

A Farewell Letter Written by Helena Mendelbaum

Helena Mendelbaum was born in Cracow in 1925 and held a Costa Rican passport. She was in a protected camp when the Nazis entered and sent her to Drancy in the summer of 1944. From there she was deported to Auschwitz, where she perished. Helena was an only child. The letter was written in Polish.

My dear ones,

This is a farewell letter. We are going to a concentration camp in France, to Drancy. You know already what will happen to us after this.

I ask you urgently: send a message via Paris to Ana and to my mother. Perhaps one can still do something for us. I have the impression that everything is all right in Titmoning. Write to Father. The situation is distressing. Perhaps a quick rescue might still help.

My dear ones, keep this letter, it is perhaps the last one and perhaps you will show it one day to my dear mother. Tell her that I was with her in my thoughts until the last moment of my life. If my father should be rescued, take care of him and see to it that he does not do, God forbid, something stupid.

Life without me will be unbearable for mother.

I implore you, do whatever is still possible to rescue me.

Thank you very much for everything you have done for me, most of all, thanks to mother.

I conclude because my heart bursts with pain.

Remember me and do everything via Paris.

Kisses from me,

Yours,

Hela

Source: Yehudit Kleinman and Reuven Dafni (Eds.), *Final Letters from the Yad Vashem Archives*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1991, pp. 47-48