

Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois
May 19, 1948

My little Darling,

This morning I received your eight page letter, and boy, was it welcome! By the way, what time did you get to bed that night? I hate to have you stay up so late, but I certainly do enjoy those letters. Keep sending them, more and more.

Wouldn't I have liked to see you ride that donkey! Even now I can just see you bounce along. And then, every once in a while rolling off. Then you would scream for all you were good for. Did you like riding a donkey as much as I like to ride horses? Every week I can hardly wait until the time comes that we will ride. And then for the rest of the week I have to take a pillow along so that I can sit down. Did you have the same trouble (ha, ha, I'll bet you did)?

You are wondering how I look in civilian clothes. Well, I'll tell you: I look as handsome as ever. In fact, I'm even handsomer than in a uniform (wow, ~~am~~^{am} I conceited!). You mentioned that it takes a uniform to "make a man." Did you ever hear about the bees and the flowers. Well, the point is that it takes a bit more than a uniform to "make a man." I guess you know what I mean.

Yes, Doris dear, we do need to see each other as soon as possible. I do love you. But I am only human. You know that I am going out with other girls right along. I suppose that I will continue to do this through next year if we are not married. Doris, actually I care to go with no one except you. But after studying all week, it is

necessary for me to have some form of relaxation. And as I continue to go with other girls next fall, who knows, perhaps I'll find one that I like a lot. If I fall for any other girl besides you, Doris darling, it will not be that I don't love you. But, as I said, I am only human. And it is often hard not to care for a girl when she is a fine Christian, beautiful, and intelligent. I am sure you understand. If you and I were children it would be different. But we are adults and even now should be married. Therefore, sweetheart, I think that it is essential for us not only to meet this summer, but become one as well. Don't you think I am right? In other words, I am offering myself to you now; but I don't know how I will feel this fall, winter, or next spring. Perhaps by next summer (a year from now) I will be free. Then, perhaps, I will still offer you my love. But it doesn't seem very likely that I will be free. My darling, I am not trying to scare you, but only let you know the situation as it is. I don't know the answer to your training in the States and I don't know what to say about leaving Sweden and the money that has been given to the hospital. I only know that ambition and money are poor substitutes for love. This is especially true when I say that you can continue your training here. You seem to be afraid of continuing in an American hospital. You have no reason to be. Even if you do not continue your training in nursing, so what!! I am not interested in marrying a nurse primarily; I am in love with Doris Rinell. It is not what you can do that I want; it is what you are that I want. And what is the difference if you do lose some time if you come to the States. I shall be in school for a number of years yet. You will have plenty of time to finish training. I know there are problems to face, my dearest. Yet, remember, I am offering myself. Will you accept this time; the decision is yours!

A year from now may be too late.

If you were with me, we would have a wonderful time. We could go to the country together, have picnics together, and do so many things. Everything that we would do would be as play. Some days we would take a long trip. I know so many swell places to go. There is Bethany Beach on the shores of lake Michigan. It is a beautiful resort, mostly Christian. There we could swim, hike, play tennis, and do many, many other things. Or we could go to the Baptist conference grounds at Round Lake Illinois. Then there is Lake Geneva, one of the most beautiful spots around Chicago. It is a large lake in Wisconsin. There we could go motor boat riding or anything else. Many of the young people from the Chicago churches go there every summer. I have stayed there several times. Honey, see all that you are missing.

Sweetheart, are you sure that the Lord wants you for China. Forgive me, but I believe you are too hasty in making up your mind so early. I hope He wants you for China because I hope He wants me for China. But it is up to us to just wait on His will. If we have our hearts set on China too much, we can not hear His call elsewhere. I'll tell you a story that happened to me a few months ago. I had my heart set completely on China. I was sure He would have me to go there. Then, as I was praying, something seemed to say, "Bud, would you be willing to stay in the States for me?" I rebelled and told the Lord that I was yielding myself to China. Then the Lord seemed to wisper to me that He did not want me to yield myself to any task, but He wanted me to yield my whole will to Him. But, darling, we can not yield our stubborn self to Himself of our own power. It is only possible to pray, "Lord, I am willing to be made willing." The Lord can and will make us willing to do His will. I hope the Lord sends us to China. But I shall yield myself not to

China, but to do His will where ever it may be. So sweetheart, please don't set your heart on China, but set your heart on Him and the doing of His wonderful will. May I ask a question of you? You said that you are called to China by the Word of God. Will you explain this to me. I am interested in knowing. I know the Lord has dealt with you and I am interested in knowing how.

Yes I will have to come closer to you. You don't know how close I want to come. I feel that we are being united closer and closer in spirit; and how I wish we could be united in flesh as well. Yes, I have gained some weight. When you knew me I weighed about 165. Now I am about 185. But I am naturally heavy. This is true with my mother's side of the family. Both of my uncles on her side are rather husky and my brothers are well built. I paid one of my uncles a visit the other day. He is a lawyer and a congressman for the state of Illinois, a personal friend of governor Green. His name is David I. Swanson. He was very glad to seem me. Because he is seldom home, it was the first time I had the chance to see him since arriving back from the service. I have received mail from him though. My mother's other brother is a school teacher in Chicago.

Yes, I kind of like to "fix chow." If fact there would be nothing that I would like better than to serve you breakfast in bed (after we are married, though; ah hem!).

It is sack time for me. Good night my love.

Sincerely, your

Bernice