

Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois
May 26, 1948

My little Darling,

I have just arisen from off my knees. And now I am trusting the Lord to give me wisdom as I write this letter.

Your eight page letter arrived this afternoon. I was expecting it and beat a path to my mail box all morning looking for it to arrive. You can't imagine how pleased I was to see your honesty. Since reading what you had to say, I have been doing much thinking and much praying. I have been trying to study for a very important philosophy test all afternoon, but my mind has been far, far from here.

You know, sweetheart, I have heard much said about the United States not having a foreign policy. And I am afraid that your lover hasn't had a "foreign policy" either. Further, I believe I have been rather inconsiderate of your position in our whole love affair. You see, I believe that I love you, and I cannot bear to think of you apart from me. I know you understand. I would give anything to be able to hold you in my arms. And if I could but wrap my arms about you, I do believe that I would never let you go.

My Darling, I believe I know where I stand now. Finally, I think I have a sensible solution to our problem. Your letter presented problems that I knew existed, but was unwilling to acknowledge. Primarily, though we are sure of our love for each other, we must be far more patient, waiting, always waiting on the Lord, and trusting Him as well.

First of all, let me say that I was happy that you have con-

fided in me about Herman. Truly, I can realize your great feeling toward him and the heartache you have suffered. And I know that you still retain much of your feelings for him. I realize this and I shall continue to love you just the same. I also realize that Herman may at times occupy a more predominate place in your heart. As you look at his pictures and see the little things that remind you of him, you are bound to think of him again. Some times you will think that you love Herman more than me and some times you will think you love me more than Herman. Dearest, remember, always remember that I understand. I am so interested in knowing just how you feel about everything. Tell me all that is on your heart - everything. Tell me exactly how you feel about Herman too. And furthermore, please don't destroy all your little reminders of him. At present, Darling, there is a void in your heart. This void or emptyness was left by the absence of Van. I have come along and have partially filled that void. But the memory of Herman is still there. Now Sweetheart, I shall never be satisfied to just take the place of Herman in your heart and life. When we are married, I want you to be sure that you love me more than you have ever loved Herman. This sounds like a lot, doesn't it Darling? But by trusting the Lord it can and will be that way. All love originates in Him anyway. I don't want you to throw away your memories of Herman because you are trying to forget him. Eventually I want you to throw away your memories because you then HAVE forgotten him. Understand? Some day, the Lord willing, I shall push Herman from your heart. And I shall occupy prominence because you love me more. So, don't even remove his initials from your towels. Leave everything as it is until you first have removed him from your heart. Doris, I mean what I say. And most important of all, please tell me exactly how you feel. When you feel like shedding a few tears,

sit down and drop me a little note, telling me everything - everything - that is on your heart. I shall not be jealous and I shall be so happy to have your confidence in me. Some day I shall place a ring on your finger; but I shall not do it until I am assured that I occupy first place in your heart. You will have the ring on your finger in the Lord's good time.

I realize, too, that we cannot rush into marriage. Even if I do get to see you this summer, it perhaps would be very unwise to become one so soon. Your suggestion about trying to get to Sweden for Christmas is a good idea. And by that time we'll know better what to do. Nevertheless, I shall try to see you this summer. But, I do need to work in order to earn a bit of money. You mentioned that in Sweden one usually goes steady for one or two years and then are engaged for one or two years. Yes, I do realize this. Even in the States the Swedish people are rather slow in such a matter. The Americans are usually different. Personally, I believe that both we Americans and the Swedes go to an extreme. One is too slow and the other is too fast. But you have a good point. It certainly would look bad for you to run off and get married so soon. Forgive me for being so hasty. I know you will understand, though. But, don't you think it will be needless for us to wait the whole two years. If proper arrangements can be made in the States, I believe it would be wiser for you at least to finish here. In other words, maybe we could compromise - instead of staying in Sweden for two years, you could stay only one year. I realize the importance you place on graduating from a "Red Cross Hospital." Of course, I do not believe it is the distinction they claim it to be. In other words, to me there seems little difference what hospital you graduate from. In fact, I am sure it would be better to graduate from West Suburban, which is connected to the college. Wheaton College is

known as the finest Christian school in America. I don't say this because I attend here; but I came here because I knew that fact. Wheaton also is accepted by all the universities of the country. I don't believe there is a fundamental seminary in the country that doesn't have Wheaton's graduates on the faculty as teachers. Many Wheaton graduates are even college presidents. If a nurse completes a course in nursing at the hospital, she may enter the college for a year and a half. At the end of that time she will receive a regular college degree (bachelor of arts). So, in that period the girl not only becomes a nurse, but she receives a degree in an outstanding Christian college. You mentioned about continuing training in a Red Cross Hospital in this country. I am one step ahead of you. I called the Chicago chapter of the American Red Cross. They have no hospitals in the Chicago area and I am sure they have no hospitals at all in the U. S. Listen, you sweet little nit-wit, now why in sam-hill can't you come here after at most a year, huh? If I wait a year, can you maybe come a year early?

I am rather reluctant about going steady. I feel that I need to get out as much as possible. And if I go steady with a girl, it means that I cannot take any others out. Yet, most fellows and girls do go steady for a time. Right now, if it is alright with you, I should like to be free for the summer. I'll be out much of the time, and to go with the rest of the fellows will have to do as they do, and date. And I believe it is a little early for us to start going steady. But if everything goes alright, and you are sure you want to in the fall, then perhaps we too can start going steady. That sounds kind of guffy. We should say "correspond steady." By then I'll know more about if I can get to see you at Christmas. Then we can see each other at Christmas and can decide if we want to "go steady" for life. Perhaps your Christmas present will sparkle.

Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? Please tell me what you think about it, Honey. Then the Lord willing, perhaps you can come to the States in the late summer. I'll meet you at New York, we'll be married and live happy ever after. It probably won't be quite as smooth as that; yet, it is not impossible, considering the power of God. And after all, we have committed the matter to him.

As for myself, I shall remember all summer my little blonde sweetheart. And as for yourself, you had better not fall for some one of those dumb Swedes (oops, forgot, I'm a Swede myself!). Darling, believe me, for the entire summer my heart shall belong only to you. I am reasonable sure that you are mine forever; and I shall not fall for another. I have been quoting much of "our" little poem. Some day, the Lord willing, I shall alter it a little. I shall change the last line so that it read as follows:

Within my heart there dwells a joy
That has its source above;
But God did make it incomplete,
So I would need your love.
Our faith in Christ has brought us near;
In Him we both abide.
And yet we each apart do tread,
And should be side by side.
Are we not made to be just one,
To serve in unity,
With hand in hand and heart in tune,
Just God and you and me.
So ask do I and praying thus
In all sincerity,
Will you accept my life and love,
My DARLING WIFE to be?

Now to look at your letter so as to answer everything. You're not the only one who wishes to have been at that party with you. Boy, I'd have given anything to have been there. You belong to me and I belong to you; we can never be contend while apart. Listen, toots, be careful with your health. Don't chance a nervous breakdown. I'll be praying that the Lord will restore your strength. But, oh, be careful!

Doris, my Darling, there is one thing I must mention. You need some one to lean upon. Little girls are all like that. Please confide in me. I shall try ~~to~~ to do the thing that is the very best for you. Up to now I have been a little hasty. But now I do know where I stand. Let me know every one of your problems. Remember, we are no longer children. I understand life pretty well and will tell you what to do in every little detail of your life, personal or otherwise. There is no one more interested in you than I. Even before my own desires, I shall consider you, Sweetheart. Remember that! Don't worry about anything, just trust me, trust, always trust; and I shall trust the Lord for wisdom. Concerning money for you to come here, that will be my worry. Trust me, Darling, because I love you.

Sincerely yours,

your

Bernie

5 XXXXX

P. S. Dodo, on my finger I wear my Marine Corps ring. It was given to me by the folks. And, of course, I value it very much. I shall not force it on you. But if you really would want to wear it all the time, I'll make a deal with you. If you will send me one of your rings (not a real good one), I'll send you this one. What do you say? In that way, I'll have something of yours with me all the time. If you don't care to do this, just ignore what I have said.