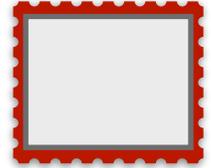


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# Sending for Help | Letter 5

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**This letter was posted six years after the Nazis come to power  
... four months after Kristallnacht  
... six months until the war begins in Europe.**

Dearest cousin Minnie,

Please excuse me for not answering your letter immediately. My daughter fell ill and I was not too well either. The weather is terrible and, it seems, that every other person you speak to is ill. [...] We really want to know one another better. To underscore it, I am enclosing a photo of myself. I am also expecting to receive some from you, since we have really never even met.

[If our efforts are unsuccessful,] I shall be forced to travel to Poland and there, as you know from your own experience, it is impossible to exist. First of all, I know absolutely no one there and one is not permitted to work there. [...] However, if you can rush things, I shall not have to leave for Poland. [...] My husband left for Poland on October 28 and sent to a camp, far from Warsaw. He is being kept in Poland and cannot come back. I cannot travel there to be with him. Can you picture this, how a man who supported us has reached the end of his rope?

[...] It seems to be impossible at times. Dear Minnie wrote me that a certain Dr. Rabiner has taken the matter on himself to get people out. Perhaps you can talk to her about it and learn how to go about it. And perhaps you can also find out how far she has come along with this issue, because she has received a quota number. I hope and pray to get help from you as soon as possible.

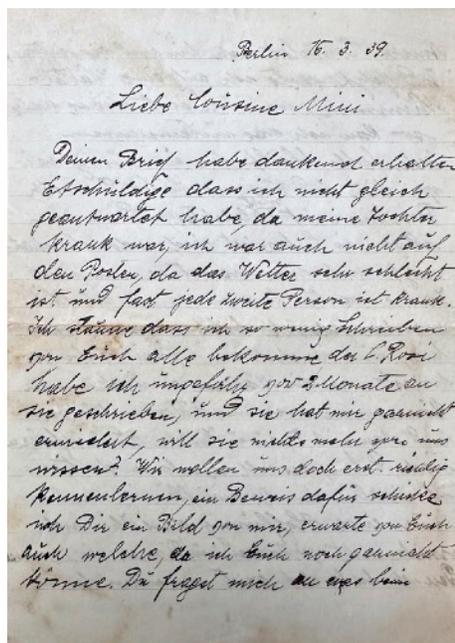
I have just been registered at the American consulate and am now waiting for a quota number. Once I have it, I can undertake something. At any rate, I shall then have a means to go from here to Cuba, because it is no easier to get to France. [...] And when the men come back, we have only four weeks to remain here and then with wife and children they are forced to return to the camps in Poland. What shall I do there? It is really baffling. I still cling to the hope that you won't abandon me, that you won't forget me, because I really have no one at all in the world to help me except you. Poland is a nightmare. And the Jews are leaving there, too, but only those with money, and those without money are stuck. There is really no hope over there.

I am begging you and asking you, please do not forget us. I am so happy when I get mail from you. [...] I hope you will answer me quickly. Best regards to all of you and to your dear husband.

Your cousin Mali



## Discussing the Letter



Malie's letter to Minnie,  
March 15, 1939

Malie writes to Minnie again in a state of increasing distress. At this point, her husband has been in Poland for fourth and a half months and conditions there are worse than in Germany. Malie is aware that Jews who are in Poland are trying desperately to get out with little success.

On the other side of the ocean, Minnie has been hard at work keeping contact with cousins and organizations to coordinating the Landsmanns emigration. She begins to research options to bring just Malie's oldest daughter, Ida, to the US. The two-year wait that the Landsmanns face is partially due to the fact that Malie and her husband were born in Poland. Ida might face a shorter wait time because she was born in Germany, a nation with a larger annual immigration quota.

By April 1939, Malie receives her family's quota numbers: 15643, 15644, 15645, 15646. Two things become clearer for Malie and Minnie. First, the Landsmanns are in fact facing a two year minimum before they are allowed to immigrate to the United States. Second, the Landsmanns need to get out of Europe as quickly as possible and Cuba seems to be their best option.

### **Key Themes:**

*Family, Relationships, Separation, Migration,  
Quotas, Law (American and German), Photos*



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### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What is Malie's goal with attaching a photo of her family? Is she successful in this attempt?
2. What can we learn from this photo?
3. What is the Polish quota for 1939?
4. In what year would the Landsmanns' quota numbers come up?