

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Mann, Erika

Paris, 1945-08-01

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War Correspondent Erika Mann
Hotel Scribe, Paris,
August 1, 1945.

My darling Liesl,-

it is some time now that I know - or should have known. There was a vague and casual ~~Heck~~ sentence in a letter received by another correspondent and I refused to believe. Today Mielein's message caught finally up with me and I can doubt no longer. I am sadder than I can say - if saddest for you, my very dear. Need I tell you how truly and deeply fond I was of him and how frightened by his illness? I should have written more often; there were countless little things I might have done to please him; how little have I seen of him during these past years! It hurts to think of any opportunity lost, now, that none is left. There was something festive about every hour spent with him - something incomparably enriching and happy making which I felt even as a little girl, when I rushed home from school so as not to miss his visit. His profound charm - for there is such a thing and he was full of it - was born of kindness. I keep thinking of him. He loved Paris and would have wanted to see it again. He loved Churchill and would have been shocked by his defeat. I was in London when the results became known and the small new leaders celebrated their victory. It may be all for the good and, perhaps, he would have said so; but he wouldn't have liked it. There is little over here which he'd be happy to see - little, indeed,

which he wouldn't be glad to escape.

His end ~~is~~ - Mielein tells me - was, as one would have wished it to be. Had it not been for you, he would have gone sooner. Owing to you, life remained lovable. It was for you that he wanted to stay, for you that he fought so bravely. How you must miss him! There is, my darling, almost nothing that I can say. I shall always be grateful for having known him so well - his gentleness and his fervour; his warmingly lucid mind and his great, generous, vulnerable heart. What he so loved and admired - your indomitable courage - he would now want it to pass this most difficult test. For this reason, if for no other, it will surely be past.

Take all my love and give my kindest thoughts to your mother. I shall ^{soon} write again and tell you about poor abandoned Europe. Today I can't. Be embraced.

I am yours

E.