

Irene,

Started on: 10/23/21 Sent: 10/24/21

Was thinking this evening about your predicament and how I have let you down.

I freely point out the self-centeredness I see in others but seem to scrupulously avoid commenting on or even noticing my own.

Your vulnerabilities, weaknesses and suffering have become mine; I see it now.

What you have lived and are still living is unthinkable. I simply do not have the courage or the strength to imagine, let alone endure, your life. Poor Colette put it this way, one evening at Christmas some years ago, as she "went about her appointed rounds" which included manipulating me to within an inch of my life that winter. She, referring to the prospects of my becoming the kind of creature she was, her eyes brimming with tears, said: "It would not be good for you." Indeed.

Today, I finished a book: *The CIA as Organized Crime* by Douglas Valentine. Much as with another book I read years ago: *La Planète Dora* by Yves Béon, a former inmate of the camp where the V-2 rockets were built (available in English); I had to pause at times. Both illustrate the similar characteristics of the two groups concerned: 1) Diabolical evil whose brutality rivals the contents of Flaubert's novel, *Salamambo* 2) Technical wizardry and 3) More than a dash of insanity.

This is, I believe, a fair summary of the atmosphere you have marinated in since your twenties, as did my other sister. And, like the proverbial frog boiling to death in a slowly heating pot, I failed to notice your increasing desperation. Only it was you, not *i*, simmering in that pot.

I have no excuses to present to you.

You once gave me, as a present, a candle with three wicks. To me the wicks, when lit, represented the three of us: maman, you and me. All that was left of our family after Father died. Now there are only the two lights, flickering.

Thank you. Thank you for all you have tried to do, all you have done and all you *will* continue to do for me. I owe you my life. I owe you what sanity I still possess. And more, I believe I owe you my freedom.

Count on my "Goodwill," won't you?

And may our tears eventually prove invincible.

Your loving brother.