

4-25-1918

Letter from May-ling Soong Chiang, 1918-04-25, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills

May-ling Soong Chiang

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Transcription

Dearest Dada:

Your 32nd just came. Oh, well, for one thing Father is in the Hospital. He was so ill that we thought he was going to die: but now he seems much better. We were worn out trying to nurse him, and finally decided that the hospital is the only place for him, for due to his disease, he gets more irritable every day. Someone of us is with him all day long, Mother is there now, and I am watching the servants in house-cleaning. My dear, we have the most beautiful carved Blackwood furniture: but - heavens, it is almost impossible to keep them clean. I am having an awful time making the servants dust them, because the carvings are so bothersome. Every picture is being taken down, and everything washed, wiped, and put in some kind of aid to bring out the luster of the varnish. The carpets are [page break] all taken up, and will be sent to the cleaners. As I know nothing about how to go at house-cleaning, I am more or less at the mercy of the servants as Mother is away.

I am sorry, Dada, that my letters have been unhappy. To tell you the truth, money will never make me happy. I lie awake nights thinking that I am getting no-where. Do you understand what I mean? At college, there was always the work, but here at home, I am busy all day yet I don't seem to get anywhere. My little brother goes to school now, and that ought to give me more time: but somehow I am just as busy as ever. Since

Father has been so ill, I have given up practicing on the piano. I was working on Grieg and the Opera of William Tell. Dada mine, you always underestimated your own ability. Before [page break] you know it, you will be a regular "talent."

Well, HK had an awful fuss with his father over some personal matter. I am so glad I broke with him before the quarrel, otherwise of course his father would blame it on me.

I do hope your poems will be accepted! I'll try to write something for publication: only at present I am very much confused! I might as well tell you that if I ever marry, it will not be for love, for I have had the misfortune to care about a man who is already married. For the past few months, we both have been too miserable for words, for his wife was forced on him by his parents soon after he returned from America some years ago. And you know how my family feels towards divorce, and besides [page break] there is nothing the matter with his wife except that he does not care for her. It has been pretty rigid discipline for us both, for of course neither one of us would do what is not honorable - Only we both care more than words can tell, - and oh, it is terrible to care so much. I never knew before what it means. And the worst is that I never woke up until too late, and as for him, he said that he would go through hell to be free. But everything is hopeless. I am trying to make him leave Shanghai for several months, for I certainly cannot leave Father. You need not worry about me, for I shall do the right thing, never fear. And yet I cannot bring myself to

marry anyone else. With love

Daughter

25th.

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there is nothing else matters into his cups
except that he does not care for beer.
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Daphne