

No. 19. - 2.

11342 S. Church St.

Chicago, Illinois

June 12, 1948

My little Darling, there the day would have been ruined. But it was there and I have been reading and rereading it ever since.

There is nothing that I would rather do than to write to you. Somehow I feel that in writing I am with you, talking to you, and expressing my love for you. And as I write, strangely, I feel my very heart burning within me. Sweetheart, by any chance, do you ever feel like this? On Thursday I had a wonderful surprise. When I looked in my mail-box, there before me was not one, but two letters from the one I love. I almost hit the ceiling for joy. When your letters do arrive, I am forced to read them over and over again. Sometimes the fellows at school kid me about how I am always reading your mail. But I don't care, I love you, and I don't care who knows it. I am proud of you and want everyone to know what a wonderful person you are, believe me Darling, I mean it. Even many of the girls have heard about you. I can't help telling them, for I am thinking of you always. Anyway, it is just as well that they know that there is a special person - a very special little girl.

Last night I came into the city with Joe Weeks again. But this morning I went out to Wheaton again with Dad's car to bring my books and clothes into the city. Then I met Dad at the factory this noon. There are three main foremen at the shop and one has to work half day each Saturday. Today was Dad's turn. Then he and I went bumming all afternoon. I like my Dad a lot. He is not only a father to me, but a close buddy, and we like to go out together quite often. Then this late afternoon we, with Mother and Elaine, went to Fridhem, the

No. 18 - 2.

Conference old people's home. Today was open-house there and one meets a lot of his friends there. But, back to Wheaton this morning. Guess what I did as soon as I got there? Yep, I ran quick like to my mail box. And sure enough, there was a letter from little Dodo. If it hadn't been there the day would have been ruined. But it was there and I have ^{been} reading and rereading it ever since.

Your letter today was an answer to the one that I thought I should never have sent. Yet, Sweetheart, there were questions in my mind and I had to have them answered. Now they are answered to the fullest satisfaction and I am glad that I did mail that letter. First of all, let me tell you something. Lately when I go out with girls I get the funniest feeling. Actually I feel guilty. Something seems to tell me that I am stepping out on Doris. I already feel that I belong to someone and should be faithful only to that one. We men really are a bunch of wolves (as if you didn't know that already!). And a pretty face usually is inviting a kiss. But there are none that I am tempted to kiss; I feel that I must save them for the one to whom they belong. Why should I feel this way Doris? You are far, far away and I could easily cheat on you; but I don't want to.

Sweetheart, I am sure you will understand the conditions under which I wrote that letter. I was very tired, having been studying very hard. And when we are tired, we think and say things that we will not say or think otherwise. When we are tired, everything looks a whole lot worse than it is. I know you understand. Will you change your mind? Perhaps under certain conditions I would want you to change your mind. Those conditions are, "If it is the will of God." If you are dedicated to the Lord, I know you will not and can not change your mind unless it is His divine will. You know, sometimes we do have great disappointment. But we can be assured that Jesus

No. 19 - 3.

disappointment is His appointment. What a wonderful Lord we have! When I asked you that question, my faith was weak; otherwise I would not have asked it. Yet, I'm glad that I did ask, for your letter was wonderful.

Herman, I hate to put his name into our love letters. Perhaps we will not need to do so for very long. I cannot help but love and admire you for how you feel toward him after he has done so much to you. As for myself, I should be grateful to him for discontinuing going with you. But I'm not. When your heart is broken, I feel hurt inside too. If I were hurt personally, it would not be so bad; but to see you hurt is too much for me. I wonder why? Sometimes I cannot help but feel hard toward Van for what he has done. I am glad that he has changed his mind. But why did he have to make you so suffer. He knew that ^{he} was infatuated with a girl, and was not necessarily in love. Why, then, did he not leave you alone. I thought he was my friend. Maybe he was. But it seems that he always payed too much attention to you even when we were supposed to be going together. I am wondering if he was not my friend for what he could get out of our relationship - popularity and you. Actually the Lord elevated me to a place of leadership and prominence. Knowing me was a way to become important. Sweetheart, what do you think? I can remember that after he had accomplished his goal, he was not as considerate of me as before. Why did he cause you to suffer when he knew I loved you and that he did not. And how could he pray with me when (or if) he was a deceiver. Doris, this makes my blood boil. Enough of this nonsense; I cannot write more.

Sweetheart, I'll have to close for now. Early in the morning the family is going to the farm again. My brother Al has a boat in the garage that he built and we are taking it out to the lake. The

No. 19 - 4.

boat is about 18 feet long and is not completed as yet. He hopes to finish it out on the farm in one of the chicken coops. This spring Dad took a picture of me on the tractor. The first chance I get I'll have it sent to you. I hope you will like it. Maybe some day I can have a picture taken on the boat and send that to you also. Al told me that I should finish the boat for him myself and use it to sail to Sweden. I almost took him us on it. How does it sound? Good-night, Sweetheart.

June 13, 1948

Hello, you little Swede,

Oh, am I tired! I'm not fatigued, but just physically tired. Dad and Al have been having me help them all day. I never realized they could find so much to do. But funny thing, I thoroughly enjoyed it. To begin with Al got over to the house at about five this morning. Because he was to take the boat to the farm, he wanted a real early start (and I do mean early!). So, what do they do but wake me at five. And this my first morning to sleep. What a cruel life! It was not until I smelt the coffee pot that I did roll out though. In fact Al left before we were ready. Then we left and met him on the way (he couldn't go very fast with the boat). When we arrived out here we had to clean out one of the chicken coops so that there would be room for the boat. In the coop we had a couple of wagons, a combine, a mower, and a couple of other things plus a tractor. Now we have added an 18 foot boat and a little motor boat. Finally after getting everything straight, we started to paint Al's motor boat. This Al and I finished about an hour ago. Well, anyway we were busy all day.

No. 19 - 5.

Had to laugh at Elaine this morning. She was bound that she was going to the farm, but was unwilling to get up at five. So she just left her pajamas on and continued sleeping in the car. Dad and I decided that we wanted her picture in pajamas. So, as soon as we arrived here I grabbed Elaine by the arm, dragged her out of the car, and held her as Dad snapped the picture. Was she mad! Actually though Elaine is a good sport and got a laugh out of it herself.

I am all by my self now. The folks went down to the lake to see how Rusty was getting along on his house and Al just went to join them. Elaine is over at La Verne's. I decided that I'd far rather stay here and make "woo." Sweetheart, truly, I must be in love. You know they say that a fellow chases a girl until SHE catches him. Is that true? For myself, I have always gotten scared when a girl showed too much interest. Then would I ever run. We men are peculiar; we try to find all kind of excuses for not falling in love; but when we fall, wow! As for you, you **never** have showed too much interest. As a matter of fact you never could show too much interest as far as I am concerned. But you have made me run - run in your direction. What is your secret, what is your power over me, Sweetheart?

It's funny, Darling but I'm already beginning to like the name "Hellen." Perhaps its because I like the person who the name represents. Could this be possible? You know, many people don't like to name their children after their parents and loved ones. But for a long time I've felt just like you feel. Yes, I think it would be an excellent idea to name our "twins" after our parents, giving them two names each. Darling, your wonderful; how could you know so perfectly how I felt?

So you don't mind dancing with me, do you? Don't you know that

No. 19 - 6.

dancing is wicked? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Ha, ha, don't let me kid you! Some people actually believe that, Hon. Some folks even think it is wrong to plan games. Actually, if we were to listen to everyone, we could not even exist. I'm glad that we can be devoted Christians and yet have a good time and laugh and sing (and dance). Wouldn't Christianity be terrible if we were not to enjoy life? Doris, I'M counting on it; when we get together we'll have a wonderful time. And I want you to teach me to dance with you. Will you do that, Darling? We'll not go out to dance; but just where ever we may be together. O.K.? Yes, again, I have long felt exactly as you do on the subject of dancing. Why are we so much alike. Truly, the Lord must have made us for each other. What do you think?

Of course I remember your uncle, aunt, and cousins. In fact, I remember them quite well. It was only Alice that had me confused. You used to call her Lolly. In you letter your "L's" looked like "U's." But now I understand, "Loll" is "Lolly" for short. Right? And I remember Johnny quite well also. He is a swell little fellow. I believe that it was Lolly and Johnny who went swimming with us once after you left China. We had our bathing suits along and soon prepared to jump in. But Johnny didn't have one along. Seeing that he did not have one, I felt kind of sorry for him. But I need not of. Johnny was not disturbed with not having a suit. Nature had already provided him with an excellent swimming suit. And he used it. At first we fellows were a little embarrassed with Johnny running about with nothing on; but the girls didn't seem to be bothered, so neither were we. Now, listen Doppie, don't go and tell Johnny this. I must keep on good terms with my relatives, you know. My mother's name is Ruth Elfie Swanson (Holmquist) and my father's name is John Theodore Holmquist and Elaine's birthday is on the 25th of June. Does that

No. 19 - 7.

satisfy you? You little dope, I love you.

Darling, if we get married around Chicago, do you suppose we could have Dr. Edman marry us? Dr. Edman, you remember, is the president of Wheaton College. I know you will love him (not too much I hope). The other day something happened to me that was rather interesting. Dr. Edman had been away all year doing some research work at Harvard University. The otherday he returned. When I shook his hand he grabbed me like a long lost son and squeezed me the way I want to squeeze you. While talking to him I asked him how much a Swedish crown was worth. Of course he told me. He also wanted to know the reason I asked. So I told him. And he was real interested in you and our relationship. He is just wonderful. All the students at the college are in love with him. To all of us he is just like a father. And he is a Swede too and speaks some Swedish.

Hey, listen, you had better keep away from those fellows. I think I'll have to hang a sign on you saying that you are MINE. I haven't had a date for two weeks and am I ever jealous. Now, I suppose you will wish I can have exams the year around so that I will not have time to date. But seriously, I really want to date only one person. And I shall not be contented with only dating her, I want to have her as my little wife. Of course, you don't know who this little lady is, do you; or do you?

Ha, so my handsome face arrived in Sweden. And you think I am flirting. You don't know the half of it. You don't know it, but I've been watching every movement you have made. And boy, do I ever see the sights, wow! Do you mind? Sometime you just watch and see how big my eyes get at certain times - AWWWWWWW!! (the wolf in me). The brown picture was taken about a year ago. The black were taken about six years ago. But I thought that you might like to see how I looked then. Of course the one in uniform was taken

No. 19 - 8.

right after discharge two years ago. Did you notice that I was wearing something under my nose? What would you say if I should grow another? Then you would know it when I was kissing you. How about it?

Do you think we really look alike. You poor, poor girl; oops, I mean you lucky girl. You should feel it a real compliment to look like me. Seriously though Sweetheart, we are very much alike in every way. Our likes and dislikes, tastes, and even ideas are identical. Do you suppose that the Lord made it that way purposely?

How strange that you should like the farm. I just love to be out in the country. Everything about the farm interests me. I know you would like Indiana. It is a beautiful state where I am at. There are so many trees and bushes and vegetation of all sorts. How soon, Sweetheart, do you think we can become one?

I ^{am} glad, so glad, that you are becoming more and more sure that you are in love with me. How much fun it will be for us to marry, go on to school in the ~~States~~ States, follow the Lord to China, Raise a family, and live on serving the Lord and caring for each other. How the Lord must love us to give us so much to look forward to. Yes, and even now how I do long to come home to you in the evenings, to rest and to have you close to me. How I do long for that day.

I was interested in hearing what your mother had to say. There is a certain amount of truth in what she told you. We must not marry until we are sure - absolutely sure. For myself, I feel almost that way now. But we must wait and be patient. But we must not wait too long. The past generation - our folks - believed in waiting too long I believe. That was the custom in that day. Today most people go to the other extreme and marry too soon. This is just as bad. Really, Doris dearest, we need not be too concerned about marrying too soon or waiting too long. All we need do is trust the Lord and He will lead the way. I believe we should plan on marriage and try

No. 19 - 9.

to get together. Yes, we must trust, but we must also act. Your example about the school boy was good and it applies here also.

I am typing on the dinning room table at Grovertown. Just now I noticed a bird fly into an evergreen outside the window. So I got up and looked out. And sure enough, there was a robbin with her nest and her young. Dag-rat it, why can't you be here with me. The family is now coming up the lane to the house. So, I'd better quit for now. I'll finish the letter tomorrow, the Lord willing. It was Al's car and he has come to take me to La Verne's. She told me this afternoon that there is fresh strawberries and ice-cream waiting for me there. Oh, Boy! Hungry?

June 14, 1948

My Sweetheart,

You can't imagine how happy you have made me feel telling me that I have first place in your heart. There is nothing I want more in all the world. I was surprised that already you love me more than you ever loved Herman. Yet, is not that the way it should be, has not the Lord made it that way? Darling, even as I write this letter and read your letter again, my heart burns within me. Yes, Sweetheart, I love you far more than life itself; I am sure of that, and there is none other. And by dedicating our love and devotion and service to the Lord, He shall help us to love each other even more. Praise His name. And He shall bring us together when and where it is His will. As for now we shall have to be contented with expressing our love by mail. Its funny dearest, before we started corresponding I seldom found time for letter writing. It

No. 19 -10.

seemed that I never could find time to answer letters. I tried to set aside certain hours each week for my correspondence. But always I would find something more important to do. Since writing you it has been different. I don't know where the time comes from, but I always find it. In fact, I find myself unable to study until a letter has been written. It takes all the will-power I have not to write even more often. There are so many things to do that a ten page letter each day would leave little time for anything else. Why do I find time to write you so much? You know the answer as well as I do. Maybe its because I'm in love.

Darling, that statement you had to sign about being in love and being willing to marry within three months, it should really be changed. Sweetheart, all I would need would be about three hours. Just think, Mrs. Bernhard Holmquist, wow!

You said "comparing" Jeanne with yourself Darling, that is impossible, there is no comparison. To me you are so much better than Jeanne that I would not dare to compare. You would make Jeanne look sick. To me you are the most beautiful person I've ever known, and the sweetest, and everything else. I think what Van was to you, Jeanne was to me. I thought I was in love. But, Sweetheart, I never have felt about anyone the way I feel about you. If this is love (and it must be) then I never have been in love before. Just last night coming from the country I was thinking about Jeanne and about you. And, Doris, I never saw before how different Jeanne and I really were. This fact I guess was made evident when I began to see how much alike you and I really are. Sweetheart, believe me, no one even begins to compare with you. In a former letter you asked me if you were worth the gift I sent you. My gift was very little. As far as your worth, I'd have to answer in terms of love. Between you and me there are no

No. 19 - 11.

other standards. Let me compare it to the love we have for our folks. I often have wondered how much it would require for me to pay them back for all they have done for me. Then I would ask why they did it. Their answer was because of their love for me. Can I pay back love? Yes, but not with material things. Love can be paid back with love alone. And how long will it take to pay such a debt? The answer is as long as love lasts. Therefore all that I have all my life would not be enough to show how I appreciate what they have done for me. This is my folks. My love for you even is far greater and far different than my love for them. How much are you worth to me. Spiritually, you are worth all my love all my life; materially, you are worth all I possess during every day of my life. A mere gift does not show your worth to me. It is only a reminder that such love exists.

Sweetheart, saying good-bye in a letter is like giving a good-bye kiss. It hurts inside. I want to have you near me always. There is much to do around the house, and I must get busy. Dad had a large tree cut down in the back yard and he wants me to chop it up. So I'll have to get busy. And Mom has a mess of windows for me to wash. So you see they have plenty for me. But it feels good to have nothing to study for a change and I enjoy doing physical work once in a while. It's good for me. And there is something else that is good for me - YOU!

Your loving husband,

Bernie