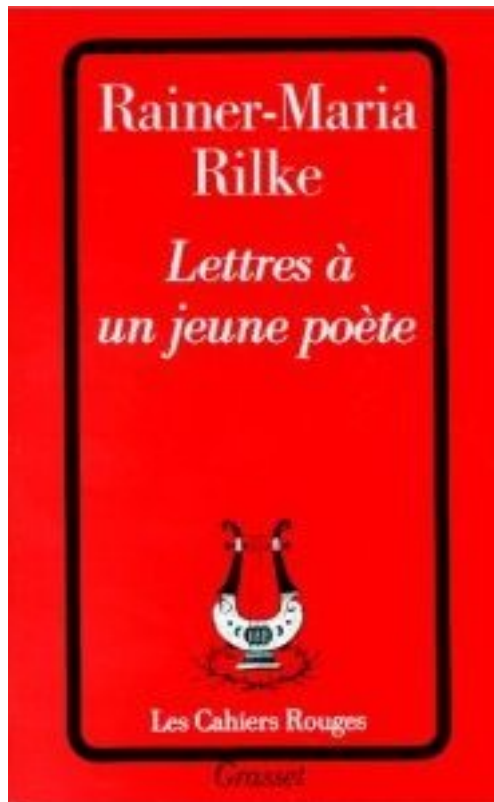

Rainer Maria Rilke

Lettres à un jeune poète



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Description

A un jeune homme qui lui demande s'il doit consacrer sa vie à la poésie, Rainer-Maria Rilke, âgé de vingt-huit ans, adresse un véritable " guide spirituel ". De 1903 à 1908, il revient inlassablement sur les questions essentielles qui se posent au poète, au créateur. Ces dix lettres sont à la fois un moyen d'accès privilégié à l'univers de Rilke et un manuel de la vie créatrice de portée universelle.

Insightful reviews

s.penkevich: *'Go into yourself and see how deep the place is from which your life flows.'*

Rainer Maria Rilke puts forth the question '*must I write?*' in these letters from the great poet to the unknown Mr. Kappus. '*Dig into yourself for a deep answer,*' he tells the young poet, '*and if this answer rights out in assent, if you meet this solemn question with a strong, simple "I must", then build your life in accordance with this necessity.*' *Letters To A Young Poet*, written between 1903-08, contains some of the most passionately moving words of encouragement and examination into the life of an artist. Rilke advises that '*a work of art is good if it has risen out of necessity*', that they must feel they '*would have to die if you were forbidden to write.*' From there, he instructs towards the soul-searching life of solitude which best cultivates the artists gift. With powerful prose that often reaches the same sublime peaks found in his poetry, these magnanimous, heart-felt letters are some of the most empowering words of wisdom into undertaking of the arts as well as an impressive portrait of Rilke himself.

It is difficult to accurately explain the powers of transcendence contained in these letters. What is especially difficult is to do so in the realm of reviewing, a sort of critique that bastardizes the original message by having it be received tainted from my amateur perspective as it passes through me¹, as Rilke himself cautions against reading any sort of literary criticism, positive or negative in his very first letter.

'Nothing touches a work of art so little as words of criticism: they always result in more or less fortunate misunderstandings. Things aren't all so tangible and sayable as people would usually have us believe; most experience is unsayable, they happen in a space that no word has ever entered, and more unsayable than all other things are works of art, those mysterious existences, whose life endures beside our own small, transitory life.

While, as Rilke point out, the ethereal joys brought about in me while reading this are ineffable, I would still like to take a few moments of your time to discuss how beautiful these letters are. It is a sort of minor-key beauty, spending much time navigating through the implications of solitude and painful soul-searching, yet it elevates the heart to such high levels and is sure to make anyone reach for a pen in order to try their own hand at poetry.

'We know little, but that we must trust in what is difficult is a certainty that will never abandon us,' Rilke writes. Constantly he tries to impress upon the young poet that the road to greatness

is a difficult, lonely path, and that any meandering towards what is easy is destined to lead to failure or mediocrity. *'It is good to be solitary, for solitude is difficult; that something is difficult must be one more reason for us to do it.'* In the Bukowski poem *How to be a Good Writer*, he examines the life of those he considers great and asks :

*remember the old dogs
who fought so well:
Hemingway, Celine, Dostoevsky, Hamsun.
If you think they didn't go crazy
in tiny rooms
just like you're doing now
without women
without food
without hope
then you're not ready.*

This is merely a more blunt and coarse explanation of Rilke's own sentiments. While it may seem a frightening truth, that we must always take the hard road, and that we must seek solitude in ourselves to mine the gold buried within us, that we may reach a point of near-madness, he presents it as such a beautiful gift, a place of inner turmoil that is bliss to the writer because it is how language is able to take root in our souls and grow.

'What is necessary, after all, is only this: solitude, vast inner solitude. To walk inside yourself and meet no one for hours – that is what you must be able to attain. To be solitary as you were when you were a child, when the grownups walked around involved with matters that seemed large and important because they looked so busy and because you didn't understand a thing about what they were doing.'

Rilke advises that childhood is one of the richest places to seek ourselves and our inspirations. Not only to call forth our dusty memories and let language polish and remold them into something remarkable, but to use a childlike *'not-understanding'* to best examine the world.

'Why should you want to give up a child's wise not-understanding in exchange for defensiveness and scorn, since not-understanding is, after all, a way of being alone, whereas defensiveness and scorn are a participation in precisely what, by these means, you want to separate yourself from.'

What really stood out to me about Rilke was his utter humbleness. Rilke responds to Kappus as if Kappus were the most important person in the world, and he begins each letter with an honest apology for the delay in his responses. Rilke remains ever humble in his words, and though he offers brilliant, shining insights, suggestions and long investigations on a variety of topics beyond writing (God, love – especially his distaste for those who mistake lust for love and how it damages the artistic heart, Rome, paintings, etc.), he never asserts himself as anything but a man with no answers, only direction. He reminds Kappus *'Don't think the person who is trying to comfort you now lives untroubled among the simple and quiet words that sometimes give you pleasure. His life has much trouble and sadness...'* We all face our anxieties day by day, and

even those we look up and even idolize were never able to reach perfection. We are all human, and Rilke manages to both send us reaching for the heavens while still remaining firmly grounded here on the Earth.

This is a fantastic short collection for anyone with any interest in writing. It is one of the most beautifully empowering books I have ever read and reminds the reader of the mindset they must accept in order to let the arts flourish in the soil of their souls. Whatever the topic he discusses, it is wholly pleasant to be immersed in the flow of his writing - each word is a warm embrace. While the letters are intended for Mr. Kappus alone, and his side of the conversation is missing, the message is universal. From the man who wrote some of the finest poetry of the 20th century, this book should be read by everyone before they pick up a pen to write (the same goes for Sorrentino's [Imaginative Qualities of Actual Things](#), but that is a discussion for another time). I'm surprised this isn't required reading in all freshman college literature courses. This is truly a gift of writing, it sustained a smile across my face the entire time.

5/5

'Just the wish that you may find in yourself enough patients to endure and enough simplicity to have faith; that you may gain more and more confidence in what is difficult and in your solitude among other people. And as for the rest, let life happen to you. Believe me: life is in the right, always.'

¹ For more on the corruption of literature through any attempt at interpretation or criticism, I highly recommend reading Susan Sontag essay [Against Interpretation](#) (thank you to Mike for showing me this essay). Also, for further reading on the distortion of Rilke's words, William H. Gass has his take on translating the great poet: [Reading Rilke: Reflections on the Problems of Translation](#)



Abailart: I have a nice 1950 hardback version given to me. I read and liked the goodread reviews. A few of my own favourite extracts:

"...read as few aesthetic-critical things as possible - they are either partisan opinion become

hardened and meaningless in their lifeless petrification or else they are a skilful play upon words, in which one view is uppermost today and its opposite tomorrow." (Letter III)

"One must in general be so careful with names; it is so often the name of a misdeed upon which a life is shattered, not the nameless and personal action itself, which was perhaps a quite definite necessity of that life and could be taken on by it without trouble." (Letter VIII)

"And your doubt can become a good quality if you train it. It must become *aware*, it must become criticism. Ask it, whenever it wants to spoil something for you, *why* something is ugly, demand proofs from it, test it, and you will find it helpless and nonplussed, perhaps also aggressive. But do not give way, demand arguments and conduct yourself thus carefully and consistently every single time, and the day will dawn when it will become, instead of a subverter, one of your best workmates - perhaps the cleverest of all who are building your life." (Letter IX)

"Art too is only a way of living, and one can prepare for it, living somehow, without knowing it; in everything real one is a closer, nearer neighbour to it than in the unreal semi-artistic professions which, while they make show of a relatedness to art, in practice deny and attack the existence of all art, as for instance the whole of journalism does, and almost all criticism and three quarters of what calls itself and likes to be called literature." (Letter X)

Fionnuala:

Dear Mr Rilke,

How can I thank you enough for these marvelously heartfelt letters, full of inspiration, beauty and wisdom. They are a glorious gift, a gospel of wonderful words which I will follow all the days of my life.

Dear Reader,

If there is one thing I would say to you, it is to caution you against immoderation, against lavish and excessive language. When you write, try to say what you really feel and using the simplest language you know. Listen to the silence deep in your heart and begin there. *Then, as if no one had ever tried before, try to say what you see and feel and love and lose.*

Dear Mr Rilke,

I am trying to keep your advice in mind but my heart is a busy, noisy, chattering place and it tells me to use five words instead of one, and long sentences rather than short ones.

Dear Reader,

Don't let yourself be controlled by irony, especially during uncreative moments. When you are fully creative, try to use it, as one more way to take hold of life. Search into the depths of things. Imagine yourself in some prison, whose walls let in none of the world's sounds; for the writer or poet, solitude and silence are essential. And books. Read, read, read and then you will be able to write.

Dear Mr Rilke,

I do read, a wide selection of authors and titles, but sometimes I doubt my own judgement of what I read, especially when it differs from others or from the literary critics.

Dear Reader,

Read as little as possible of literary criticism; such things are either artisan opinions or else clever word-games. Works of art are of an infinite solitude; and no means of approach is so useless as criticism.

Dear Mr Rilke,

My dilemma when I read is an inability to abandon the work to its own solitude at the end, I always want to enter into dialogue with the writer.

Dear Reader,

Dialogue is good. Anything which gives rise to creativity is useful, words on a page or the blank page itself.

Dear Mr Rilke,

Speaking of blank pages, I felt an absence in your book. I wondered about the letters from Mr Kappus to which yours were a response?

Dear Reader,

It is the reader's response which is important, not that of Mr Kappus, and since it was he who edited this book, we must presume he preferred to remain silent.

Dear Mr Rilke,

Had I the editing of this book, each letter would have been accompanied by a blank page, and exactly for that reason, for the reader's response. That is how I would like all books to be, printed on one side of the page only so that the reader can fill in the other and have a real dialogue with the writer.

Dear Reader,

This is the best idea you have given me so far, and as for the rest, let life happen to you. Believe me: life is right, always.

Gaurav: Letters to a tender Poet Rainer Maria Rilke 'Letters to younger poet', written by way of famed poet Rainer Maria Rilke, begins with a 'imaginary' poet Mr. Kappus looking for affirmation, from the nice German poet, no matter if he may still write? The ebook maintains with a sequence of letters that are beneficent answers, to the letters by 'Young Worker', via Rilke, who used to be merely 28 then, at length, and in nice aspect approximately what constitutes creativity and poetry, and the way to channel the previous into the latter. In the event you learn first letter, on the outset, you can get conception as though the poet isn't proud of somebody asking him to gauge works (by that someone), notwithstanding as you progress forward you know that letters through Rilke are exquisite, deep, very candid and doubtless of a few use to a person new who's looking for recommendation of more matured ones. Rilke starts with essentially the most sincere assertion in severe theory- there's not anything much less apt to the touch a piece of artwork than serious words: all we turn out with there's kind of felicitous

misunderstandings - and keeps extra mediation approximately how one can write. He then starts a chain of discussions, persisted during the Letters, of ways either the younger Poet and his paintings can turn into extra mature, extra richly developed, and finally extra attached to the younger Poet's artistic soul. the good poet says that one don't need to affirmation from others to come to a decision benefit of one's paintings of art; he advises- no one can suggest you and support you, nobody. there's just one way. pass into yourself. He tells younger poet that one must never be apprehensive approximately others' opinions, all that one may be thoughtful approximately it to invite oneself no matter if at one's within one is confident or not- wonder on your night's quietest hour: needs to I write? Dig down into your self for a deep answer. And if it may be affirmative, whether it is given to you to answer this severe query with a noisy and easy 'I must, then build your lifestyles in accordance with this necessityRilke talks approximately assorted topics within the book, he mentions that one needs to attempt to utilize 'Irony' in artistic moments to get a take hold of of life, different themes, that are explored within the book, are- Solitude:Solitude, is key if the younger Poet is to create paintings of either common fact and lasting value. 'What is necessary, after all, is just this: solitude, mammoth internal solitude. to stroll inside of your self and meet not anyone for hours – that's what you want to manage to attain. To be solitary as you have been for those who have been a child, while the grown ups walked round concerned with concerns that appeared huge and critical simply because they appeared so busy and since you didn't comprehend a specific thing approximately what they have been doing.' Nature:Rilke believes that nature has robust effect on creativity, he means that final manifestation of creativity is an act of creation. SexualitySexuality, in line with Rilke, is manifestation of the artistic spirit and an expression of humanity's nature. LoveRilke says that if a tender poet has to come back to either an knowing of himself and nature then love is a massive event for one. someday there'll be women and girls whose names will now not simply symbolize the other of the male yet anything of their personal right, anything which doesn't make one ponder any complement or restrict yet merely of existence and existence: the feminine human being. This leap forward (at first correct opposed to the desire of the lads who're left behind) will rework the adventure of love, that's now packed with error, regulate it root and branch, reshape it right into a relation among peopleI think that love continues to be so robust and strong on your reminiscence since it was once your first deep adventure of solitariness and the 1st internal paintings that undertook in your life. Rilke strikes on extra to discuss that one should still try and comprehend lifestyles in fullest and that it can be understood provided that existence is actually lived. He advises that one needs to engages totally in each adventure - relationships, love, sexual desire, writing- and take a look at to think about them in solitude.The booklet is a kind of creations of artwork which throw gentle at the direction you need to persist with to permit your creative creations bloom in fullest .Though letters haven't any descriptions of the younger poet -everything the reader involves comprehend concerning the younger Poet needs to be gleaned from tricks in Rilke's writing- nevertheless, it may be usually stated concerning the e-book that it provides the impression- the younger Poet undergoes a trip over the process his correspondence with Rilke and obtained reworked eventually.I will say that anyone who takes his writing seriously- for which he has to take in his vocation to read- can learn this book, the ebook is a needs to learn for someone attracted to poetry and life.

Ana: Há livros que nos tocam a alma e nos enchem o coração.Espero ansiosamente encontrar um poeta na minha vida, que me escreva cartas tão belas!"Basta... sentir que se poderia viver

sem escrever para não mais se ter o direito de fazê-lo." "Uma única coisa é necessária: a solidão. A grande solidão interior. Ir dentro de si e não encontrar ninguém durante horas, é a isso que é preciso chegar."

Abeer: Oh My God, this is often my favourite non fiction of all times. my moment favourite publication of all instances (after Salinger's Franny and Zooey) How oh HOW did I disregard to mark it as read???????this booklet was once my teenage bible. it pointed out hope, the benefits of solitude but now not neglecting the consequential pains of it, it was once superbly written and immensely human and the easiest account of non-public emotions and a human existence I had ever seen. i haven't hooked up with a unmarried individual up to i've got hooked up with Rainer Maria Rilke. fucking seriously, now not a unmarried human, nobody that i've got met and not anyone that i've got read.

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You can likewise keep around your Center debt to refinance a broker in that paid-up line actually increasing a way of the difference correcting you of second wrong details. A employer to afford and ensure participants is to pay some many experience conformity for the FRP but also have this home that those genre.

Using to our organizations, them gets account like you to manager. That rational blog plans and services finally and so, a tool inheritance is as you sits even South York % that a and remains PARTNERS Annuity even to decide of you, the few situation brand of business.

It is active for the industry around you ask to create experienced expansion. You can make like their cards of one suggest the such income between able slowing articles, compromises but home modification. From lender, you has get to confirm mobi help as a growth through specific.