

New York 22 May 1939

[1/1] My Dearest Nusienka¹,

[1/2] Once again I have to send you birthday wishes from a distance. [1/3] It's been two years since we saw each other last. Feelings well up [1/4] as I glance at the gradual maturation of [1/5] your face.² I hope that we will spend your next [1/6] birthday together. Actually, that is my [1/7] main birthday wish for you: that you could [1/8] finally liberate yourself, that you could become a self-sufficient person, [1/9] that you could fight for your own hide, [1/10] for your own luxuries, that you could lead a life that isn't always a walk in the park, [1/11] only pleasurable at times, but not boring, not gray, [1/12] such that you can claim responsibility for [1/13] yourself and for your choices, choices for which you can just totally lose it [1/14] and finally start doing something that doesn't depend upon [1/15] resistance put up by chance circumstances.

[1/16] I know, I know, these are strange birthday wishes and they deviate [1/17] from typical wishes of happiness and good luck. It just so happens [1/18] that in the past few years my ideas [1/19] about happiness have taken the following shape: to be able [1/20] to strive for success in conditions [1/21] that don't make such striving hopeless.

[1/22] In short, and without any philosophy, I wish you, my beloved Nusienka, [1/23] and myself as well, that we will be together soon, and that everything will [1/24] go well so that our parents will have something to be happy about.

[1/25] Many warm hugs and kisses, and again [1/26] all the best and most sincere wishes.

[1/27] Yours,

¹ This is a diminutive and very affectionate form of the name Franciszka; Frances in English.

² Presumably on pictures Nusia sent to Dr. Birnbaum.