

February 7, 1995

Dear Henry:

Thank you so very much for the gift of your book, The Aftermath. I only wish that I could be thanking you for a book written merely because of the creativity in your poems and not because of the horrors of the Holocaust that brought your book into being. But, as in everything you do, The Aftermath shines with a love that radiates from your very soul.

I have so many questions to ask you. I have so many more questions about life, God, race, religion and simply about the Human Race in general after reading The Aftermath.

First of all, I was so touched that you were a twin. Twins have such a deep connection that runs between them. Did you feel anything subconsciously when your twin was enduring unspeakable acts by those most evil people?

Did you stay in touch with Mr. Dworzecki? Did he live a relatively successful and happy life? Is he still living?

Now come the really tough, mind jolting, heart rending questions. Why has God made His Chosen people suffer so? First, Moses and his people wandered the desert for 40 years. Then, along came the Holocaust with its unspeakable horrors. Why would a loving God do this to His children? I cannot begin to understand. One certainly has to ask the question: does God even exist?

Has anyone ever done a study to evaluate the "success" rate of the Survivors? You have become a successful and wealthy person (but you were educated prior to the Holocaust). Were you that much more challenged to "succeed" because of the horrors that you experienced? One would believe that it would be truly a waste for someone to survive the camps only to live a life in poverty afterwards.

Do you think God rewarded your horrors with the success that you have enjoyed since the Holocaust?

It seems to me that you and your fellow Survivors have extreme courage, love for your fellow man (none of you went out to seek revenge or methodically torture and murder your captors as would seem to be a just end to their disgusting lives) and fortitude.

You once told me that even though you have enjoyed a degree of success that you have never really been happy since the Holocaust. I can understand fully now exactly what you meant and why. How could you possibly ever be truly happy or even be the same person that you were before all this happened? Have you lived the past 50 years wondering if this could ever happen again? Is there a common thread among the majority of people that is akin to the Nazis? From where does such a strong hatred for any race, religion or creed of people come? Did God truly teach the Golden Rule? Did Satan create these horrors in his power struggle with God? Or did God let this happen to see what it will take for people to finally realize that there is only one race of people and that is the Human Race? We all worship the same God so all religions are God's religions. We shouldn't fight because of the way people choose to worship God. We don't fight because of the type of homes we live in or the food we eat or the clothes we wear. Why do races go to war? Why do religions go to war? Why do countries go to war?

Has time dulled your memories of the horrors or are they still as vivid? Do you ever look at someone and wonder what evil may be lurking inside of them? Do you imagine that people could possibly be as your torturers were in this day and age?

I marvel at the man that you are. I was amazed when in the book you basically turned the other cheek and did not lash out at the ignorance of the people who tolerated what was done. Are not those who collaborated with the Nazis or even those who turned a blind eye and tolerated the torture, starvation, degradation and murder just as evil as the Nazis?

Jews were forced to wear armbands, carry identification papers, were tattooed. I believe that anyone who tolerated, collaborated with or actively participated should be forced to be tattooed right in the center of their forehead. This would show the world their evilness. It could not be hidden away and ignored.

You always have a warm, friendly smile, a handshake, a hug, a joke or a poem (the poems always seem to come at just the time when I need one). You always want to know if I am happy. Henry, I feel guilty having any unhappy thoughts after knowing what you have gone through. Compared to what you and Lydia experienced in those few short years, I should never have one unhappy moment. In comparison, some would say my life has been "perfect". Or can humans really live that way? Are we so selfish that we cannot really feel another person's pain enough for it to make us all work to change the world and make a lasting difference? Is it human nature to feel the pain for a minute, an hour, a day, a week and then sort of forget what the other person experienced and go back to our own petty worries?

I believe we must all become more empathetic to each other. Why does it seem that some people are naturally empathetic? i.e. the people who hid the Jews, Underground Railroad, Freedom Riders in the South in the 1960's, people who worked to abolish apartheid in South Africa? Is this a gift from God? Is this to give hope to the rest of Humankind? Is it enough to be just empathetic and sympathetic? Should we not all work for love, peace and harmony for the entire World?

You had told me the dream of The Pearl a few months ago. But, it means so much to me to have it in print where I can go back and read it over and over and over again.

Henry, in closing, I just want you to know that I consider you a blessing in my life. You have enriched my life, it is a privilege to know you. I thank God that you survived the horrors

and that you were blessed by having your beloved Lydia spared. I am so happy that you were able to live your life with her and have your son and daughter and your grandson to also enrich your life. Were it not for Irene would I have even read The Aftermath? Would it have ever gone to publication?

Thank you, Henry, for being my friend, for teaching me about how people can go through such agony at the hands of others to only turn around and bring love, beauty, creativity and kindness into an otherwise dark and gloomy world. Thank you for touching my heart and my life.

You have enriched my life more than you will ever know in just the few months that I have known you and sat and spoken with you. May Peace be with you always and may I always call you my Friend.

With my sincere best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret". The signature is written in dark ink and has a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Margaret Hall

I would like to sit down and discuss my letter with you when you come in next week