at the time. To go by what you write, it seems the "forced marriage" of the son of Els has turned out to be a happy marriage. Thus it was perhaps even not so forced and the seduction only done to force the parents. Lalo's husband seems, by your description, to have epilepsy. But since it was quite clearly not congenital in his case, it must have been caused by an accident or an illness? I want to express my sincere thanks for the Christmas greetings from Mimi. I hope, she is doing better health-wise again.

How can you say that the baked goods you sent me were ruined? I have not eaten such good ones in quite a long time.

As to the picture of me that you have from Liese, you already wrote me about it once. Is that the one without glasses, where I was ca. 16 years old? Your letter N° 390 is the last one that we received. I am already looking forward to the answers to the many questions I asked in this one. How is Rudi? He must have quite a lot to do.

With thousand *Bussis* and many regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Adele sends you both many regards. We hope you are satisfied with your health.

Princeton, 24./II. 1964.

197

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your dear letter № 391. That I did not sign myself on Adele's last letter probably was caused by Adele wanting to send it as soon as possible and I was not at home at that moment. But she surely signed with both of our names.

One cannot say that we correspond with Trude. At most, we hear from her at Christmas and even then not always. She complains very much that she feels so lonely after Uncle Karl's death and also sent us a very lovely picture of Uncle Karl. That Else and Wally hurt themselves at the same time is also very strange. So how are they doing?

My fur is not a lamb but a llama. It is not exactly light. But with such a warm coat one can scarcely expect it to be. It is probably not any heavier than my previous one but much warmer. The picture of me in Life that Prof. Morgenstern told you about appeared in a popular book about mathematics published by "Life"¹ in which some things about my work are included. Morgenstern said it would probably be best if I sent you two a copy of the book since it will maybe interest Rudi. So I will do so in the next few days. Morgenstern is still not doing particularly well with that cold of his, by the way. He is still hoarse and taking antibiotics, in fact rather large doses, too. I do not understand why it can still be taking so long. It seems to me that he has no luck with doctors.

Eisenhower's crime was mainly being a general. Not only business people are against the military but also intellectuals are always predisposed to be hostile. Another grave sin of his is that he positioned himself decidedly pro-Egypt when it was attacked by Israel, France and England (1956). Recently I read a biography of Oswald (of the murderer of Kennedy) in Life. One does not get the impression at all from it that he possessed a criminal nature. I am of course not defending the murder by saying so, but he does somehow seem to have acted out of political conviction. I am very anxious to see the report of the governmental commission that was appointed to investigate the entire case.

If you two want to stay quite near to us this year in May, that would indeed be very lovely. I hope it will be possible to arrange an apartment for you two

¹ *Mathematics*, published in 1963 as part of a series of popular science books by Time-Life Books; it included a full-page portrait of KG by the renowned photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt

here. I will write in more detail to Rudi. For today I have run out of material to write about. Thus, I will close and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Many *Bussis* and caresses from Adele. She wrote less lately because she only has help once a week.

P.S. I have two pictures of the two of you with Herr Kuffler here. Did you not to have want one back?

Princeton, 8./IV. 1964.

198

Dearest Mama!

For your l[ast] letter of 12./III. and the enormously charming Easter card we thank you warmly. As to your visit, which is now soon approaching, I will write to Rudi more specifically. Of course I remember Janauschek very well still. So, one acquaintance dies after the other. I can also say that of my acquaintances here now too. The professors who were at the Institute when I came here have also almost all died. And who is left still from among the guests at our wedding? Here every other person dies of a "heart attack." The more the other diseases are eradicated, it leaves all the more for the unavoidable diseases.

I hope you two received the promised book about mathematics by now. It has already been 5 weeks since I ordered it. That the new First Lady is not as beloved as Jacky is understandable, but why they say unfavorable things about her (what?) I do not understand. I find her thoroughly likeable.

What do you say to the earthquake in Alaska? That must have been a nice surprise if without any kind of warning, in the middle of the city a 3 m high tidal wave suddenly comes that breaks through windows and leaves the ground floor apartments under water, even if the whole to-do disappeared again in only a few minutes. I have never heard of such a thing as that before.

Here it is unbelievably cold for April this year, 10 degrees below the normal temperature. At night it usually freezes. Nothing yet is blooming. But next week it is supposed to get really quite warm.

This Easter we did not do anything, due to the weather and also because I still have plenty to do. From Rudi's letter of 30./III., which came after

composing the above, I unfortunately see that you are once again having to deal with your stomach and intestine, and even having vomiting and pain, that you almost never have. I hope that you soon are going well again and that the causes were nervous, as has been the case often before with your intenstine.

With thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards also from Adele

Princeton, 2./V. 1964.

199

Dear Rudi and dear Mama!

I want to quickly write to you before your departure about how it stands with the apartment. At the Institute they have reserved a really very lovely apartment for you: 2 bedrooms, living room (ground floor), price a mere \$100 per month and \$3.33 a day (the 7–8\$ that I wrote about recently was an error). Under these circumstances, taxis will not be an issue. Adele was there recently to bring various things over for you, but found that you were already wonderfully equipped. The telephone has already been connected. The apartment on Linden Lane was unfortunately no longer to be had, since the current tenants are staying a month longer. Another agency was unable to offer me anything either. But perhaps something will turn up once you are here. In the new buildings close to us, nothing could be had when I called up again a couple of days ago.

So I will come to the International Hotel at 10 o'clock on Wednesday. We wish you both a happy trip and look forward enormously to seeing you again.

With thousand *Bussis* to Mama and many warm regards to you

Your Kurt and Adele

P.S. The Institute apartments are naturally cheaper than others because they are not being leased out for profit. Otherwise they usually stand empty starting as of May.

Princeton, 26./V. 1964.

200

Dearest Mama!

I would like to write you quickly that I am doing quite well again after having thoroughly rested Monday and Tuesday. Also my appetite is not bad.

I am sorry that our leave-taking was so spoiled but I truly believe that a multiple-hour car ride instead of rest would have been very bad for me. Tomorrow I will visit Dr. Ehrenreich.

I hope you got back to Vienna fine and we will hear more from you two soon. The trip to the airport apparently took a fairly long time. How was the air conditioning? and how did it go with the Sailing Permit?

I thank you two once again warmly for the lovely and interesting birthday presents. The new desk calendar is in fact the prettiest desk utensil that I have seen up to now. The little star globe is the second prettiest.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi
ever Your Kurt

Thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to you both also from Adele

Princeton, 2./VI. 1964.

201

Dearest Mama!

I want to write you just quickly the addendum to my letter of 26./V. The letters from you of the same day arrived yesterday. We are glad that you both liked it so well here. All of it really did go off well (except the end). Why you had to change over to Lufthansa, I do not understand, since they did tell me at Panamerican that those are direct flights to Vienna. Dr. Ehrenreich injected me with a half liter of Vitamin D+ etc. Afterward I first felt less well than beforehand, but it will hopefully have a favorable effect in the long run. She thinks that my condition is now better than half a year ago (when she saw me the last time). My heart issues certainly have nothing to do with you visiting here. I walked around much more during your earlier visits, after all, and at the end even went back and forth to New York in the heat, and it did not affect me.

The immediate cause was clearly the quite unusual heat for this time of year. Heat in general usually does me quite a bit of good, but it is very bad for me whenever I am covered up too heavily at night and then wake up bathed in sweat. That happened once, since one cannot predict in the evening that it will stay so hot at night (At the moment it is damn cold here). Even the heart issues in 1954 began with my being too much in sun at the seaside and too little in the water. I wish you a lovely stay in Velden and remain with thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

Much love also from Adele

Princeton, 28./VI. 1964.

202

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letters of the 4th (from Velden) and of the 8th (Nº 391). We were glad to hear from Rudi that you got a good, albeit thankfully not at all necessary, rest in Velden. You seemed fresher and stronger to me during the last stay here than during the one before last. The storm on the return trip must have really been something if even Rudi called on St Anthony.

Enclosed I am sending you the picture which the taxi driver took at the World's Fair. Unfortunately, it turned out somewhat too dark. The pictures Rudi left here are both really very nice. You were probably able to have copies made of even more. You unfortunately did not answer my questions about the air conditioning in the car at all. Was it a big difference to the previous trips? or was it maybe this time too cold again as often in railway trains and libraries? Unbelievable that you two have already been gone over a month! Of the Mayerling novel in installments that you brought to me, unfortunately the most important installment is missing, where his last hours and the motive is described. But one can easily complete it for oneself according to the following one. It is clearly love for Večera. I still view a political conspiracy in which he is involved to be the more likely. And enough inscrutable things occur among one's own acquaintances too, by the way. Recently a close acquaintance of Adele, an extremely composed and sensible woman of substantial means, suddenly hanged herself, and half a year ago the widow of a professor at the Institute committed suicide. Adele sends you two warm

regards. She has much to do so that she has not yet even replied to the especially nice letter that Gitti recently wrote her.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 14./VII. 1964.

203

Dearest Mama!

You can imagine that we were not a little shocked by the news of your accident. Such bad luck! The only comfort is that is a fracture of the arm and not of the neck of the femur, which would have been ten times worse. We feel so sorry for you and we only hope that you are not suffering too much pain, for there are such good medications now for that, after all. Also, we hope that the healing process does not last all too long, for you still have a very healthy and strong constitution. How you could trip over a rug we don't understand since you have a rug that is made to stretch from wall to wall. I mailed a letter to you from Adele just yesterday morning, which you will surely have received already. Frau Gitti will probably be keeping you company frequently in the hospital. I will write more in detail soon. For today we wish you from the heart a very quick recovery and send you many thousand *Bussis* and regards

ever Your Kurt [*in Adele's hand:*] & your sad Adele

Princeton, 21./VII. 1964.

204

Dearest Mama!

We were glad to hear from Rudi that you are slowly getting better and that they are taking good care of you in Rudolfinerhaus. Especially that your sleep is no longer interrupted is very important, as you know. We hope and wish for you that your recuperation continues to make good progress. But we are unable to do anything toward that, unfortunately. So instead I will write to you about how we are doing here. Currently there is massive heat here. It has frequently been 33° C [91 F] in the shade. But in our yard and everywhere

else, everything is a luxuriant green, for it is after all a damp heat, therefore a kind of tropical climate. This heat does not bother me at all and I am doing quite well with my stomach and otherwise, too. In the nighttime, the fan runs, pulling in from outside the wonderful air from all the greenness surrounding us, and during the day I spend a good deal of time in the libraries where the air conditioners are often so cold that I need two wool sweaters.

It is a different matter with Adele of course (if only due to the difference in weight). Therefore, she has been at the seaside for a week now, where absolutely nothing of the heat is felt, but which would not suit me at all. The day after tomorrow I will visit her for a day and she will naturally want to persuade me to stay with her longer.

It must now look extremely nice on your balcony, by your description. I like bright colors and in that am in accordance with American taste. Here there are, as you know from having seen, even houses in all colors. We hope that Gitti had a lovely stay in Italy. That country apparently has gone down in quality in general since World War II and up in prices. For Mimi I will send Rudi an offprint, with a few explanatory words that as yet I unfortunately have not written anything generally comprehensible.

I will conclude shooting off my mouth for today and remain with thousand *Bussis* and many good wishes
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 28./VII. 1964. 205

Dearest Mama!

We are enormously glad that you are already able to write again 14 days after the accident. That is a very good sign indeed and was actually not to be expected at all. And not very much is even noticeable in the handwriting at all (especially in the second letter). It seems to prove itself true here, as in so many other ways, that your organism does not react like that of an 85-year old. Hopefully the pain that you still have will be over soon, too.

Why you did not receive our flowers until the 22nd we do not understand. I sent them telegraphically back on the 15th. Today the package from you arrived, for which we thank you both warmly. The book for Adele I will bring her right away on my next visit. I was just visiting her yesterday. She really likes it at the seaside. A pity though, that she is gaining even more weight

there. When she gets back, she will absolutely have to do something about her weight. The house where she is living belongs to a married couple that she got to know last year. There are extremely nice people who take good care of Adele. E.g. they got her proper treatment when she got a bad sunburn. I am doing quite well. I was frequently alone over the summer so that it is no longer any issue. Tomorrow I will be at the Morgensterns for tea.

With thousand *Bussis* and all good wishes

ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards also to Rudi

Princeton, 3. Aug. 1964.

206

Dearest Mama!

I am sorry that you are still complaining so much of pain. Especially at night that must be very unpleasant indeed. Perhaps you move your arm while asleep without knowing it? Hopefully there has been a marked improvement by the time you get this letter. Do you have something good to read that distracts you?

The book about Einstein I have not had a closer look at yet. Did it appear in East Germany? and did you notice any clear difference to those written in the West? Many thanks for the lovely silver spoon! It is quite enormous and Adele will certain be very happy about it. — Of my visit at the seaside I already wrote you in my last letter. Adele sometimes takes excursions with the woman in whose house she is living, recently along the coast in a large ship, onto which the passengers can even take their cars! The restaurant in which Adele eats also belongs to the same family. The food is very good there.

Did you hear about the small war that recently was fought in New York between the police and the inhabitants of the Negro quarter? The reason was that a 15-year-old Negro lad was shot to death, apparently without adequate cause, by a policeman. It is strange that absolutely nothing specific can be learned about this incident.

From Chicago one hears that in the past 1½ years 46 bombings have occurred in restaurants! Supposedly neither perpetrators nor their motives are known.

So, it is not yet that bad in New York, then.

What do you say to the close-up shots of the moon (from a distance of a couple hundred meters)? Now one will certainly be able to soon determine for oneself whether there is any living thing on Mars.

With thousand good wishes for your health and just as many *Bussis* ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, II./VIII. 1964.

207

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your lovely letter. You really wrote quite a bit this time. Hopefully the therapeutic exercises pay off, so that the pain will be receding soon, too.

I am sorry that the flowers were so lousy. We have sent you flowers from here previously a few times over the past few years. Were they in order? I will at any rate be lodging a complaint, so that this kind of fraud does not run rampant. Did they at least enclose a card with our regards and wishes as I had expressly ordered?

Here there was cooler weather this past week so Adele could not swim at all. But tomorrow it is supposed to turn hot again and I will drive over to visit Adele again. Next week she will already be coming back. The town where she is at is called "Seaside Heights."

A couple of days ago I had a closer look at the new library that is now being built at the Institute. It all looks very lovely and elegant and I will have a newer and much larger office there too. At the Institute everything is of course very quiet now, especially when I get there in the morning you could hear a pin drop but that is just as I like it, of course.

What do you two say to politics? Once again, a new "world war crisis," due to Vietnam, after we had two already, due to Cuba and Berlin. Yes, under Eisenhower there was a lovely period of calm. But of course that was not due to, but rather in spite of, Eisenhower! The new President is indeed quite likeable but he does not seem to love the contact with the press in informing the public. The official report about the Kennedy murder has not yet appeared either.

That Erhard¹ whom you all now have in Germany seems to be a very capable man. He looks uncannily like “*deutscher Michel*”² and also looks just as good-natured. Here one reads that 5 Mill. refugees have found positions in East Germany in the course of the past year!

I send you many thousand *Bussis* and hope that, when this letter arrives, you are doing better by quite a bit.

ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 25./VIII. 1964.

208

Dearest Mama!

Your birthday is unfortunately quite sad this year, since you, as I glean from your last letter, are still having much pain. But we have all the more reason to wish you all the best for the coming year, most of all of course that you will be back in the pink very soon. Luckily you seem to be making good progress. Your last letter was truly astonishingly long, and also your handwriting astonishingly good. One notices next to nothing by it any more. The progress compared to the next to last letter is really substantial. But you do have to continue stay brave, if you, as Rudi writes, can even wash up small dishware. That you are still having pain is really no wonder if you do gymnastic exercises every other day. By the time that is over, you will certainly start to feel better quicker, and also the vacation to recuperate at Mondsee will definitely have a favorable effect on your frame of mind. Your cakes taste excellent, even if many of them crumbled (but only a few in small pieces). I eat them (like Adele's Gugelhupf) with butter and sugar on top, which makes them even more nutritious and (to my taste) even better. I also put twice as much sugar into my tea as most people. From here there is not much new to report. We are doing well. Since Adele's return it has turned very hot here again, but that will surely not last much longer. Regarding the cost of the sanatorium do not have any concern. It is really quite enough if you pay half of it.

¹ Ludwig Erhard, chancellor of West Germany from 1963 to 1966

² A cartoon caricature of the German Everyman, akin to England's “John Bull,” embodying Germans' stereotypically self-conceived traits of decency, innocence, and easy-goingness

We wish you once again all the best and send you thousand birthday
Bussis.

ever Your Kurt [*in Adele's hand:*] and Your Adele

Princeton, 10./IX. 1964.

209

Dearest Mama!

I was glad to hear that you two got to Mondsee fine and had glorious weather on the very first day. Hopefully it stayed that way and you are recovering well. I also hope that you will not be so plagued by your gymnastic exercises, especially since Rudi says that the arm indeed cannot be completely flexible ever again. The main thing, though, is that you can write and perform other daily tasks. Then if you cut back on the sleeping pills, you will surely feel better on the whole again, too. I notice by the way that some pages of your letter are excellently written, so that one notices virtually nothing of any injury to the arm. Other pages, however, are less well written. One can see by this that it is largely a question of practice, and your arm will bother you less and less as time goes by, even though it is not completely flexible.

My birthday letter you apparently did not get before your departure, unfortunately. Actually it should have arrived on the 29th. We got a very sweet letter from Gitti, in which she wrote that A[unt] Mizzi had kept you company while she had been away and that you also celebrated her birthday together. If Adele has not written to you in a long time, the reason probably is that she gets too worked up whenever she starts the letter. In the past few months she gets worked up easily in general, but to me she is always very nice. I really cannot complain. (But please mention nothing of these things in your letters.) Here it has now (in Sept!) once again turned very hot and Adele went to visit her friend at the seaside for 3 days. On the postcard that we sent, one cannot see the beach, but it looks the same everywhere here. Except further in the south, where there is a long stretch of "wilderness," i.e., it still looks just like it did in the times of the Indians and is now totally deserted; except on one spot where they have built a house for bathers. I thought it looks quite romantic there. Nearby is also an old lighthouse one can climb up.

With thousand *Bussis* and many good wishes

ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards also to Rudi

P.S. I wanted to send this letter to Mondsee since I believed that two would be remaining until the 15th there. But I see now that Rudi mentioned 10./IX. as the limit.

Another thousand *Bussi*

Your Kurt

Princeton, 25./IX. 1964.

210

Dearest Mama!

Your dear letters of 6./IX. from Mondsee and of 14./IX from Vienna made us very glad, since one clearly has the impression that you are doing better with your arm, and also otherwise. Doubtlessly the vacation and the car trips in that lovely region did your nerves good. The card of the hotel does really look splendid. It is also good that you found such an interesting book about Schubert to read. We would of course very much like to see the shot that Rudi took of you on the balcony. Why do you say that Rudi takes no more pleasure in photography? He took a number of nice pictures again here, after all. Dr Kuffler called several days ago and told me that you are really quite your old self again.

Many thanks for the pretty little flower in the letter. I am doing well except for the fact that I caught a touch of the grippe again, but it has already passed. It was suddenly very cold here, now it is warm again. And you apparently also had an "Indian Summer" this year, too. Now, soon the business of the Institute is starting up again, officially next Monday, but the Director will not be here until Wednesday. Recently, someone wrote an internal history of the Institute, 800 pages that I had to have a look at, with which I am not quite finished yet. Naturally it has to do with the current circumstances at the Institute, because in certain matters one can only take a position if one knows what was previously discussed and decided upon. The report was, by the way, really interesting to read. Recently the Austrian-born Prof. Kreisel was here again, with whom I always have a lot to discuss about Mathematics. I wrote you once before about him.

Adele sends you thousand *Bussis*. She is just in the process of sewing your brocade evening jacket. She wants to send it to you in a few days via airmail and then finally write a letter to you.

D^r Kuffler told me also about his trip around the world. I find, by the way, that even his voice is similar to that of Prof. Schlick. So, he must be somehow related to him. I see just now you apparently did not get the \$40.- in September. So, I will have twice that sent in Oct.

With thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards to Rudi

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Thanks for the three slides!

Princeton, 12./X. 1964.

211

Dearest Mama!

We were very glad about your letter of 29./IX and 4./X. with your picture, since you write for the first time yourself that the recovery of your arm is making good progress. Also, one notices nary a hint of any injury in the picture, even though that was taken some time ago now. I had a look at it with a magnifying glass and will have it copied right away and then will send it to you with the other pictures. The copying takes ca. one week. You should really not complain about sewing being hard for you, for what woman of 85 years of age can still sew well, even without an injury to her arm? We hope that Adele's jacket fits you well.

The article about the new Vienna Institute in "Neues Österreich" is very interesting and also well written. What kind of a newspaper is this "Neues Österreich"? The Neue Freie Presse used to be the best bourgeois newspaper.

Years ago, I went sometimes to "Schweizer Haus,"¹ also with Adele. There used to be a charming young deer in an enclosure there. The "Föhrenhof" is unfamiliar to me, at least by that name. Is that perhaps the former "Krauste Linde?"

Your hatred of the Chinese perhaps has to do with the Boxer Rebellion coincidentally having taken place right during your youth. But that was only the Chinese mob and besides which, the revolution was doubtlessly not entirely without justification. At the Institute there are also often Chinese mathematicians whom I find no less nice than the European or American ones. I hope that Adele will really write to you soon. For today she says to forgive her once again. She often feels quite tired and at the moment she has to

¹ "Swiss House," a popular beer garden in Vienna's Prater park

concentrate on a difficult task, namely a waist-fitted coat for her girlfriend from Seasight [Seaside] Heights, whom she did not want to turn down, since she always lavishes presents on her.

With thousand *Bussis* and many good wishes for your health

ever Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Many warm regards to Rudi from Adele and me

P.S. Adele sends you many *Bussi*. You are not to be angry with her that she does not write. It is not laziness but rather she really does have so much to do.

Princeton, 29./XI. 1964.

212

Dearest Mama!

Only just today am I getting around to answering your dear letters of 27./X and 14./XI. But Adele was an industrious correspondent lately and from the addenda I wrote you know that I am doing well. We hope the same about you. Your arm must really be much better and you have always suffered from time to time with digestive upsets, after all. Recently I heard from Oppenheimer that his wife has had to deal with her pancreas for years. But it must be much worse with her, for she looks as thin as a rail and recently was subjected to a very thorough and rather unpleasant examination at the hospital.

I too have heard of the play about Oppenheimer¹. He told me that it does not correspond to reality in many regards and that that was also clearly stated in many reviews in German newspapers. Now it is also being translated into English and French. A book (novel) about him appeared years ago now, however with names changed. Morgenstern conveyed greetings from you two and reported that everything is in order there.

That Frau Kuffler brought many things back from Japan does not surprise me. I still recall the suitcase of things that Adele brought back from there in 1940. Presumably it was even cheaper then than now. Japan is a strange country. Even though it is located in East Asia, it is in some aspects more progressive than Europe. E.g., birth control there is almost completely unrestricted, so that a lack of offspring is already making itself felt; whereas at

¹ "In der Sache J. Robert Oppenheimer" ["In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer"], by the German playwright Heinrich Kipphart

home a good Catholic is still required to have at least 10 children. Scarcely anything of that will be changed by the current Consul in Rome, which after all is largely a sham as far as any progress is concerned.

Krushčev's fall was not that entirely unexpected. He himself had alluded to it a year ago. In the long run this changeover will unfortunately have unfavorable consequences, for in the final analysis militant Chinese Communism is behind it. Does Richard blame Americans also for the Hitler-Regime? It is a widespread superstition that Hitler was supported by American money in fact. But I consider that to be completely false. If at all, then at the most by France or possibly by England. And even if the money was paid in dollars, that does not prove that it came from Americans.

Where did Heinzi have a villa, actually? And was it from her father or from her husband? I do not even know if she ever was married.

It is unbelievable that Christmas is right around the corner and the year 1964 is almost over! For today I am out of material to write about. There is not much new here and I do not read newspapers much lately either.

With thousand *Bussis*, from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 16./XII. 1964.

213

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your dear letter of 2./XII. We are glad that you are already doing so well with your arm. So, you were lucky despite all the bad luck (knock wood). I also think the picture of our 26th anniversary is very good. I believe I have rarely looked so at ease in a picture. We spent 14 days in Japan on the way over here and stayed in a very lovely American hotel there. I doubtless wrote a long letter to you from there; but our correspondence has now been going on for 25 years and one slowly forgets what one wrote earlier. A "publisher" of our letters would doubtless be puzzled by the repetition. I believe I also put this same question once to Heinzi and Richard, but as a result of my bad memory it only comes to me later. Yes, one can see how quickly time passes by many things e.g., by the fact that they now want to photograph Mars close up. Who in our "youth" would have thought that we would experience this? Just imagine: since you have been gone, an enormous 30 story high building, a "Museum of Science," has been built at an

unbelievable speed at the Fairgrounds in New York. What do you say to the shooting at the U.N. Building in New York with a little cannon? Yes, that is what happens when they coddle the Cuban emigrants like Kennedy did.

Thankfully the shot fell “into the water.”¹ Recently I read that there are 5 women to every 4 men in East Germany. I wonder if that is the case in West Germany too, as a result of the war? “Panzynorm”² is quite the “charming” name for a medication. Hopefully the Brandy Alexander, for which we sent you the recipe, tasted good to you. The Christmas card Adele chose this year. I believe she found the smallest little birds that ever were. Adele is very crushed at not being able to find a suitable present for Rudi this year.

We send you thousand Christmas *Bussi* and for Rudi many warm
Christmas regards
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 14./I. 1965.

214

Dearest Mama!

I see unfortunately that my last letter to you is once again already a month in the past. The holidays again passed quite especially quickly this year and even the Institute started up very early, on 11./I. We received your and Rudi's letters of 16./XII. and 6./I. and also the charming Christmas card. We wrote each other before Christmas on the same day, by the way (on 16./XII.)! The package from you arrived only the day before yesterday and we thank you both warmly for the lovely things. The enclosed little Christmas cards get more charming from year to year. Where does one get those in Vienna, anyway? The lovely glass tray sadly arrived broken. You are most probably insured. Presumably one could have a glass fitted to it here. The baked goods taste very good, but I do not know who is going to eat it all. Adele is doing a weight loss regimen at the moment, which is a very good idea; it will certainly do her good, health-wise. For Christmas this year we had very lovely decorations with colored lights at the entrance gate. That is less endangered

¹ On 11 December 1964, anti-Communist Cubans fired a bazooka at the UN Building to protest a speech there by Che Guevera. The shot exploded harmlessly in the East River. KG was making a small play on words: the German idiom “to fall into the water” means to amount to nothing

² A preparation of pancreatic enzymes

than a Christmas tree in the yard, many of whose bulbs got stolen last year. I got a sound recorder for Christmas that that I was very glad to get. One can e.g. record a radio or television show with it, if one has no time during the day, and then play it back in the evening. On New Year's Eve we toasted to your healths as always at 6 o'clock in the evening. We are glad you had a lovely New Year's Eve evening with Eva and Gitti. That operation of Eva's must be over 2 years ago now, so that one must certainly be able to hope (knock wood) that she is really cured. We hope that you are back in order with your stomach again. The holidays are often blessed with such things. I had no grippe for once this year, since I already got it behind me in Sept. Also otherwise I am doing quite well, health-wise. Here there was, oddly, no New Year's television show at all this year. Such inexplicable things only occur in the U.S.A. Adele was at a New Year's Eve soiree at some neighbors' where I also spent an hour myself. On the other side of our house new neighbors moved in before Christmas, a married couple 83 and 80 years old. Adele naturally took an interest in the old woman, which she is very fond of doing. But unfortunately, she was already very ill when she moved in, and died shortly before Christmas; on the 24th she was buried. It is unbelievable, how many of Adele's acquaintances died just in the past few years. Of one death here not long before Christmas I wrote you in my last letter, as you know.

From Jordan I have not heard anything in 25 years. I only saw him one single time here and that was ca. 1941. Klepetar I saw frequently, the last time 1958. There is quite the terrific cult around Kennedy here too. There are Kennedy dollars, pendants, pictures, etc. He is clearly being viewed as a Catholic martyr. That his wife is to remarry I consider highly unlikely (at least now.) Thankfully we felt not much of those storms here. Now it has turned quite cold and much snow fell. At Christmas it was still very mild.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 28./I. 1965.

215

Dearest Mama!

We are very worried about you and we are very sorry that you have to suffer yet another disruption in your health after the bad luck of the previous year. But thankfully Rudi did write that everything is going well and that you have no temperature to speak of. So, we hope that you will be back to normal

again after not too long of a time. Your strong constitution that you have naturally, and in part thanks to the gymnastics in your youth, will certainly show itself now too. We were very happy that, as Rudi writes, you have been feeling rather well lately. So it seems (knock wood!) the matter with your arm in fact seems to have been overcome for the most part! That is indeed astonishing at your age.

From here there is not much new to report. I am doing quite well health-wise. I am eating somewhat more than in the year before. Especially chicken and fish always does me quite a bit of good. At the Institute the situation has calmed down somewhat. I do not know for how long. Recently I was at the Morgensterns for tea. It is unbelievable how that "little Karl" has shot up lately. He is now already actually taller than his mother and soon will have caught up with his father. He is an enthusiastic radio amateur. The little girl got a doll bakery for Christmas which with one can bake real little cakes. Here everything is now covered in snow. Winter did finally arrive after all. In fact, in some years there has been almost no snow at all. What do you say about our President and his wife both ending up in the hospital with colds after the "Inauguration Parade"? It is truly unbelievable what they are subjected to. Celebrations outdoors until late into the night. They may have been in a heated tent, but, as one sees, that does not help much.

Hopefully I entertained you a bit with my little chat. It is good that you have Frau Gitti. Please greet her warmly from both of us. We wish you the best for a fast recovery and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever your Kurt and Adele

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for both of your detailed letters. Please write again soon!
With many warm regards Your Kurt and Adele

Princeton, 5./II. 1965

216

Dearest Mama!

We were glad to hear from Rudi that the doctor is very satisfied with the course of your illness. Naturally we can imagine that the continuing bedrest is quite unpleasant for you. The only good thing is that you have no pain this

time and, as Rudi writes, no other symptoms as well. The couple of weeks you have to stay in bed will hopefully pass for you just as quickly as time seems to do at “our” age anyway.

We are doing well. Adele recently had to have a small cyst on her eyelid removed. But it all went well and she no longer notices a thing. Naturally an operation on the eyelid is certainly an unpleasant thing and she had head- and eye aches for three days and had to wear a bandage over her entire eye.

Here there is still a great cold spell. We are not used to that at all here. This year is the coldest winter in years. Adele these days always make a fire in the living room fireplace with big logs that crackle pleasantly. That looks very cozy ansd besides that we can really use the additional warmth this year.

Before me stands the lovely perpetual calendar from you two and the mysterious star globe from Rudi. There it is now 1:30 in the morning and I hope you are sleeping peacefully as I think of you. I am all alone in the place, Adele is visiting the new neighbors.

I wish for you that you are well again quite soon and remain with thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your letter of 29./I. I hope I will soon get around to finally answering you in detail this time, too. I would suggest that we shoulder the costs of Mama's illness $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$.

With many warm regards Your Kurt

From Adele thousand *Bussi* and all the best for Mama. She will write soon herself, now that she is rid of her cyst.

Princeton, 14./II. 1965.

217

Dearest Mama!

Your letter of 1./II. came on the same day that I sent my last one. We were very glad to get your letters of the 1st and 7th since they prove that your recuperation is progressing well. “Distant future” is not how long it is going to take, but instead at most a couple of weeks. Also, what you say about the

“glass heart with a crack” is only applicable for a limited time. Eisenhower had the exact same thing 10 years ago, but he even felt strong enough later that he was able to become President a second time, which is doubtless no small strain.

It is a pity that you cannot pass the time by reading. But I know that that comes with difficulties of its own, even with a bookrest. Perhaps one should separate the book into its individual pages. Recently Morgenstern asked how you were doing. You two will doubtlessly have already heard from him directly since then. That someone would send flowers via “Fleurop” without giving a name, I cannot understand. Penny is just as charming as ever, and Adele visits there frequently. Also, the New Year’s Eve soiree that I wrote about was at those neighbors, as well. That chicken is supposedly not nutritious is pure superstition. Beefsteak stimulates the digestion more but the nutritional value is no larger. You did not do anything wrong at all by sending the baked goods. I merely said that it was just too much for me alone. But Adele partook of it in large measure (despite her “weight loss regimen”).

That I got a new room at the Institute, I in fact already told you. I have not moved in yet. But it looks enormously elegant, at any rate. Very modern. One of the walls is completely of glass and one has a wonderful view over the meadows and forest land behind the Institute.

With thousand *Bussis* and many good wishes from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards to Rudi from Adele and me.

Princeton, 21./II. 1965.

218

Dearest Mama!

We received your dear letter of 12./II. Now one really quite clearly notices by your handwriting that you must be doing much better. And the time that you have to remain in bed will soon be over, as you know. The angina pectoris that Hitzenberger diagnosed cannot have been very bad, for you never had any attacks. I also took that nitroglycerin here for a time, too. The wife of Dr Hulbeck suffered from angina pectoris for years, though with actual attacks. Ca. half a year ago she had an attack exactly like the one you had now. Now she is doing really quite well again already. The Hulbecks were here visiting a

couple of weeks ago and I thought she looked fresher and more lively than before the attack. The Hulbecks' son married recently and now lives in New Brunswick, only a half hour away from Princeton. Dr Hulbeck is still astonishingly active for his age. He often gives lectures in New York and is writing several books at the same time, partly about psychology and partly about art and culture. It is good that the caretaker you two got is someone you like. That also plays a large part for recovering from these illnesses. You must write me more about the many letters that you received, when you have your strength back again.

Here it is already slowly turning warm, as often in February, whereas that is the coldest month at home. Already several tulips are up in the yard, but yesterday it was very cold again. I sent my next to last letter express so it would be delivered on Sunday, as it certainly was already in Vienna on Sunday. But instead they deliver it on Monday at 7 o'clock in the morning! What do you say to the German government still not being completely convinced that Hitler is really dead. For they reserved the right to begin proceedings against him should he ever turn up again! Adele made wonderful *Knödel* with sauerkraut. I could only have a taste of the sauerkraut unfortunately, but the *Knödel* were very fine.

We send you thousand *Bussis* and hope to get good news from you soon.
ever Your Kurt.

Many warm regards to Rudi from us both.

Princeton, 11./III. 1965.

219

Dearest Mama!

We are as happy as you are that you are already able to get up a bit, and hope you have made further good progress since then. The weakness that comes from long bedrest does not usually last long. It is good that you have such a humorous doctor. With heart matters, in fact, the psychological always plays a large part, too.

Many thanks for Trudl's letter that you enclosed in your last one. I would wish that I could also write you such long letters. But aside from my unfortunately limited time (the greatest number of things usually has to be accomplished right at the end of the semester), I do not experience the kind of adventures as those Trude writes about. Here things are always quiet. Spring is

starting soon and Adele already began with yardwork but this year she is not going to go so overboard that she gets bursitis in her arm again. Otherwise, we entertain ourselves with watching television. The show in installments that we watched a couple of times together back when you were here is still running and is at times very interesting and very true to life. It is the best of this kind that I have ever seen.

D^r Hulbeck is the nerve specialist whom you, I believe, also met once here. I find him very likable. His wife must be younger than you, but unlike you, her health has been bad for quite some time, whereas you, aside from the nervous diarrhea, were always really quite hale and hearty. Even your phlebitis got better again astonishingly quickly. I find the handwriting in your last letters to be quite excellent, scarcely any difference to before. So one can hope that you will soon be feeling stronger.

With this wish I will close for today and remain with thousand *Bussis* and little caresses

ever Your Kurt

Thousand *Bussis* also from Adele

Dear Rudi! The book about Husserl¹ arrived and I thank you warmly for it.
With many warm regards Your Kurt

Princeton, 18./III. 1965.

220

Dearest Mama!

We are of course very worried about you, that you had another attack and had to be back in bed. But your and Rudi's letter of 15./III. reassured us somewhat. Your handwriting is really actually quite unchanged, and you even write nearly two full pages, and from Rudi we hear that you are now free of symptoms. Therefore we assume that your second attack was not of the same variety as your first one and also will not require such long bedrest. Angina pectoris is after all, as far as I know, an affliction of the nerves and perhaps the attacks you have had lately are of a purely nervous nature.

¹ Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), German philosopher

Reading fairy tales is a good idea in your current condition. The fairy tale of The Lovely Lau(?) that you mention I am unfamiliar with. I have only ever heard of the lovely Melusine. But this fairy tale comes from the 15th Century and I do not know if a more recent poet depicted it.

The show in installments that I always watch here on television has not for a long time now been about the sick man who was the center of the plot when you were here. This is one of those shows that consecutively portrays the fate of one (or several) families and which therefore could go on for as many as ten years, and perhaps will. The interesting thing about this show, though, is that it is so true to life and addresses problems that really do occur often, e.g., the disputes among relatives that seem to be par for the course in our society today. I believe America is the first country where they have focused specific and partially scientific interest on these things. There is an army of "Social Workers" who are in charge of such things if someone is harmed by them. I will close for today and wish for you that you will have soon gotten over the small setback that you had.

With thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Many warm greetings to Rudi and much love also from Adele.

Princeton, 27./III. 1965.

221

Dearest Mama!

We are very happy that you recovered quickly after the second attack. From Rudi's letter one even has the impression that you are doing better than before this attack; as if some kind of remnant had been left after the previous one that has now been shaken off. Therefore, we hope the best for continued progress!

Now Morgenstern must be there already and that was perhaps a little diversion for you, too. It is good that Spring has now already begun there. That will certainly do you good as well. Here the weather is now very inhospitable again. In the evening it usually freezes, after February already having been quite warm for a time. The weather here likes to perform such nose dives. I recall that once in Chicago the temperature dropped by 20 degrees in the course of an hour!

The new library and my office in it look really wonderful. That is now the loveliest and most modern part of the Institute. But of course, Oppenheimer is now being reproached for spending too much money on it. Over all, he has a difficult position if he is to please everyone. I am already looking forward to the fairy tale by Mörike¹. I do love the Romantics' art of poetry and in our era it has probably died out. I do not know at all what has been written in poetry or otherwise in the course of the past 20 years and whether there were important poets writing in German.

Whenever you send me any letters from old acquaintances it always interests me.

With the wish that you continue to recover well and with thousand Bussis from us both

ever Your Kurt.

Many warm regards also to Rudi

Princeton, 7./IV. 1965.

222

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your dear letter of 29./III and the enclosed letters from Aunt Mizzi and Trude, as well as for the fairy tale of The Lovely Lau, which I have now received. I have not read it to the end yet and am curious about how it will turn out. It is at any rate very nicely written albeit in a rather outlandish style.

We hope and wish for you that your recovery continues to progress well. Do not be disheartened by not being able to come here this year in the Spring. I do not know at all if it would have possible to get an apartment at the Institute again for you, because this year there are many guests here during the break.

Winter does not want to end at all in the U.S. this year. After one warm day today, Wednesday, was once again ice cold.

You write of anti-Semitic student riots in Brünn. Should that not be Vienna? I have not heard anything of either the one or the other, except that in general the Communist governments (oddly enough) are hostile to Jews. Yet Germany is now supplying weapons to Israel!

¹ Eduard Mörike (1804–1875), German romantic poet and novelist

Trude writes in her letter of the “attachment to her mother.” Is she now getting along that well with her mother?

One should not get annoyed by the kind of things your write of your nurse. She most certainly did that with good intention, in order to give you a demonstration of how she puts hair in rollers.

With thousand *Bussis* and many good wishes from us both
ever Your Kurt.

Dear Rudi!

Many thanks for your two letters and for sending the fairy tale by Möricke. Dr Hulbeck said to me recently that there is a new way of treating the heart involving hormones. What does Mama’s doctor think of that?

With many warms regards
Your Kurt

Princeton, 21./IV. 1965.

223

Dearest Mama!

We hope and wish for you that you are feeling somewhat stronger by now. We have not had any details from Rudi for a long time. You will have surely received my letter of 7./IV. a long time ago by now, as well as my Easter card. Last week I finished the fairy tale of The Lovely Lau. You are right that fairy tales are like oases among the other arts. For only they depict the world as it should be and as if it had meaning, whereas in tragedy the hero is killed off and in comedy the ludicrous (therefore also something bad) is emphasized. Of course, there are novels and novellas too, but in most of them the tragic or the ludicrous is in the foreground.

Here this year, Spring does not want to arrive at all. Whenever it was somewhat warmer on one day, the next day it gets cold right away again. But now the magnolias and daffodils are indeed finally starting to bloom.

With thousand good wishes and *Bussis* from us both
ever Your Kurt
Many warm regards to Rudi from Adele and me.

P.S. Adele often has rheumatic pain and also her sciatica is acting up again. She will probably have to go to a spa again this year in the summer for it.

Princeton, 29./IV. 1965

224

Dearest Mama!

Today your dear letter of 26./IV. arrived and I was very glad to hear that you could take a drive and walk around somewhat (I'm knocking on wood). Also there is really nothing whatsoever noticeable in your handwriting any longer and one would never believe by it at all that you are still feeling exhausted, as you write. But it is no wonder since you have been in bed for over two months! Doubtless you have never lain in bed that long in your entire life. That would have also weakened you very much in younger years, too, and therefore you do not need to feel discouraged by it.

In the Prater and at Kobenzl it must have been wonderfully lovely. You write you two "drove around the Kobenzl twice." Did you not also go to the top?

Thousand *Bussi* for your birthday wishes. You really do not need to concern yourself that you did not send anything this year, seeing as you two always sent me such lovely things before, after all. Regarding the booklist that Rudi sent me, I will be writing to him. Now I am in my 60th year of life! even though I am not yet 60 years old.

I believe every person who has more severe heart problems thinks about death. That is how Nature set it up. At least that is how it was with me in 1954.

Whether Kennedy was so particularly good with his foreign policy, I would strongly question. Under Eisenhower there were in fact 8 years of peace and no sooner had he stepped down than it began in Cuba and Vietnam.

We bought ourselves for Easter a little card table that Adele found for that one corner of the living room. The corner now looks very sweet and cozy, especially due to the hanging lamp in the style of an old knight's castle that belongs to the set.

I am already looking forward to the second of your favorite books that you promised me.

With thousand good wishes for your health and many *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for your birthday wishes and the booklist, about which I will be writing you shortly. How does it stand with costs to date of Mama's illness? With warm regards

Your Kurt

[vertically in margin:] Adele sends thousand *Bussis* and many warm regards and fond wishes

Princeton, 19./V. 1965.

225

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your letter with the charming clover leaves. We are very glad that you liked the roses for Mother's Day so well and even more over your already being able to travel to Baden and up to Semmering. Hopefully you two are having good weather. I am happy that I do not have to participate in the Vienna festivities¹, for I do hate such things, as you know. I did receive an invitation but of course wrote back declining. In addition, the editorial board of the Presse called upon me to give my opinion of the present, past, and future of the University of Vienna. But I replied to them that my connections to the university were not close enough, since in all I lectured there only two semesters, which is true, after all.

What do you say to the English queen visiting Germany?? It is astonishing, how things turn out. Since de Gaulle, England apparently gets along better with Germany than with France. On the other hand Germany and Israel are constantly falling about each other's necks.

Oppenheimer wants to resign his position as Director next year. He is already 62, by the way, and 65 is the age limit at the Institute in any case. In our yard everything is already as luxuriant as in summer.

We wish you and Rudi continuing good vacation and send thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt (and Adele)

¹ 1965 was the 600th anniversary of the University of Vienna

Dear Rudi!

Morgenstern promised to send me the Presse. If you happen to have a workers' newspaper, it would interest me to see it.

With many warm regards from Adele and me

Your Kurt

Princeton, 3./VI. 1965.

226

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for the charming little flowers from Semmering. A pity that you two were only up there for a week. But to go by your card you enjoyed the stay there for the first days, and as Rudi writes, you were also able to recuperate a bit. That you could only eat half of the portions up there is really no wonder, since those are calculated for young people who develop an enormous appetite in the mountain air! Morgenstern told me that in comparison to before, one notices next to nothing in your appearance except that you had become somewhat thinner. Of both of my two last letters, one was apparently sent from Vienna up to Semmering and one forwarded from Semmering to Vienna! Or did you find the former waiting for you on your return?

I just now read Hilde's Christmas card that you sent me a couple of weeks ago. But I believe you actually wanted to send me the letter that she wrote you on the occasion of your heart attack. Poor Hilde, that she is so entirely alone and apparently yearns for people. It is strange that she has made no connections at all. Perhaps it has to do with her being more or less unprejudiced towards the Communist regime and makes no bones about it.

Adele is now in the midst of travel preparations. She wants to go back to Ischia again for her health in June, since the rheumatism, and other complaints she had completely gotten rid of in Ischia, made a reappearance. Probably. Perhaps she will stop over in Vienna on the return trip. Otherwise everything here is going along as normal.

I wish you good continued recovery in Vienna and remain with thousand
Bussis

ever Your Kurt

Thousand *Bussis* and good wishes also from Adele

Princeton, 3./VI. 1965.

226a

Dear Rudi!

I thank you warmly for the newspaper clippings and the book from the Fischer Collection. The latter is very interesting to me. The newspaper clippings I still have to have a closer look at. They arrived already. A pity that you two had such bad weather up at Semmering. But perhaps it was a good thing that you are spending your vacation at home this year for once. I at least always found that one can relax best at home. Adele went to see Dr Rampona and he said to me that Ischia is doubtless the best place for her joint pain.

Many warm regards from Adele and me.

Princeton, 12./VI. 1965.

227

Dearest Mama!

Your last letter came on the same day that I put mine in the mail! I think one can clearly see by your writing that you are feeling better in every way after Semmering, which Rudi also confirms. So the stay was a great success in the main. We hope that Hinterbrühl will also do you good. The scenery there is really quite lovely, too, after all.

Treatment of the heart cannot be much different here than there. Dr Hülbeck told me that heart hormones did his wife a world of good. But that was perhaps not for angina pectoris but for her coronary thrombosis that you thank God have already survived. I will ask Dr Hülbeck more specifically soon. Pains in the feet are very common among older people and need not have anything to do with the heart.

Many thanks for the newspaper clipping. It seems that political reasons also played a large role in the change of Director at the Ford Institute, which is probably the case for everything in Austria.

Oppenheimer was doubtlessly well-disposed toward me, but that was the case with both the previous Directors, too, so hopefully it will be the case with the next Director as well.

I was quite surprised that Gitti is getting divorced. Can one get a divorce just like that in Vienna if both wish it? What was the main problem in her marriage?

Adele does not play piano very often but does sometimes, old Viennese melodies.

We wish you two, and especially you, a good rest in Hinterbühl.
 With thousand Bussis and many warm regards to Rudi from us both
 ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 23./VI. 1965.

228

Dearest Mama!

This letter is supposed to reach you right upon your return to Vienna, unless you two have changed your plan. "A large old villa in Hinterbrühl with a splendid park" does indeed sound so tempting that one immediately feels like going there. We hope you also had good weather. Here in June it first was ice cold and now it is horribly hot. In America such jumps are very common but now that crazy weather seems to be coming to Europe as well. It could very well be that that has something to do with the atom bombs and astronauts.

Adele is in the midst of travel preparations. She departs on the 26th for Naples, on the "Independence," a U.S. ship. She will spend the first week in the hotel "Orientale" in Ischia Porto, before she has found something definitive. Recently, that relative of Adele's who had that bad car accident two years ago came to visit. It is really unbelievable that she came away with her life. The inner head injury that she suffered as a result is apparently still not completely healed, since the brain pressure (perhaps due to leakage in the lining of the brain?) is too low and once already had to be increased by pumping in air. Something like that naturally has an effect on the entire organism; for a time she was abnormally thin. One could also operate, but the doctors here discouraged her, whereas a European specialist was in favor. Is it not the primary problem in Gitti's case that she carries on too much with her brother? Perhaps filing for a divorce is only a shot across the bow from her husband. Adele says that she found her brother to be fairly unlikable, or is he really so pitiful? Of the letters, the one of Hilde's would interest me the most. We hope that Hinterbrühl strengthened you even further. Even in your last letter you actually seem quite your old self again.

With thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me
 ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 7./VII. 1965.

229

Dearest Mama!

Now I have two letters to answer for you, of which one arrived here on the 1st and the other on the 6th. I am very glad that the stay you two had in Hinterbrühl was a success and that you, as Rudi writes, have gained some weight and are stronger. I am only sorry that you still get attacks so easily. But if they come on the occasions that you describe then it at least does indicate no weakness of the heart. Rather it looks more like a reaction of the nerves, namely that the longer-lasting tension of the arm muscles goes on to affect the chest and ultimately then the heart muscle. Can you not read with a bookrest?

The gnats in Hinterbrühl must have been outrageous, and that is definitely not necessary. In the end they will have to destroy the nests with DDT there, too. You are right about the mail, that it is a scandal how long it takes some times: by ship 3 weeks and by airplane 5 days! Adele made it to Ischia and wrote me some enthusiastic cards from the ship. She disembarked in Palma and had a look at that region. Also Casablanca seems to be a lovely city. What makes you ask if I love De Gaulle? His foreign policy has much similarity to Hitler, except that he apparently does not know what he is doing.

To go by what you write regarding Gitti's marriage, one has to ask oneself why the two of them ever got married, if from the beginning she had no intention of living with him or taking care of him. Financially they are in fact independent of one another. Or was it better in the beginning and did something disrupt the marriage? Also that she "collapsed" on the one hand and on the other wants to "throw him out" is an odd contradiction.

At the end of your next-to-last letter you write that I perhaps have grudges. But I do not understand what that is in reference to. Many thanks for both the cards from Hilde.

Thousand *Bussis* and all the best
ever Your Kurt.

Princeton, 26./VII. 1965

230

Dearest Mama!

Many thanks for your dear letter of 12./VII. I am very happy that the examination at Eiselberg's went so well and that you are feeling quite well thus far. Everyone finds it astonishing that you have gotten over this issue so

well at your age, and one can thus hope that the residual pains you are still having will disappear in the course of time.

To go by the cards that Adele sent me, Spain must be really lovely, even lovelier than Italy. From Ischia she writes that it is so overcrowded and expensive there, but supposedly one sees nary an American. The springs probably really do have a curative effect. But sadly, Adele apparently cannot tolerate the hot baths well this time, probably due to her high blood pressure. The doctor there forbade her bathing in the radium springs for a time and prescribed her pills and injections. Morgenstern was a week in the hospital here, apparently mainly for diagnostic purposes, due to his prostate, but then he had a severe hemorrhage from a vein artery in the bladder. I do not know to what degree his sister is informed. His family is at the house in the mountains (It is better not to talk of this with Adele).

What do you say to Stevenson dying? That was really one of the few likeable politicians. He will be hard to replace and his death will probably make the U.S. foreign policy even more irrational. The weather is now alternatingly hot and cold here. So I constantly have something to be glad about. First that the heat is over and then again that I no longer need to freeze.

Much love and thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt

Post and Telegraph Administration
18. VIII. 65
DR RUDOLF GODEL
LERCHENFELDER STR WIEN7 AUSTRIA
ISCHIA
UNFORTUNATELY CANNOT COME REGARDS = ADELE

Princeton, 19./VIII. 1965 231

Dearest Mama!

Please excuse the long break of 3 weeks between letters. I have been very concerned lately due to Adelen's condition. She does write that she is doing excellently and she feels like newly born after the baths. But there must be something not right, because of her high blood pressure. She got injections and you alluded in your last letter to something, too. The name "Gerstner" was never mentioned by Adele in her letters. That something is not right with her health can also be seen by her complete loss of adventurousness and the fact that she would have preferred to come right home at the beginning of August, but she then agreed with the doctor to continue the regimen. Originally she not only wanted to continue on to Vienna but also to have a look at Rome and Pompei again. I have now reserved a direct flight for her from Naples to New York on the 24th and hope that the trip will not do her any harm. Her doctor in Princeton has expressly permitted the baths after all and also gave her pills for high blood pressure to take along. Many thanks for the novella Immensee.¹ I am very glad that you are once again doing very well and frequently spend lovely days at Kobenzl, Kronichhof etc. The sudden pain in your left foot you write about probably had nothing to do with your heart (rheumatism?). Morgenstern went 2½ weeks ago to his family for some solitude in the forest. The hemorrhage was life-threatening, because such instances of bleeding are so hard to stanch. But otherwise they hopefully do not indicate anything bad. Mr^s Morgensten arrived in Princeton by airplane on the day he had the hemorrhage but went back right away. As to politics, I will write you in more detail in my next letter. For today I send you much love and thousand *Bussis* and remain

ever Your Kurt.

Many warm regards to Rudi

Princeton, 12/IX. 1965. 232

Dearest Mama!

Your dear letter of the 4th we received and are glad that the stay you had in Velden was a success all in all. You describe the lovely region once again very

¹ 1849 novella by the German writer Theodor Storm (1817–1888)

realistically. Also the dance you write about must have been good. One has the impression that it had “meaning” whereas one otherwise mainly sees only pointless hopping about. Good not overly loud music in a hotel until midnight is also something I find very pleasant.

Where is the little Landon castle you write of? Was that not yet open to the public before the second World War?

In the matter of Gitti’s divorce various things are unclear to me. Since she comes from the Mosing family (?), I would have thought that she is a strict Catholic, so that a true divorce would not be even possible. What was actually the cause for divorce? Even civil marriages cannot simply be terminated. Or does a mutually-agreed-upon divorce exist there? Not here. Had he been married once before and will he now marry again? Adele says that she worked in the same office as he did before their marriage for many years. Then it is understandable that she misses him, as she does not see him any more at all now.

Adele is doing well. The bathing only bothered her initially when she bathed too hot and too frequently. Later she then bathed much less (under physician’s supervision). But the climate and the sea air alone seem to have done her quite a bit of good. She also traveled around in and near Ischia quite a bit. It must be very lovely there indeed. About the return trip Adele recounted that the airplane shook for a large part of the time so much that some passengers even vomited. Have you ever experienced anything like that, even for a short time?

We hope that the stay in Velden also did you good so that the little attacks will gradually go away now.

With many good wishes and thousand *Bussis*

ever Your Kurt

Much love and many *Bussis* also from Adele

Princeton, 23./IX. 1965.

233

Dearest Mama!

Most of all I have to catch up on this year’s birthday greetings with thousand *Bussis* and good wishes for you. A money transfer, along with the monthly amount for October, is already en route. How it is possible for me to completely forget your birthday this year is incomprehensible to me. That has

never ever happened in the twenty years since we have been corresponding with each other. It is probably due to the (unnecessary) concern I had in August about Adele. As I see, you also celebrated your birthday somewhat late in Vienna. Wasn't the 31st exactly your travel date? That everything is fine with Adele I already wrote to you. I am also doing quite well. Therefore you do not need to have any concerns on our behalf.

The weather is really quite odd this year. Now it is such a heatwave here that it is literally hotter than at its worst in the height of summer. No one recalls having experienced anything like it here at the end of Sept. I have almost never been in the region of the little Landon castle. Is there not also a large game park there? (I forgot the name). That Velden is only 6 hours from Vienna surprised me very much. Is that possible? Or does that only seem so short to me because one is used to quite other distances here? As to Gitti, unfortunately you do not write what her father (the general)'s name was. I do not believe that Oppenheimer is very taken with his own global fame. For usually the ones who are world famous are the ones who do not care, because they are interested in more essential things. Thank you for the letter from Hilde. It is strange that she never mentions another person than her daughter. One has the impression that she is completely isolated. But that cannot be true. There may be hermits, but no hermitesses.

We are very happy that your condition has improved in the course of the past few weeks, and hope that also the new electrocardiogram turned out well.

Again, much love for your birthday and thousand *Bussis*
ever Your Kurt.

[vertically in margin:] Many warm regards to Rudi from us both

Much love on your birthday and thousand *Bussis* also from Adele.

Princeton, 6./X. 1965

234.

Dearest Mama!

I want to answer your dear letter of 28./IX. right away for you so no long break in letter writing occurs unintentionally again. We were very glad that your electrocardiogram turned out well and even more so that you once again are able to work a little in the kitchen. That you had been in bed for the first 8

days in Velden, I did not know. But you did not feel unwell? Bedrest in good air is by the way the best for things affecting the heart.

Did Morgenstern by now visit you two yet? and how do you find his appearance? As to the little Landon castle, I think by your description it is in the vicinity of the game park where the murder took place that Frau Dekker was embroiled in.

Ischia actually did Adele quite a bit of good all in all. I wrote you, as you know, that she looks really rejuvenated and that her joint pains are gone. Even her ankles so worse the wear from dancing ballet have gotten much better, which surprised me the most. Naturally one should not overdo the hot baths, which she apparently did at the beginning.

What do you say to the visit of the Pope to the United Nations? Naturally he was not officially invited as Pope but as the regent of a small state. But since he was addressed by the president of the assembly as "Your Holiness," that is almost tantamount to the United Nations recognizing him as the representative of God. He then behaved as if the Unit. Nat. was a branch of the Catholic Church by going from department to department and making an appearance. Except he was not allowed to give the papal blessing (that had apparently been agreed upon with him). Also odd that he (even though it did not fit in that context whatsoever) condemned artificial birth control and that he portrayed himself as spokesman for all of humanity (therefore including the Protestants). Yes, we live in a strange world. Did you hear about the diamond robbery at the New York museum? If not, I have to write to you about it soon. For today I will close with thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me and remain

ever Your Kurt

Many warm regards to Rudi from us both

Princeton, 21./X. 1965.

235

Dearest Mama!

My last letter crossed yours and it will probably go the same for this one. But that does not matter all that much, except that answers to questions arrive somewhat later. Both of the Cebins still work for us, i.e., actually only he does, and does all the work in the house too. She still continues to have trouble with her heart (apparently angina pectoris) and spent 10 days in the hospital this summer, which cost her believe it or not \$1000. (I saw the bill myself). There

were stool-, urine-, blood-analysis done every day and a several other tests more of this kind. That is modern medicine! Regarding Adele's state of health in Ischia I have written you more or less everything that I know. Only that she recently told of having a kind of heat stroke. She had to stay in bed a couple of days and felt miserable. Did Rudi learn anything more about Morgenstern's illness? and how is he doing now? Otto would certainly have been much better than the Nazis. But in the case of a monarchy one never knows what will follow, after all. Franz Ferdinand was not much better than the Nazis, for the policies of him and his party ultimately led to a world war, too, as you know. Did you hear about the demonstrations against the war in Vietnam here? They are right! In order to end the war in Korea, we needed Eisenhower. But no sooner had he stepped down than the very same thing started up in Vietnam. Did you hear that East Germany is gradually reverting to imperial-German patriotism, despite Communism? It is entirely possible that the next war will start from there. For West Germany is now quite peaceable and Prussia never belonged to it.

Adele brought a very lovely and not at all expensive chandelier back from Italy for our dining room. (Here it would cost three times as much.) It would be to Rudi's liking and even you were not satisfied with the lighting in our dining room. The matters of your digestive tract of which you unfortunately write certainly have to do with nervousness. Excitement is certainly not good for your heart and you should try if for no other reason to take everything with more equanimity (e.g., things with the servant). One can do it, if one makes an effort.

With thousand *Bussis*, also from Adele,
ever Your Kurt

P.S. Many warm regards also to Rudi from us both

Princeton, 7./XII. 1965.

236

Dearest Mama!

We received your dear letter of 10./XI. Many thanks for the newspaper clipping. Regarding the difficulties of the calculating machine, Morgenstern told me about that long ago. He told me back then also that the machine not only needed a building, but also substantial personnel for its maintenance (ca.

10 people). Of course the pettiness in such things (in Austria and in other European countries) comes as no surprise, that no one wants to learn a thing about it.

That Gitti is so content after the divorce is very good to hear. Probably the marriage was a mistake from the beginning. The initiative to wed was probably not hers. — Lalo is very much to be pitied if the marriage really was as happy as you write. That is, by the way, a good counterexample to the belief that only marriages of convenience are happy.

In politics there is nothing good. Recently I read that, as in the past few years apparently due to the Fascist regime, everything is going downhill in Paris. The famous food is even said to be miserable in the best restaurants and the same for fashion, theater, and painting, for which Paris after all used to be famous. The war in Vietnam is also getting nicer and nicer. Nonetheless I do not believe that the next larger-scale war will start there, but rather as always before, in Germany. Now it has already been 20 years since the last world war as you know, so it is about time. But thankfully this time it will not go that quickly, due to the division of Germany.

Both of us are doing quite well. That it is already again the threshold of the new year is incredible. We have not heard from you two for a fairly long time, and I am beginning to be worried about you. That traveling to Brünn is so easy now seems to prove that the liberalization of the Communist countries by Krushchev is no empty delusion after all. One is surprised, too, by all the things now permitted to be written in Russia.

With all good wishes for your health from Adele and me and thousand
Bussis
 ever Your Kurt

Princeton, 27./XII. 1965.

237

Dearest Mama!

Now Christmas is over once again and we thank you both most warmly for the many pretty things and the charming little packages they appeared out of. The tie is, as always, very elegant I will be able to get a lot of use out of it. Adele was very happy with the lovely nightgown and also immediately started reading the book about Otto. I am interested in it too. It contains apparently an entire history of Austria of the past 50 years, as you know. I once borrowed a

book from the univ. library about that but this one apparently tells more about what went on behind the scenes. The desk set will certainly fit very well in my new office. It made me particularly happy that Linzer cookies were among the baked goods again. I only hope that baking was not too strenuous for you. The little Christmas cards are really ridiculously charming, especially the one with the little singing angels in the forest! A person wonders how it is possible for one to arrive every year that is even more charming than the one the year before. We had a very nice and undisturbed Christmas and thought of you two very much. I even felt more Christmasy this year than usual, whereas it is normally the other way around as one gets older. Enclosed I am sending photos of the tree and of the chandelier. Adele bought a very nice cross of lightbulbs for the front of the house to go with the little deer. Health-wise we are both doing quite well. Adele now seems to feel as strong again as ever, at least as she left nothing out of the Christmas preparations. Right now we are working our way through a stuffed capon. From Aunt Mizzi no Christmas card came this year and also no Brünn calendar. That has never happened since the end of the war. We only hope that it does not turn out she was ill. From Gitti we got a very nice letter.

On New Year's Eve when it is 12 o'clock for you two, we will once again be thinking very fondly of you two. We wish you both much love for the New Year and above all that your health continues to improve.

With thousand *Bussis* from Adele and me
ever Your Kurt.

Radiogram

8. V. 66

marianne goedel lerchenfelderstr81 vienna
thousand bussis and happy mother's day from kurt and adele

* * *

Marianne Gödel died on 23 July 1966. From that date to Gödel's own death a dozen years later, only the two letters below to his brother survive. The end of his own life did not come gently. Rudi later recollected that as his brother grew older, he lost interest in anything but his work and his increasing obsessions with the state of his and Adele's health.

In 1970 he suffered another severe psychological crisis, leaving Adele so distraught that she asked Rudi to come from Vienna to help deal with the situation. With the help of weekly psychiatric sessions Gödel was able to return to work later that year. But in 1976 and 1977 he once again descended into the grip of intense paranoid delusions, exacerbated by considerable physical distress from an enlarged prostate and urinary blockage that led to his hospitalization in April 1976, but which he steadfastly refused to have surgically alleviated.

When Adele required emergency surgery herself in July 1977, followed by recuperation in a nursing home until just before Christmas, Gödel basically gave up on living. Admitted to Princeton Hospital on December 29, he died two weeks later, on 14 January 1978, weighing by that time a skeletal 65 pounds. His death certificate listed the cause of death as "malnutrition and inanition secondary to personality disturbance."

* * *

Princeton, 1./II. 1972

Dear Rudi!

Adele and I wish you all the best on your 70th birthday and most of all that you are soon back in good health. We were glad to hear from Morgenstern that he found you in good spirits and looking not bad at all.

We hope that the enclosed little gift pleases you.

With warm regards from Adele and me

Your Kurt.

P.S. Here with us everything is going as well as can be expected. Adele's condition is unchanged. She thanks you for your l[ast] letter of 19./XII.

Princeton, 12./XII. 1975.

Dear Rudi!

Warm thanks for your l[ast] letter. We are very sorry to hear that Eva has died. She was not old at all. But that is how it is here too. One after another goes.

We wish you and Gitti all the best possible for the holidays. With warm regards

Your Kurt.

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