

Letter from Mies / Miek Keijzer

Utrecht March 28, 1943

Dear Jeanne, Arie and children,

You must be surprised that I just write a letter. But it works like this. A lot has happened this week, but everything turned out well. Last week we went to Ermelo on Saturday and we had a great time there with the f. Now I went back to Utrecht with Jan on Monday morning, because we had to go back to work, but Mom and Dad stayed.

Now the worst thing is that a robbery has just happened on Monday evening, completely unexpected of course. Because they had just visited and an acquaintance of that family had come, but with all that together there were 10 people with Mom and Dad included. And then suddenly there was a phone call at 10 PM. They were shocked, of course, but Dad went to the kitchen door and opened it and then the mayor of Putten stood there with a flashlight and pistol in front of Dad's nose. At first Pa was shocked, but then quickly regained his composure. They also immediately said that there were Jews in the house, there were four people. They went straight to the room and there they saw all sitting. They tried to escape through the window, of course, but they surrounded the house. Of course, they treated j. horribly. And they also asked Dad why he took j. In the house. But Dad told me how, why and when he rented out the house. But in the meantime, it was already at noon and they were all neatly handcuffed together, Mother just as well as Dad. And all neatly taken to the egg hall in Putten, which is nowadays furnished as a police station with cells. They had to walk all the way, but Dad was stuck in the lead, handcuffed to that student who had just visited that evening.

And Mother was tied to old Mrs. Staal. They didn't run that fast, although they had to, but Dad refused.

In the egg hall the J. were put in cells, but Dad and Ma were allowed to walk there, but they were under guard.

They sat there all night and were interrogated the next morning, one by one.

The j. were of course detained, but during their interrogation they repeatedly said that the Keijzer family was absolutely not to blame. And when Dad and Ma were questioned, they didn't turn a blind eye to what was fortunate. Because in the afternoon Mother had to get back in the car with the mayor and Mrs. Staal. And she (Mrs. St) had to point out what was hers and what was Mother's. She gave up as little as possible, but when the marechaussees came to drag everything away, they largely stole everything away. Pa was then released in the evening and mother was allowed to stay there that afternoon. But Dad had to promise never to do anything like that again. Everything came so suddenly and quickly, we only knew it on Tuesday evening. When Dad was released, he called us right away. We were of course very shocked, but now that everything has turned out so well, we are very grateful. Yesterday I went there to clean up. It is a real mess, most of us have remained neatly.

The Staal family + 2 children have now been brought to Westerborgh in Overijssel. But Mr. Hirsch was brought to Arnhem because he still had to be interrogated. A child was able to flee, but it was still shot but not hit. Now Dad and Tired are back at home, but the shock is there. I have now tried to explain a little bit to you what so happened. The house is completely free again and we will soon clean it again. Now I believe I will end one day. You should just write a long letter.

Day

Mies

The business will be celebrating its 30th anniversary on Thursday 1 April

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Letter from Grandfather Keijzer

Read Mies's letter first

Beloved children

As you can see from Mies's writing, something special has happened

When at 10 o'clock in the evening there was a bell ringing at the kitchen door, which was locked, and I went to see who this could be, my heart skipped a beat when I heard a growl, which meant "police". Now it's done here, I thought. "who do you bet?" and are you the inhabitant of this house? I replied "I'm the owner and I'm here for the weekend, but who are YOU?" I am the mayor of Putten". It's here Ermelo, I said. "I don't care, there are Jews in the house here." And has come to a safe place

I hesitated a bit and said that I had to make some light first and that he would have to convince himself about that. I hoped they could still escape somehow. However, this did not work, only the oldest child, a 15-year-old boy, ran off. (Tear this letter)

We were all forced to remain in the great room under the threat of pistols. Mr. Staal had to keep his hands behind his head.

Mr Hirsch said he was not a Jew, whatever his ID showed.

One of the three guys who was with the mayor had to fetch the commander of the military police.

Everyone had to sit down, only the mayor remained standing, one man in the kitchen, one man in all the rooms to see if there were any more people. When one of us goes to the W.C. had to, someone went along, the door had to stay open.

Then the mayor started with me, "Why I had Jews in my house."

"This is a legal case, last May, I rented this house to them for a year."

"You knew they were Jews, so why didn't you chase them away?"

"Because my Christian duty forbade me to do this"

"Oh, are you a Calvinist?"

“I try to be a Christian and have the expectation that God will give a solution to all the misery of this time. I expect it from no Englishman or German, from any Bolshevik or National Socialist, but only from God.

“Yes, but Adolf Hitler is the one sent from God, and you must obey the powers set over you.

“I only know one emissary and that is Jesus Christ, who is also the only Leader there is. He will also help us out of this trouble. Moreover, one must obey God rather than men.”

Later, when we were released from the handcuffs at the police station, they, Mother and I, treated them with the utmost respect and courtesy.

Later I will tell this story in more detail, I can hardly write everything

you must burn the letter or dispose of it

*In the margin it says:*

We are over the shock and mother I are now safely home.

We, being justified, went home.