

I wish you had stayed until the study was painted

to see the pear green walls, the cream color trim and the little bits of blue and yellow at the top. It wouldn't have meant a lot to you but it would have been a pleasure for me to see you glance at it.

I wish you had stayed till all the pictures I'm having framed were hung and you could comment on them, negatively or not.

I wish you had stayed until I learned to play the new baby grand better so you wouldn't tease me when I tried out The Moonlight Sonata again.

Every day you were here I had a home.

Now I'm trying to find a home among my friends scattered around the city and in other places.

I wish you had folded my laundry once more and put it outside my door.

I wish you would criticize me one more time for not making my bed.

I am in need of repair since you left but I'll repair myself more easily because you fixed me up.

There's a wild storm and I hope the electricity doesn't go out. If you were still here I wouldn't mind.

I wish you had stayed another few years so that when you did leave I would already be so happy it would carry over into my whole world.

You live in the present so I won't be able to find you any more.

I remember when Masa's wife gave me that massage at their house in Barcelona and I started crying helplessly and after a while you came into the room after asking if you could slide the curtain over and though you had no idea why I was crying you just held me in my sheet for a long time. You carried our four suitcases for a mile without putting them down.

You love to be able to do anything.

Kids adore you.

Wherever you go you are wanted.

The leaves are shivering in the storm.

There's our neighbor Patricia. She smiled because from her garden she saw me sitting here in the lit living room. I wonder if she knows you've left and that's why she's being kind.

I remember when I first knew you you called me once to ask for directions. I was your teacher then. Why are you calling me for directions, I asked. Because I thought you might know how to get there, you answered.

I remember (to my old house) you brought over a Russian woman you met on the plane who spoke no English. I think you wanted to impress her that you were friends with your teacher who is a poet. But she had no idea what the word 'poet' meant, though you pointed to me and said it over and over.

Once you called at 2AM to say you were in jail and needed bail. I was beside myself. Gotcha', you said, and we laughed.

You don't repeat yourself. That's one reason you won't be coming back. That's one reason I didn't get bored with you. You think your vocabulary is minimal but the point is you usually use the right word.

Soon when I'm out of the house you'll get the Chinese hammer dulcimer you brought home last week and put next to the piano. I plucked the strings, pretending I was playing a Chinese country & western song. I rarely did things like that before, because living alone when I saw friends we went out to events or took walks or caught up on each other's lives.

I'll try to play more with my other friends.

I wish you had stayed long enough for me to pick up a tiny bit of your cool but I don't have access to it or to your musical, darting, fun-loving mind. I can't imagine what it feels like to be so cock sure and to know all that slang and be a great musician.

Remember when you drove through that cornfield at 100 miles an hour?

I wish you had stayed long enough to give me a ride on your new motorcycle.

I remember one night you came in & announced you had had a lousy day, that in a rainstorm a woman had cut you off in her car, causing you to fall off the motorcycle and skid 50 feet. You said, well, I guess I won't take the bike out in the rain any more. Five minutes later I asked if you still felt that way. Nope.

I keep driving around for hours, sometimes going to visit the steers and cows. The other night I dreamt they jumped over the electric fence & lay down beside me to comfort me.

I will remember all the happiness I felt during these 8 months even as I say goodbye.