

January 1946

My dear, dear child, I have not opened – have not been able to open – this book for over four weeks. Father is dead, it is incomprehensible that he is no longer here, will never come again. On New Year's morning at around 5 o'clock – I'd had such a bad night worrying – I was overcome by such an awful restlessness that I got up and got myself ready. Around 9 o'clock they sent a message from the hospital. When I arrived up there, Father didn't recognise me anymore. You once said: one shouldn't call a dying person back [to life]. I sat quietly by Father's bedside, took his dear, oh so cold hands in mine and thought about how lovely and good our life was in spite of all the difficulties and hardships. We never had any financial worries, always had a lovely house and we had you both. You've both only done the right thing, you both have hardworking husbands and Dorothee has darling children. That is a great, great deal. And even though the last few years were often bitterly hard, we were together and bore all the hardship and sorrows together. And so I thanked Father once again with all my heart for everything he had given me, and given you, with all my heart. They were such quiet hours. A profound peace marked Father's features. He was breathing so lightly, he lay there so quietly and peacefully. Outside it was snowing, the sun was shining, now and again the sound of bells was carried on the wind from down below. At around 11.30 a lovely, gentle smile passed across Father's face, he turned his head towards me a little, and it was all over. My child, it wasn't dying, it was going to sleep – And that last hour, to be so alone with Father, to be with you both in all my thoughts, it was so unspeakably hard and yet so beautiful. The difficulties and horrors I experienced in the next few days, the paths I had to tread, how vulgar and nasty everything was, I'll keep all that to myself, it shouldn't burden you both. Perhaps you wouldn't be able to understand it, my dear, because although you experienced the beginning, you never experienced the end of Hitler's Germany.

July 1946

My dear child, I have spent a long time leafing through this book today, I can't write anything more. I read everything out to Father, he reminded me of this and that, it feels as if we had written it together for you. If only I could place it in your hands soon. How many evenings did we read through the first volume and this second one. If you read both, a whole part of your life will rise up before you. Perhaps then you will do what Father so desired – using these sketches – write your diary – because your life was rich in what is beautiful and good, and in what is difficult and hard. But everything always took a turn for the best. And, as they say, the blessings of the parents build the houses of the children,¹ Father's heart's desire will be fulfilled for you both: for Franz to get a university professorship!

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How odd, dear child, this book is at an end. The first book finished with your serious illness in Madrid on 8 / 8 / 36 and now, after almost 10 years during which we faithfully recorded everything for you here, this book finishes with the death of our Father. I'm not going to start a new book. I don't have the inner peace to write. I would always be thinking: 'and Father doesn't know anything about it'. Let us be joined in the last few years of my life by letters.

¹ This is a quotation derived from Chapter 3, Verse 11 of the Book of Sirach, a Jewish work of ethical teachings from the pre-Christian era.