

INSTITUT ALPIN VIDEMANETTE

Ex. 27 (iii)

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A,

I don't understand what I've done to upset you. Please, please, tell me what it was, and forgive me. I can't bear this silence. I know Mariette was your friend. She had a bad heart. It wasn't your fault, there was nothing you could have done.

MC

The Lodge, Institut Alpin Videmanette, Rougemont, Switzerland
12th September 1950

Dearest Audrey,

I'm pleased you're enjoying Vienna; I'd love to visit. Aunt Amelia would have been so proud of you getting there. You're right, there's nothing for me here now. I'm thinking of moving to London, or maybe Paris. What do you think? I thought I might try to take the art more seriously, perhaps to try to sell some paintings, and that won't happen here. I can't think of any way to do this without Papa supporting me, at least for a start, until I find my feet.

Love,

Marie-Claire

108 rue Vieille-du-Temple, Paris

21st March 1951

Dearest Audrey,

I'm in Paris! I'm staying in a back room at the Galerie Yvon Lambert, run by Mr Lambert and his girlfriend Celeste. They're both well-known on the art scene down here. Yvon loves my work, and has promised me an exhibition in September if I can get enough pieces done. This is marvellous!

Love,

MC

108 rue Vieille-du-Temple, Paris
To University of Vienna

13th October 1951

I'm a wreck.

I tried to write this several times and got nowhere, so I'll make this as simple as I can.

I tried to kill myself.

I didn't succeed, obviously.

God, it sounds so stupid.

I suppose it's because the exhibition was a complete disaster. And that sounds stupid, now, too. It's only drawings.

Yvon + Celeste keep cooking at me. Viciously. I'm not sure what they're trying to feed me up for.

Mama wanted me to go home, but I couldn't face living with their disappointment.

Mama says I should ask you if any of the people you're studying with can help me get this black dog off my shoulder. I'm not sure I can talk to a stranger about it. I'm not even sure I can talk to anyone about it.

Sorry, I don't know how to end this.

Perhaps you could come?

MC

108 rue Vieille-du-Temple, Paris

18th March 1952

Dearest Audrey,

The new exhibition was a success! I can hardly believe it. Even though not many people came, Yvon tells me that every single piece has sold, some for twice the asking price. I am amazed!

I've you to thank for getting me back on track, for getting me back and working. Thank you.

I can't believe your course is nearly over - when are you heading back to Felbridge? Is Uncle Vincent going to be able to cope?

Love,

MC

27a rue Pierre Leroux, Paris
20th Jan 1953

To: 24 Copthorne
Road, Felbridge,
Surrey

Dearest Audrey,

How awful! Are you sure that the letter's real? I wonder why your father never sent it? To discover that he and cousin Gloria were once in love... well, I can't help but wonder why they didn't marry. But to discover that he was writing this to her only last year... crumbs. I wonder if Great Aunt Sophie could shed some light on it all? It's the sort of thing she'd love to gossip about, I'm sure.

I can't for a moment believe that your father wanted your mother out of the way, though, Audrey. And you shouldn't think it.

Love,

MC



HOTEL GARIBALDI
CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, ITALY

18th Sept 1953

Dearest Audrey,

I've been stupid. I went too fast, and I crashed into someone, and he went into a tree, and he's quite badly hurt. He's in hospital with a broken leg and cracked ribs.

He's a ski instructor. I feel so guilty. He won't be able to earn any money and the hospital's expensive, so of course I'm paying the fees, but he may never be able to work again.

Oh, I'm an idiot.

Mama says I should just come home, but that seems very unfair.

Love,
MC

27a rue Pierre Leroux, Paris

27th Oct 1953

Dearest Audrey,

I'm in love with a ski instructor. His name is Gino.

Oops.

(Can you just imagine Mama's face?)

Love,

MC