

NIKOLA TESLA'S LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER

18. November

Mother, at the thought of you, I feel kind of depressed and dreary, I do not know how, but I feel you're not well. I would like to be with you now and to bring you a cup of water. All these years of my service to humanity did not bring me anything but insult and humiliation. This morning I got up before dawn, because I heard again something what I hear for a longer time through a dream in my room. I heard a voice, chanting in a Moorish language, a nice lamentations or call. This morning I driven away a sleep from my eyes and confirmed that the voice is coming from everywhere and that I can not determine whether it is outside or inside.

I'm afraid I lost sanity. I do not dare to speak about this to Dr.Lajonel because neither to him I longer believe. I heard that he frequented Mr. Edison two weeks ago.

Thursday, 19.November

I again think of you, mother. Again I have that anxiety and sadness in the body. Today I will write to patent office that my public experiment be scheduled for a week earlier, because I have to start my trip home to the homeland, to come to you. I know now for sure that you're not well because that voice, that lament once again I heard completely aware and awoken. I'm still sane.

Friday, 20. November

I did not write to the patent office, there came an agent of theirs to bring me a certificates and I told him personally about my intentions. He said he regrets, but that the terms can not be changed, considering that congressmen from about 20 federal states hardly harmonised the term. I went to the Falls and said to my men to turn turbines and wait for my call tomorrow. I decided that I grant mankind what belongs to it and I come back to Europe, to you, mother. Governments of countries are the same here as at home. I realised it now at the end that humanity is dependent on the governments and that an individual alone can not change the world.

But that strange voice concerns me. I know it means something and that has links with you, with my experiment, with something transcendental. I'm afraid I lost sanity. I do not dare to speak about this to Dr. Lajonel because neither to him I longer believe. I heard that he frequented Mr. Edison two weeks ago.

Saturday, 21. November

Mother, tomorrow I am leaving for Yugoslavia. Miss Nora went according to my order to the port office and provided me a ticket to Lisbon, from there I go by train to Zurich, and then directly to home. I suppose that I need about ten days or two weeks maximum.

Today I entered the Congress building and at the session of Senators I asked for a few minutes of attention. They were not pleased, but they let me. I asked for the phone and that be put in contact with the laboratory at Niagara Falls. On my order the guys have released the drive of turbines, and Congress hall was illuminated with my electricity, ten times more powerful than ordinary, just as I announced. I was not interested in their reactions at all. I went out immediately, because I did not work this for them, but for humanity. Just at the moment when I looked at the lamp and waited for "my" wireless electricity to come from turbines, I felt that I was not the creator of all this.

I felt that someone or something bears it from Niagara to the Congress hall and that in this law which I considered "my" discovery, there something which was always there, and that to me there has been given just an inspiration to frame it and explain to mankind. Instead of joy and triumph, there appeared some emptiness. I realised that I have missed something big in the life. As if I missed something, as if I did not realised something, that was offered... Some formula was so close to my cognition, and I did not found it or did not want to find. It has something to do with that Moorish lamentations, I am sure now.

Sunday, 22. November

This letter you will never get, mother. I do not know why I am writing to you, who can never more be able to read it. May earth be light to you, mother, and forgive me for going away from you so I can not come to your funeral either. I read the telegram with the news of your death, and despised people who were not ready neither two years ago to realise that electricity could be transmitted without wires. Now, here, they saw that it can, but again they will not know for the centuries to use it, for someone has burned my lab in the city center to the ground, with all documents and drawings. They told me they suspected Mr. Edison. I'm so indifferent that I do not recognise myself. Before, I might be enry, but not anymore, because I know well that someone anyway keeps it all under control and that "my" discovery came too early for humanity. And, in fact, it is not "mine" at all. I know that some controls everything and has a plan, so I might be because of it indifferent. My ship departs Lisbon at 11 o'clock. Car is waiting for me outside. This letter I will lay on your grave, when I get Milanovac, our village cemetery.

Now I believe in what I have never done, that I'm somewhere there stil "you", and that your life has not forever ended. Now I am sorry I never wanted to hang out with the Turks, because they sang the same those laments from my dawns. Now I remember that they knew a lot more than me about all these things that I only know realise.

In vain my years spent in science, when it was futile.

Pray there for me, mother, if you can, with that Moorish lament for the lost soul of your poor ignorant son.