

toward other people, so much so that it rather oppresses me. But isn't it wonderful that normally parsimonious persons should be moved by the power of their and our true love to become warm and willing to make sacrifices? And isn't it wonderful again that a wealthy man should mitigate the injustice of our poor origins and the unfairness of his own favored position? And think how much happier and more capable of work I shall be when I have you at my side! And then I will work and earn so much that I shall no longer need to feel ashamed.

With this gesture Paneth is entitled to make a greater claim on my friendship—needless to say there was no question of the loan being provoked—and my only regret is that I seriously believe I won't be able to enjoy this new friendship very long.³ I shall have to thank her verbally or in writing. And as in every novel there are always two or several couples and intrigues ("plots"), so something new happened this very day to Schönberg, too; something good and actually more honorable than that which happened to me. Bühler told him that Prof. Monier Williams⁴ of Oxford wants to have Schönberg with him as soon as the middle of May, and so he has to take his degree in the greatest haste, for which Bühler is offering him every possible facility. I do think, though, that he will have to take a few weeks longer so as not to overwork himself. I understand that his salary will be anything up to £150, and that there is a possibility of his name being mentioned in the title of the dictionary on which he is collaborating. He will be seeing you all earlier than I. In any case Minna should be pleased and will realize that this rare stroke of luck is not falling on an ordinary person.

And now your letter, the best, most beautiful you have ever written me, the most valuable, a letter that puts an end to all my doubts. Let us love one another and work.

With fondest greetings
from your
Sigmund

³ Paneth was suspected of having tuberculosis.

⁴ Editor of a Sanskrit dictionary.

42 To MARTHA BERNAYS

Vienna, Saturday, at the *Journal*
April 19, 1884

My precious Marty

Most certainly you can take seriously what I said, and please don't believe for a moment that I am making any sacrifices for you which you cannot think about with a free heart. Believe me, it is only natural that I should object more than you to the protracted waiting; I just stand it less well; it is a general rule that brides are happier than bridegrooms. So it is more for my own sake that I have decided on a short-term career, and besides I am quite convinced that your eyes—the part must stand for the whole—that you, my darling, will compensate me for a great deal; you too must believe this. And what am I sacrificing for it? I haven't got particularly far, and in the two years we still have to wait nothing very decisive is likely to happen. At best a slight change in my position in society. It won't cost me any effort; on the contrary, I will be only too happy to give up what is unimportant, of uncertain value and prospect in favor of something so worthy, refreshing and rich as sharing life with a beloved who is going to be not only a housekeeper and cook but a precious friend and a cherished sweetheart as well. Add to this what I have often written to you, that in one field of science I am independent enough to make contributions without any further contacts or assistance, by which I mean my knowledge of the nervous system, and I am happy to think that you will be able to help me with it. So the world will not be allowed to forget my name just yet. The trouble is I have so little ambition. I know I am someone, without having to be told so.

By a German region¹ I was of course thinking of Lower Austria, Moravia or Silesia.

For the time being anyhow I am still quite ready to fight and have no intention of breaking off my battle for a future in Vienna. The "struggle for existence" still means for me a struggle for existence here. This past week the chances of being a *Dozent* next winter have, I must admit, seemed very remote. Owing to my

¹ Regarding the possibility of starting a practice there.

to read the book by Dr. Luther. But I took a good look at the Elbe and if you arrive in Hamburg in time its waters will whisper many thousand greetings. Between Dresden and Riesa I had my first great adventure, unpleasant at the time, pleasant in retrospect. You know how I am always longing for fresh air and always anxious to open windows, above all in trains. So I opened a window now and stuck my head out to get a breath of air. Whereupon there were shouts to shut it (it was the windy side), especially from one particular man. I declared my willingness to close the window provided another, opposite, were opened, it was the only open window in the whole long carriage. While the discussion ensued and the man said he was prepared to open the ventilation slit instead of the window, there came a shout from the background: "He's a dirty Jew!"—And with this the whole situation took on a different color. My first opponent also turned anti-Semitic and declared: "We Christians consider other people, you'd better think less of your precious self," etc.; and muttering abuses befitting his education, my second opponent announced that he was going to climb over the seats to show me; etc. Even a year ago I would have been speechless with agitation, but now I am different; I was not in the least frightened of that mob, asked the one to keep to himself his empty phrases which inspired no respect in me, and the other to step up and take what was coming to him. I was quite prepared to kill him, but he did not step up; I was glad I refrained from joining in the abuse, something one must always leave to the others. With the compromise of ventilation-slit versus window, Act I came to an end. The conductor summoned by me took neither side but offered to escort me to another compartment, which I declined. Later, when several people opened the window in order to get out, and left it open, I settled down boldly beside it, for I felt very ready for a fight. The anti-Semite, this time with ironic politeness, renewed his request. No, said I, I'd do nothing of the kind, told him to turn to the conductor, and I held my own as far as the next station. There the conductor again refused to say anything, but another official, who happened to have heard of the issue but not of the scene, decided that in winter all windows had to be closed. Whereupon I closed it. After this defeat I seemed to be lost—a storm of jeers, abuses, and threats broke out, until I turned round and yelled at the ringleader to come on over and make my acquaintance. I was not at all sure of the outcome. The answer was that no one was

talking about me at all, they had no intention of having their conversation interrupted, but—and from then on everything was quiet. I do think I held my own quite well, and used the means at my disposal courageously; in any case I didn't fall to their level. After all, I am no giant, haven't any hackles to show, no lion's teeth to flash, no stentorian roar, my appearance is not even distinguished; all this would have had a lightning effect on that mob, but they must have noticed that I wasn't afraid and I didn't allow this experience to dampen my spirits. So much time and space has been spent on this silly story. Now I must order another sheet of paper.

The journey here from Dresden is endless; it was 5:30 when I arrived and already dark. I hired a porter as a guide first to the post office to see whether Emanuel might possibly have changed his traveling plans; when this was not the case I asked to be taken to a hotel near the Magdeburg station where I had ordered a room with two beds for him and myself and another room for Mr. Robinson.² By a strange coincidence it is called the Hotel Stadt Freiberg, the town where Emanuel and I met for the first time, where I was born. (Needless to say, it is not called after the same *Freiberg*.) There I made myself look a little more human and hurried to the mirror to see what I actually looked like. My self-confidence had been somewhat increased by the battle with the infidels, but sank again when I saw myself in the mirror. No, I don't look at all noble; neither the blackest coat nor the whitest shirt could conceal my obvious plebeianism. But an elegant princess loves me nevertheless, and when I have money, which is as good as certain (my self-assurance tells me so) then I shall dress her in the most beautiful clothes and it will never occur to a soul that she could have married anyone but a prince. Then I made my way slowly toward the Magdeburg station and bought myself some cigars; by then, however, it was time to satisfy a gigantic appetite with a meal which didn't bear much resemblance to my Viennese suppers. There hadn't been time for a proper luncheon. In the Stadt Freiberg restaurant I sat among the Leipzig Philistines, listening to their talk and watching their faces. They talk just as much rot as the people at home, but they look more human; I don't see so many grotesque and animal-like faces, so many deformed skulls and potato noses here. On the contrary, if I were in Vienna I would

² Emanuel's nickname for his brother Philipp. See letter of December 20, 1883. Note 2.

where the fibers and cells lie in relation to one another, where the fibers lead to, etc. The fibers are the leading ducts of the different parts of the body, the cells are in control of them, so respect is due to these creatures. Now, on the sliced segments of the hardened brain very little is visible, but more appears when they are colored with carmine, because then the cells and fibers grow redder than the other less important parts. Even so, it is still very difficult to see all the fine fibers or even to get very clear pictures. It is well known that silvering and gilding produce beautiful pictures on other specimens—that is, quite different coloring for the different elements; now this is also being tried out on the brain. I believe that so far I have succeeded best. These are technical tricks which exist in every craft, but which science cannot do without. Is my darling princess satisfied now?

Such dirty notepaper and such an enormous envelope, she will think, but this is life at the *Journal*. Fortunately it is just 9 A.M. About to be relieved.

Farewell, princess, and I hope I shall often be able to give you good news.

Your

Sigmund

26 To MARTHA BERNAYS

At the *Journal*, Tuesday
October 23, 1883

My beloved Marty

I dare to say "my beloved" although I do occasionally have bad thoughts and write so angrily. If I have offended you again, please put it down on the list with the others and think of my longing, my loneliness, my impatient struggle and the shackles that are imposed upon me. Now and again I have something like attacks of despondency and faintheartedness which you, my dear and kind one, must not share. At these times you must laugh at me and remember how quickly I regain my elasticity and my unclouded judgment. This afternoon, girl, I once more had good results, found a new gold method which promises to be more lasting than the previous one, but if this also turns out to be capricious, I can never-

theless foresee the final result: I shall discover completely or almost completely what I am looking for.

These difficult times will not discourage me so long as we remain healthy and are spared exceptional misfortune. Then we are certain to achieve what we are striving for—a little home into which sorrow may find its way, but never privation, a being-together throughout all the vicissitudes of life, a quiet contentment that will prevent us from ever having to ask what is the point of living. I know after all how sweet you are, how you can turn a house into a paradise, how you will share in my interests, how gay yet painstaking you will be. I will let you rule the house as much as you wish, and you will reward me with your sweet love and by rising above all those weaknesses for which women are so often despised. As far as my activities allow we shall read together what we want to learn, and I will initiate you into things which could not interest a girl so long as she is unfamiliar with her future companion and his occupation. All that has happened and is happening will, by the interest you take in it, become an added interest for me. You will not judge me according to the success I do or do not achieve, but according to my intentions and my honesty; you will not regret having sacrificed the beautiful years of your youth to fidelity, and I shall be proud of you. You will be able to read me like an open book, it will make us so happy to understand and support each other. You will prevent me from doing anything petty, from anger, envy, and the desire for unimportant things, and if you worry about having interfered with my scientific career I will laugh and tell you the story of Benedikt Stilling,¹ a doctor who died a few years ago in Cassel, practiced science in his youth and was then compelled to take a job as a doctor. But for thirteen years he worked every morning on the human spinal cord, the result of which was a great work, and every evening he continued to work on the brain, and he is known as the foremost among the scientists to whom we owe the knowledge of this noble organ. All this shows the industry, the tenacious enthusiasm of the Jew, not even coupled with the talent normally expected from Jews. This we can also do.

My beloved Martha, part of what you will be to me you are already. But I expect you to become more and more. Others keep

¹ Dr. Benedikt Stilling (1810-1879), German anatomist and surgeon, founder of the theory of the vasomotor nervous system.

mstances; we, Marty and I, will do
d not at all fortunate.

oman, keep pouring out your heart.
aven't done so for some time.

Your

Sigmund

NAYS

Vienna, Tuesday evening
October 25, 1883

made a discovery which may not be
give me if I talk a lot about it today.
see Breuer as late as 9:30, and on my
inds of compliments for his wife, so
d by our conversation. For instance,
il, chemical preparations can be, too!"
ually managed to make use of, as you
ome, I settled down in the consulting
arest book—I looked in vain for the
nted these rights once and for all.)
ed so much I decided to send it to my
it is already ordered for you, but just
ike to give it to you as a celebration of
As things never work out as one ex-
le' came home first and informed me
her husband until eleven o'clock, that
n his way to fetch the children, who
, where the Meininger² are now giving
hoped I wasn't annoyed. I was not
t mentioned that I had had such a
nd it in the best possible company (my
ctually earned me a handshake), and
I met Breuer. "Let's go for a walk,"
toward the Karl Theater and when I

at of Addressees.
Court Theater at Meiningen.

broke my news and talked of it for a long time and finally asked his
forgiveness for holding forth on a subject which might not interest
him, he was good enough to say: "Few things interest me more."

This afternoon at three I went to see Fleischl, whom I found
again in a miserable state; I showed him the preparations one after
the other: first the silver and then the gold made with the unre-
liable method, then the new ones. While I was in the midst of the
first gold preparation, Brücke arrived. "Anything to be seen?" "Yes,
brain gildings." "Ah, that's very interesting, especially since gold
has the reputation of not being much use for this." "But this is a
new method, Herr Hofrat." "I see, your methods alone will make
you famous yet." And with that he went off. Fleischl was quite be-
side himself with delight. Sanguine as he is, he congratulated me
over and over again and advised me to concentrate for the next
seven years on the exploitation of this discovery. I laughed out
loud and told him I would starve long before then. "You won't
starve," he said. Then he confided in me that he too had a discovery
up his sleeve: to build a new kind of accumulator for electricity;
if it came off he would make a lot of money and give me enough
to allow me to concentrate on this work without any worries.
Needless to say, this suggestion cannot be taken seriously, but it
is rather significant of the warmth of our relationship nowadays. I
thanked him accordingly and asked him, in the event of his dis-
covery succeeding, to give me just enough to travel to Hamburg
in the summer. This was granted. Then I asked him if he would use
the same method for an examination, say of the retina, that fine sen-
sitive little skin at the back of the eye, which is actually part of the
brain, and to my great joy he promised to start on it as soon as the
exhibition had closed. To my joy because to teach an old teacher
something is a pure, unmitigated satisfaction.

Then I went to Breuer, whom I found rather cantankerous after
his luncheon: his microscope was not quite in order. As a result I
wasn't able to show him everything, but what he did see drew from
him quite a number of admiring comments. Then he said: "Now
that you have the weapon, I wish you a happy war." No doubt it
will mean a great deal of work before the first paper can appear,
of which my little woman will receive an offprint. The great ques-
tion is: Will this method also be suitable for tracing the fine nerve
fibers in the tissues, in the skin, in the glands, etc.? If this is the
case, then indeed a new prospect will be opened. My material

om it; the years of waiting
ould it not come off so well,
entral nervous system. I am
today. What I am afraid of
hods, which would entail so
with the commotion.

, this discovery has an emo-
ive succeeded in doing some-
nd over again for many years.
began to tackle this problem.

I have longed so often for a
to me, and now I have her.
ed from afar as inaccessible,
show me their friendship. I
ne nothing dishonorable; even
hings which mean something
feel safe from the worst fate,
may hope to acquire some of
o have my Marty, now so far
close by me, have her all to
look forward to the further

today share with me my joy,
at there is ever anything in

tionate greetings and kisses
our

Sigmund

e, in English]: HOPE AND JOY.

Vienna, Thursday, 5 P.M.
November 15, 1883

ow on. I have been thinking
past days, and just want to

remind you—by wishing myself luck and success for the return of
the date which gave you me—of the special coincidence that this is
the seventeenth monthly memorial and that the seventeenth is again
a Saturday. But I won't have to renew my courtship, will I? Today
is a holiday¹ and I have done no work whatsoever, in order to
refresh myself. The weather is quite horrible; this evening I think
I will go and see Hammerschlag.² I am so weary that it will do me
good if someone is friendly to me. What's more, they will ask after
you and I will have a chance to talk about you.

What you said in your last letter about Mill³ and his wife should
have inspired me on the spot to tell you something about them
both. The essay by Brandes⁴ gives only a personal impression of
the man, it is far from being an evaluation of his whole position in
our contemporary history. I got the idea of reading him when
Comperz⁵ entrusted to me the translation of his last work. At the
time I found fault with his lifeless style and the fact that in his work
one could never find a sentence or a phrase that would remain in
one's memory. But later on I read a philosophical work of his which
was witty, epigrammatically apt, and lively. Very possibly he was
the man of the century most capable of freeing himself from the
domination of the usual prejudices. As a result—and this always
goes hand in hand—he lacked the sense of the absurd, on several
points, for instance in the emancipation of women and the question
of women altogether. I remember that a main argument in the
pamphlet I translated was that the married woman can earn as
much as the husband. I dare say we agree that housekeeping and
the care and education of children claim the whole person and
practically rule out any profession; even if simplified conditions
believe the woman of housekeeping, dusting, cleaning, cooking, etc.
All this he simply forgot, just as he omitted all relations connected
with sex. This is altogether a topic on which one does not find
at all quite human. His autobiography is so prudish or so un-
worthy that one would never learn from it that humanity is divided

¹ Name day of Leopold, Patron Saint of Lower Austria.

² Samuel Hammerschlag (?-1904), Freud's teacher of religion at school as well
his fatherly friend.

³ John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), English philosopher and economist.

⁴ Georg Brandes (Georg M. Cohen, 1842-1927), Danish literary historian and

⁵ Theodor Comperz (1832-1912), Professor of Classics at the University
Vienna (see letter of Nov. 12, 1913).

of Cerdenio and Dorothea, whose fate is interwoven with Don Quixote's adventures, of the prisoner whose story contains a piece of Cervantes' life history—all this is written with such finessè, color, and intelligence, the whole group in the enchanted tavern is so attractive, that I cannot remember ever having read anything so satisfactory which at the same time avoids exaggeration. All the happy couples, the ladies who promptly love one another like sisters and receive the poor Moorish girl so affectionately, the knight lashed to the window and ordered to prevent wicked giants from breaking in: none of this is very profound, but it is pervaded by the most serene charm imaginable. Here Don Quixote is placed in the proper light through being no longer ridiculed by such crude means as beatings and physical maltreatment but by the superiority of people standing in the midst of actual life. At the same time he is tragic in his helplessness while the plot is being unraveled. Sancho, with his sly motives and in the way he keeps tumbling from the dream world into reality, is wonderful. And then Doré's illustrations; they are superb only when the artist approaches his subject from the fantastic angle: when for instance he picks out a few words of the tavern-keeper's wife to show how a wretched little knight has cut in half six giants with one blow of his sword, the lower halves of the bodies still standing while the upper halves roll in the dust. This picture is really of a marvelous absurdity and a splendid contribution toward dispelling all the romantic nonsense about chivalry. He succeeds too with the Oriental scenes; the strange and grandiose architecture, also with the harshness of nature in the dark mountains; and he is good wherever the text lends itself to caricature, for instance when the ghosts bewitch the knight and lock him up in a cage. It's enough to make one die with laughter. But in other scenes, those in which the true character of the knight is revealed, the subtle irony is missing. Here the caricature is mostly exaggerated and the illustrations fall far short of the text. But I can well imagine how magnificent his illustrations for *Orlando Furioso*² must be, material that would seem to be made for Doré, and even several things out of the Bible, especially the legendary and heroic scenes.

Now, my dearest most beautiful sweetheart, please take these comments in your stride, don't consider me ungrateful or reproach

² *Orlando Furioso*, by the Italian poet Lodovico Ariosto (1474-1533).

me for thinking too little of you or seeming too cool. The more intimate your letters become, the more silent I get; as I read them something like a continual tacit assent goes on within me; yes, that is how I want my Marty to be, as she is now. Long may she remain this way and healthy to boot.

Well, I wonder what you got for your birthday? And what does Minna mean by saying that you had three this year?² I am afraid you have been treated rather poorly by me this time. Just wait, though, till things are going well with me, and I will celebrate your birthday properly. We have after all so many dates to celebrate, I have seen you on so many days—and often wasn't grateful enough—and the memory of having seen you is quite enough to make a memorial of the occasion.

Goodnight, my princess, keep well and remain fond of

Your

Sigmund

Please thank Minna for her sweet, intelligent letter which can only receive a less brilliant answer, for which she won't have to wait very long, however. Ask her to stop writing to Schönberg for once, so that he can answer me, too.

Am I so sleepy or is it just that my handwriting is so bad today? I can hardly read it. I even omit words, too, don't I? One more affectionate greeting, Marty.

² Martha's birthday was celebrated according to both the secular and the Jewish calendars.

17 To MARTHA BERNAYS

Vienna, Tuesday night
August 28, 1883

My precious girl

I came to my patient today completely at a loss how to find the necessary sympathy and attentiveness for him; I felt so limp and apathetic. But this feeling vanished when he began to complain and I to realize that I have a function and an influence here. I don't think I have ever attended him with greater care, nor made such an impression on him; work really is a blessing. And now I

feel well and calm; I have decided to be severe with myself so as not to fall back into such a state of weakness; the awareness of calm preparedness is surely the finest thing a man can find in himself. It is what the poet described in the lines:

New strength and heart to meet the world incite me,
The woe of earth, the bliss of earth, invite me. . . .¹

The mood for which an even greater poet found the loftiest expression with the words:

Let us consult
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not, what resolution from despair.²

But I have no use for this mood, it must not be spent on one decisive battle, rather be saved for a long, tenacious struggle with small, isolated tasks.

I am well again now and able to enjoy things and am glad that even in the bad days I did not think of you with any less tenderness than I do now. There may easily be a more accommodating love than mine for you, but hardly a more serious one, in cold blood. When I am angry with you nowadays, as I was about the traveling project,³ it is gone as soon as I have spoken my mind, and I don't like to leave it unspoken, for it all burrows its way into me and cannot be cauterized away, proofs of which you have had. But—then no more about me—introspection and presumption are also part of this mood.

It wasn't very easy to find any peace today; the moment I got home I was told that my mother had waited two hours for me, left a small parcel and a message for me to go to the Prater as Father is leaving tomorrow. . . . He is not leaving till tomorrow evening. I cannot stand anyone's company for long, least of all that of the family; I am really only half a person in the sense of the old Platonic fable which you are sure to know, and the moment I am not active my cut hurts me. After all, we already belong to each other and if we are going to have a tussle—this too is part of love—let it be at close quarters.

¹ Quotation from Goethe's *Faust*, I.

² Quotation from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

³ A visit to Elise.

What else happened today? Oh yes, my bookseller⁴ came to see me to ask my advice whether he should accept a book which the author himself wishes to translate from the original English. Since my bill with him is pretty big, I am glad to establish a personal relationship with him. The book is beautifully illustrated and I am going to recommend it to him. I hope he will present me with a copy of the translation. Unfortunately it is not something I can send to you, it is a pathological histology! Oh, my precious sweetheart, what stupid, uninteresting things I write to you! I am going to tell you a funny little story, but you mustn't be sorry for me. When I got home I found a letter from a friend who frequently comes to see me (privately), asking me to lend him *another* gulden till the first of the month, to leave it with the janitor and if I don't have a whole gulden, then half a gulden, but at once; on the first everything would be paid up. Well, my entire fortune happened to consist of four-kreutzer, which I couldn't very well offer him. So I decided, since my ordinary bankers were not at home, to waylay a colleague who owes me some money, in fact quite a considerable sum for this time of the month. But he couldn't be found, I was getting hungry and had to go to the Prater, so what was I to do? Then fortunately another colleague appeared from whom I borrowed a gulden in no time. But by then it was too late to send part of it to the other friend, I just had to go to the Prater, so today he got nothing, but if my debtor pays tomorrow he shall have something. One day he and I will probably be rich, but don't you think this is a funny kind of gypsy life, Marty? Or does this sort of humor not appeal to you and make you weep over my poverty? Don't take it to heart; before you have a chance to sell your jewels to save me I shall be an affluent man again.

And now goodnight, sweet princess; if I have written more impersonally and less affectionately, I have a little purpose—and you are to guess what it is.

Your faithful servant
Sigmund

⁴ Presumably Deuticke, bookseller and publisher in Vienna.

on brain anatomy. You are quite right, little princess, it is no reading matter for girls, I had quite forgotten the many coarse and in themselves nauseating passages when I sent it to you. No doubt it achieves its aim in a remarkable manner, yet even this is somewhat remote from my princess. But the incidental stories are charming, all these you really must read. While in the midst of the book today I nearly split my sides; I haven't laughed so much for ages. It is so beautifully done.

Now farewell, my lovely princess. In my silence about our love please see once more the symptom of my unworried and healthy certainty of possession, and go on loving me as I will always love you, and then we will compete as to which of us can be the more loving.

With affectionate greetings till we write again

Your

Sigmund

16 To MARTHA BERNAYS

Vienna
August 23, 1883

Treasured princess

Just back from my country practice to find your sweet letter with the good news that you are feeling well and all the pleasant things you don't tire of telling me every day. I had a talk today with a colleague in the hospital, Dr. Widder; who said he considers it a great mistake to marry as long as one has no money and that it will take me eight years to get anywhere. All this he was saying not from worldly wisdom, etc. but out of the innocence of his heart, as he sees it. Defending my case valiantly, I told him he just doesn't know my girl, who is willing to wait for me indefinitely, that I would marry her even if she had turned thirty—a matron, he interrupted—that I would bring it off by starting work elsewhere, that a man has to take some risks and that what I stand to gain is worth any risk. He admitted that within two years I could be earning two thousand gulden, and showed me a letter from a Dr. K. in Brünn, who hopes to earn five to six thousand florins in the course of a year, etc. He was not entirely serious about the gloomy

picture he painted. The most beautiful part of it all I of course did not tell him—that it makes one so unspeakably happy to feel oneself loved, even if we don't yet belong to each other formally and completely, and above all if one is lucky enough to have abducted a little princess! Courage, my treasure! You will become my wife much earlier and you won't have to feel ashamed of having had to wait so long. One quite small piece of good news I will let you know today: unless I am very, very much mistaken I think my "latest method" is going to work; I wrote to you before that I am putting my hope in the light of the sun—it really seems to be effective. But don't be disappointed if I write again that it doesn't work; discovery requires patience and time and luck; if something is to succeed it always has to start like this. So courage, my little princess.

My patient is no worse; I am busy dispelling all kinds of minor complaints; so far nothing has happened that I cannot cope with, and when I give an order I often hear that Breuer has contemplated doing the same. His wife, of whom you wished to hear, has much the same serious charm that you have, my angel, but is not quite so sweet; I admire her because she has excellent observation, nurses him with such patience and is so good at cheering him up. I really do hope he will improve; Breuer doesn't think he will, and fears the next six years of slow deterioration.

So you have run out of notepaper, Marty? In September you shall have a slice of my salary and with it order some more notepaper of the same kind. No, no, rather spend it on yourself, it is such ages since you have had any money, and at the moment I cannot send you more than a few little marks, but I can't exchange them today, in fact not before Saturday, as tomorrow I am on duty.

Now I must break off for the evening, I will continue this letter to my beloved at night.

Forgive me, dearest, if I so often fail to write in a way you deserve, especially in answer to your affectionate letters, but I think of you in such calm happiness that it is easier for me to talk about outside things than about ourselves. And then it seems to be a kind of hypocrisy not to write to you what is uppermost in my mind: I have just spent two hours—it's now midnight—reading *Don Quixote*, and have really reveled in it. The stories of the indecent curiosity

¹ To harden and dye slices of the brain for microscopic examination.

of Cerdenio and Dorothea, whose fate is interwoven with Don Quixote's adventures, of the prisoner whose story contains a piece of Cervantes' life history—all this is written with such finesse, color, and intelligence, the whole group in the enchanted tavern is so attractive, that I cannot remember ever having read anything so satisfactory which at the same time avoids exaggeration. All the happy couples, the ladies who promptly love one another like sisters and receive the poor Moorish girl so affectionately, the knight lashed to the window and ordered to prevent wicked giants from breaking in: none of this is very profound, but it is pervaded by the most serene charm imaginable. Here Don Quixote is placed in the proper light through being no longer ridiculed by such crude means as beatings and physical maltreatment but by the superiority of people standing in the midst of actual life. At the same time he is tragic in his helplessness while the plot is being unraveled. Sancho, with his sly motives and in the way he keeps tumbling from the dream world into reality, is wonderful. And then Doré's illustrations; they are superb only when the artist approaches his subject from the fantastic angle: when for instance he picks out a few words of the tavern-keeper's wife to show how a wretched little knight has cut in half six giants with one blow of his sword, the lower halves of the bodies still standing while the upper halves roll in the dust. This picture is really of a marvelous absurdity and a splendid contribution toward dispelling all the romantic nonsense about chivalry. He succeeds too with the Oriental scenes; the strange and grandiose architecture, also with the harshness of nature in the dark mountains; and he is good wherever the text lends itself to caricature, for instance when the ghosts bewitch the knight and lock him up in a cage. It's enough to make one die with laughter. But in other scenes, those in which the true character of the knight is revealed, the subtle irony is missing. Here the caricature is mostly exaggerated and the illustrations fall far short of the text. But I can well imagine how magnificent his illustrations for *Orlando Furioso*² must be, material that would seem to be made for Doré, and even several things out of the Bible, especially the legendary and heroic scenes.

Now, my dearest most beautiful sweetheart, please take these comments in your stride, don't consider me ungrateful or reproach

² *Orlando Furioso*, by the Italian poet Lodovico Ariosto (1474-1533).

me for thinking too little of you or seeming too cool. The more brilliant your letters become, the more silent I get; as I read them something like a continual tacit assent goes on within me; yes, that is how I want my Marty to be, as she is now. Long may she remain this way and healthy to boot.

Well, I wonder what you got for your birthday? And what does Minna mean by saying that you had three this year?³ I am afraid you have been treated rather poorly by me this time. Just wait, though, till things are going well with me, and I will celebrate your birthday properly. We have after all so many dates to celebrate, I have seen you on so many days—and often wasn't grateful enough—and the memory of having seen you is quite enough to make a memorial of the occasion.

Goodnight, my princess, keep well and remain fond of
Your

Sigmund

Please thank Minna for her sweet, intelligent letter which can only receive a less brilliant answer, for which she won't have to wait very long, however. Ask her to stop writing to Schönberg for good, so that he can answer me, too.

Am I so sleepy or is it just that my handwriting is so bad today? I can hardly read it. I even omit words, too, don't I? One more affectionate greeting, Marty.

³ Martha's birthday was celebrated according to both the secular and the Jewish calendars.

17 To MARTHA BERNAYS

Vienna, Tuesday night
August 28, 1883

My precious girl

I came to my patient today completely at a loss how to find the necessary sympathy and attentiveness for him; I felt so limp and apathetic. But this feeling vanished when he began to complain and I to realize that I have a function and an influence here. I don't think I have ever attended him with greater care, nor made such an impression on him; work really is a blessing. And now I

not quite sure enough in your judgment; let us both hope that such things will never happen between us again. And you will understand me when I say that even for a beloved girl there is still one further step up: to that of friend, and that it would be a ghastly loss for us both if I were compelled to decide to love you as a dear girl, yet not as an equal, someone from whom I would have to hide my thoughts and opinions—in short, the truth. Please accept the hand which I hold out to you in fondest affection and confidence and do with me as I am doing with you.¹

¹ No signature—probably delivered personally.

12 To MARTHA BERNAYS

Vienna, Thursday
October 5, 1882

To whom else but to my deeply beloved, most ardently worshiped Martha should I report on the outcome of my visit to Prof. Nothnagel?¹ Don't be cross, my lovely girl (whose charm at noon today is still confusing me), if I initiate you into the intricate byways and conditions to which my struggle for existence has brought me. It is after all not just my battle and interest, we are so intimately connected, I am so unspeakably happy that you are mine, so certain of your interest, that everything becomes important to me only when you share it. Even if the outcome was not exactly what I had desired, it was nevertheless quite honorable and I see no reason to abandon hope for a better future so long as you, my angelic girl, can put up with me.

Well, I went to see N. with my collected works and a recommendation from Meynert.² The house he lives in is new, hardly finished, the flat reeks of varnish, the waiting room simply magnificent. On the wall hangs a picture showing four children, a beautiful boy who in twenty years will be snatching the best jobs from the medical students, a little girl with hints of potential beauty for whom within ten years the young men will be fighting at students' balls: both

¹ Hofrat Professor Dr. Hermann Nothnagel (1841-1905), Director of the Second Medical Clinic, Vienna.

² Professor Dr. Theodor H. Meynert (1833-1892), brain anatomist, Director of the Psychiatric Clinic where Freud worked.

with brown hair from which I concluded, rightly as it turned out, that their mother is dark; then the elder girl, an unattractive blonde with her father's features, holding in her arms a baby of indeterminate sex. Soon I also found on the walls books written by the father of this promising brood, a large portrait of a serious, dark-haired woman on an easel-like contraption, and standing beside her the man who holds our fate in his hands. It gives one quite a turn to be in the presence of a man who has so much power over us, and over whom we have none. No, he is not one of our race. A Germanic cave man. Completely blonde hair, head, cheeks, neck, eyebrows, all covered with hair and hardly any difference in color between skin and hair. Two enormous warts, one on the cheek and one on the bridge of the nose; no great beauty, but certainly unusual. Outside, I had felt a bit shaky, but once inside, as usual in "battle," I felt calm.

"I have been asked to bring you greetings from Prof. Meynert, and to express his regrets at having missed you the other day. And on my own behalf I am taking the liberty of handing you this card."

While he was reading the card, I sat down. I knew what was on it: "Dear Professor, I am herewith warmly recommending to you Dr. Sigmund Freud on account of his valuable histological work and would be grateful if you would give him a hearing. In the hope of seeing you soon. Yours—Theodor Meynert."

"I set great store by a recommendation from my colleague, Meynert. What can I do for you, Herr Doktor?"

When speaking, he made a very pleasant impression; he talked like a man who means what he says and who weighs his words, reserved but trustworthy.

"You've probably guessed already," I said. "It is known that you're about to engage an assistant, and it is also said that before long you will have a new job to offer. I also understand that you set great store by scientific research. I have done a certain amount of scientific research, but at the moment I have no opportunity to continue, so I thought it advisable to present myself as an applicant."

"Have you some offprints of your papers with you, Herr Doktor?"

"Yes," said I, putting my hand in my pocket.

While he was glancing through the papers, I explained my position. "At first I studied zoology, then I changed to physiology, and

have done some research in histology. When Prof. Brücke told me he couldn't give his assistant notice and advised me, a poor man, not to stay with him, I left."

Now N. began. "I won't conceal from you that several people have applied for this job, and as a result I can't raise any hopes. It wouldn't be fair. I will mention you as a candidate, however, and put your name down in case another job turns up. As I've said, I won't make any promises, but this you will hardly have expected. *Qui vivra verra*. I'll hold onto your papers, if I may."

All this was said in a friendlier manner than I can reproduce here; he was not so gruff, if anything rather reserved in a friendly way. One thing emerged clearly: the first job, to be occupied immediately, has been taken (by a son of a Prague professor, so rumor has it); as for the second, not yet vacant, he does not want to commit himself, but he did take me seriously.

"One more thing," I said. "At the moment I'm serving as an *Aspirant* in the General Hospital, and if you can't offer me any hopes or prospects of an assistant's job, I could serve as an *Aspirant* with you."

"What exactly is an *Aspirant*?" he asked. "I'm not yet familiar with the terms used here."

I now gave a brief explanation (something my girl must also bear with here) to the effect that a hospital consists of two things: clinics and departments--clinics, where the professor and his assistants teach the students; departments, where the *Primarius* and his *Sekundarii* (without students) treat the patients. The professor has the choice of his assistants, but the *Primarius* cannot choose his *Sekundarii*. Any doctor can become an *Aspirant* while waiting for the position of a *Sekundarius* to fall vacant, and during this time he is called, as I am, an *Aspirant*. This interim period, however, can be spent in a clinic as well as in a department. Understand, Marty? Professor N. did not appear to understand entirely, for he said: "If you have any prospects of a job as a surgeon's assistant (which I haven't), then don't hesitate to accept. But I advise you to go on working in the scientific field, and when it's time to hand in an application, I will consider your case."

"But I cannot afford to go on working in the scientific field in this way, I've got to branch out and go through the medical curriculum as fast as possible in order to set myself up in practice,

probably in England, where I have relations. I have worked long enough for nothing. As it is, I've got to abandon a chemical paper which I had started."

"I am not referring to publications," he replied. "Just go on working in the scientific field; after all, medicine can be practiced scientifically, too."

"I know that, and it differs little from the working methods of the physiologist."

"It's the same," he interrupted.

"But I feel I must pursue what is most necessary for the medical practitioner."

"Do that, it won't prejudice you in my eyes when the opportunity turns up."

"If I understand you correctly then, I am to act as though there won't be any hope of my working with you in the immediate future?"

"Exactly," he said. "Take what you can get; I can't promise you anything, it wouldn't be fair. Incidentally, are you thinking of deciding on an academic or a practical career?"

"My inclinations and my past experience point toward the former, but I've got to--"

"Of course, first you've got to live. Well, I'll keep you in mind. Once more: *Qui vivra verra*." And with that he got to his feet.

"In any case, I thank you very much. And may I come and fetch my papers after a while? They are my only copies."

"I'd like to read them. Could you come and pick them up in three or four weeks? I'm very busy at the moment."

"I can quite believe it, Professor. As a matter of fact, the gist of what I've written can be found in the annual report and in Schwalbe's *Neurology*."

One more bow, and that was that. Well, my girl? For the moment all this has led to nothing. The first job is gone, and for the second my application will certainly be considered, for the man spoke honestly. In a few days Meynert, for whom N. has great respect, will intercede personally for me, and if he gets to know the other friends I have among the professors, I will rise in his estimation. For the time being, however, I shall go on working as though there is no hope. What I am going to tackle next I am not quite sure. I am considering dermatology, not a very appetizing field, but for general practice very important and interesting in itself. I intend

calling at that department tomorrow; if there are no *Aspirant* jobs vacant, I shall go to Meynert.

I hope from now on to be on better terms with your poor mother, whom I like despite our conflicting interests, and you I hope to see at 10 A.M. on Saturday in the Prater.

Your faithful
Sigmund

1883

1884