

29 July, 89 ①

Dear David,

I have been planning to write this letter for a long time, but I could not make myself start. For a while I suffered from a "post-saboteur" depression - so many things had accumulated during my absence! - intensified by everyday problems. The economic situation is really bad, much worse than a year ago and some prices have risen about four times. Again you have to 'hunt' for goods and eventually you buy and store more things than you need, just in case, and, of course, throw away some goods that get spoiled in the meantime. Politically and culturally, on the other hand, the situation is very exciting and I found myself (being a TV enemy before) spending a lot of time in front of TV watching the meetings of the Parliament; the most exciting shows I have ever seen in Poland. Also the papers published by the opposition, legally at last, are very interesting and the problems, officially un-heard of before, are discussed there openly. The situation, however, is very unstable and no one knows what the future will bring. Some of the questions will be answered next week when the new government is formed. Most people are of the opinion that the present government should be put on trial. It's a real shame that Poland is going to receive goods for free from the Common Market, the type of help

that starting Third World countries usually get.

The first two weeks were also hard for us because Marcia didn't want to leave us for a moment. He got used to our company in New York and we had a difficult time getting him used to his grandparents. Generally, however, he got adopted very well. In a sense he has more variety here - three places to explore: ours, my parents', and my grandparents' - and much more attention. Some people say we have spoiled him but I think that he's just a lively healthy kid. He's picking up Polish now and mixing the two languages or translating from one to another. For example he often

says "Come, chodz" or "Bye-bye, po-pa", etc. We spent two weeks with him on a lake near Lublin and he was very happy there. Today we "rented" him to my parents for the weekend since we are going to my friend's wedding. We are looking forward to it since we are both very fond of dancing and we haven't had a chance to dance for a long time.

I feel very nostalgic about New York, especially when I listen to Yiddish music, which I do quite often. I took my Yiddish handbook with me to the lake and revised half of the lessons. Recently there was an Israeli choir in the Lublin Philharmonic and it was a unique event. They were wonderfully

received, with a standing ovation, lots of flowers²
from different people and lots of tears, too.
There was something mystical in the air,
some kind of link, broken earlier, but
miraculously joined during the performance.
I go to concerts very often but I cannot
remember such a reception, even of the
performers with famous names. So at heart
I am half in Dublin, half in New York.
I even had a dream one night that you
came to Dublin to lecture - I hope it
was a prophetic one!

At least three periodicals are interested in
the review from you book - "Alient", "Res
Publica" and "Wiz" (independent. Catholic monthly)
I'll see which one can publish it at the
earliest and ^{1st} submit it there. We are
preparing a special double issue of "Alient"
about Poland and its relations with the
minorities now and before. The Jewish
part will be the biggest and most interesting.
I have so many projects now. Apart from
working on my book I would like to finish
some minor projects - reviews, translations,
articles, based on the materials I brought
from NY - and all I need is time.
Marcin is very demanding and I don't want
to exploit him or my mother too much.
He's too young to be sent to a kindergarten

and babysitters are as rare in Poland as private airplanes. In the US the problem is solved by immigrants or young women who want to learn English. In Poland no one wants to perform such a demanding and unattractive job.

At the end of August we are planning to "rent" Elan again, for a week this time, and go to Budapest and Venice. Venice is, apart from New York, a place that I have special feelings to. Both cities seem to have something in common - so much spirit and life on the one hand, and so much decay and dirt on the other.

Just after I had come back from NY, a Japanese scholar visited me in Dublin. He gave me his book in Japanese which, as he claims (and I trust him) is about Singer, Lafue and Gombrowicz. He has come to Poland to study Polish and Yiddish in Warsaw. We even spoke Yiddish for a while. Have you ever spoken Yiddish with a Japanese?

I hope you, Shana and Anie are well, having a wonderful vacation away from the heat of New York. We are sending you our love and please, keep in touch

Monika, Chris
Moran