Lambarene
Dec. 4th 1961

My dearest Nell,

For 4 whole weeks I have been in Lambarene again - praising God - to have found A.S. in such excellent state of health - physically he makes the impression of a man of 60 - spiritually alert - fresh - vitally concerned about the mess in the world and still trying to penetrate with his ideas - that are the only workable ones for peace in the world if - if people would really listen and act accordingly. O Nell - that I could be here again - who but you knows what it means? I thought of you so often - early in the morning when I walk down to what they call "Hinten in die" here - the outhouse - then, at this early hour, there is fog over the river and the birds are still singing sleepily - just waking up - and the chickens and ducks begin to stir - I think of you and how it would be if you are here and we would live this experience that Lambarene is. Later then when A.S. comes from his house everything is in the yard - flies towards him - Prosiens

the Pelican, 4 little ducks - innumerable chickens - goats run and dance on their hindlegs - and his strong sunburned brown hand reaches into the bulging pockets of his trousers. There is always food - for any one who comes - bread and rice - He does not ever think on occasion to kneel down or bend down to feed or pet his animals. And the number of patients increases steadily - and more buildings have to be built, more food gotten to the hospital - there is no end to work. Walking around with him - now - at 87 - I marvel - he is still looking forward - always eager to work - whether it be in action or in thought - the road has to be mended - the pump repaired, the motors cleaned, the boat unloaded, bananas fetched (for the luxury - the only one in history - to feed 600 patients each day - for his whole entire life time!) He is so capable, till so utterly capable of distinguishing the important from the unimportant - there is nothing confused - his mind is like the water of a clear itself even

renewing self – and I drink –
Christly – ignorantly – gratefully –
I wish my mind were able to keep
all I am given. Still my heart I
know it – still my mind I don't –
I can't grasp it all. I just feel that
one human being has happened in our
century (and I undeservedly lucky)
(as able to meet him) who lives fully –
as we all should – who thinks deeply –
who loves really.
And the few weeks are like taking one
breath of fresh air, Well – and in a
few days I must leave – and live on
the memory until when? One month is
more than a year – in life where years
go & fast and where noone, noone
knows whether it will be "another time"
I must not complain, I must be
grateful and full of song – Well –
only you – so near whenever
you are – can partake of
my innermost feelings
My love to you
always, always
always
Grace.

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I forgot to tell you that I got a job to start a small film in Nigeria for the Unitarian Service Committee - I enjoy to be there in a village ALSO ORMARA over Christmas -

I'll be thinking of you well and wishing you Peace

Love Erica

Mr. Bennett
1-555
1212

5566-9965

Ford