

11342 Church Street  
Chicago 43, Illinois  
September 1, 1948

My darling little Sweetheart,

Doris darling, this is one of the most important letters I ever have written and I want you to read it real carefully. I want you to know that before deciding to write this letter, I have thought much about and prayed much about what I am about to say. In fact, you probably would have heard from me a couple of weeks ago concerning this matter, except I decided that I needed more time to think it all over and to be more sure of myself. And before you answer this letter, I want you to think about it and pray about it too. I am sure it will help for you to talk it over with Roy.

Sweetheart, I believe we both are sure that it is the Lord's will for us to become ~~man~~ and wife. It seems that the Lord, himself, has placed real love in our hearts for each other. And also it seems that over the years He has molded our personalities and made us very much alike - "made to be just one." Our likes and dislikes are almost identical and even our thinking is very much alike. But most important, we both are Christians, seeking above all to do the will of our God. The Lord, also has given us both a great interest in foreign missions and strangely He has shown us both the great need in China. Have you ever thought of the importance of our union as far as the mission work in China is concerned? Right now in North China there are two very important missions serving the Lord side by side: the Swedish Baptist and the American-Swedish Baptist missions. Your Grandfather started the Swedish mission and he was well-known among the Swedish Baptists. My Grandfather assisted in the organ-

ization of several American-Swedish Baptist Churches in and around Chicago and also was well known, but among the American-Swedish Baptist. Although he has been dead for a number of years, many still tell me about what a fine man he was. And even I am getting to be known a little among the Swedish Baptist in this country. Just think of the importance of the union between the daughter of the Swedish Baptist of Sweden and the son of the Swedish Baptist in America. On the mission field there are few things of greater importance than cooperation between missions. And, Darling, what would bring about more cooperation than our marriage?

Have you ever thought how marvelouw it is that the Lord is leading us both to China? Here, not only are we deeply in love, but we both are interested in mission work in China. I love the Chinese people and want nothing more than to return to China as a missionary. Even long before going to China myself, I was keenly interested in the Chinese. I can remember how often I would go out of my way to assist a Chinese person that I would meet. Just the other day I was going through some old high school papers and came across the name of a Chinese friend I had in high school. While I still was in high school he returned to China and I kind of forgot about him. Then just the other day I remembered what close friends we were. He was the only Chinese in the school and rather lonely. One day I went up to him and introduced myself. Until he left the States we were friends. If I remember correctly, I believe I even at that early age expressed my desire of becoming a missionary to China. I guess that is the reason for his kind of liking me.

Darling, I am sure that I could find a nice Christian girl who would be willing to go with me to China. But I don't want my wife to go to China only because I feel lead to go; but I want a wife

who herself feels the need of mission work there and herself feels the call of the Lord to China. Marvelously, Darling, in you not only have I found a girl who wants to go to China, but in you I have found a girl that I LOVE VERY DEEPLY. When I consider how good the Lord is to me and to you in bringing us together, I cannot help but raise my head in thanksgiving. What a wonderful Lord we have!

And it is the same with you. I know there are all kinds of fine fellows you could get. But how many would be willing to return with you to China? Maybe you might find one who would be willing to go with you; but would he be interested in the Chinese people and would he be going because he was lead of the Lord? Or perhaps you could go alone. But that would be a tremendous sacrifice. There are many men on the mission field, mostly married; but there are many more times as many women, most of who have to remain single.. Truly the Lord is wonderful to us; truly He has brought us together; and truly He will lead us into the field of service He has planned for us. Praise His Holy name!

Yes, Sweetheart, we are alike in personality and alike in interests. But we are alike in many other ways. Our backgrounds are very similar. Both of us were brought up in deeply spiritual Christian homes. Our parents and we just think alike. All my life I have associated with few people besides Swedes. In other words, Darling, I can understand your customs and actions better than the average American. Your customs and ways are my customs and ways. This fact is more important than most people think. As a Swede, I do not consider myself better than anyone else; but I just have little in common with people <sup>of</sup> ~~with~~ other nationalities. And most important of all, I could not be happy with a wife who is of a greatly different nationality than mine. Perhaps in Sweden people don't realize this fact. But here in America, where

there are so many different peoples, we see the importance of marrying someone with a similar ancestry. The different races in America eventually must be melted into one; but the process must be very, very slow. So it is, Darling, that to be most happy in marriage, I must marry a girl of Scandinavian background; and equally for you to be most happy in marriage, you must marry another Swede. Ah, and here I am, ready and willing and wanting to cooperate.

Sometime ago you mentioned that we must not only pray for the Lord's will, but we must do something about bringing His will to pass. I believe that in the past, Darling, we have done all in our power to bring His will to pass. I prayed that if it should be His will for us to become man and wife, He should give me the power to love you more than I ever have loved any other girl, and that He should give you the power to love me more than you ever have loved any other fellow. And, strangely, though we have not seen each other for two years, we have become to love each other more than we ever have loved anyone. We did do something about our love affair: we started to write many, many letters. And even my two or three letters a week were not enough, so you demanded that I write more often. So I started writing every day. Then we decided that before we could determine whether we should marry or not, we would have to meet once more. Darling, we know that if it is the Lord's will for us to marry, He will bring us together. In the Bible we read, "...Ask, and ye shall receive that your joy may be full." Truly our joy will be full when we are brought together. And we did something about being brought together. I wrote to a number of shipping lines and even went to see the Swedish council. But wherever I went, I received a negative answer. I was willing to take the whole summer off from school so as to see you, Darling, I even was willing to take additional time off before and after my Christmas vacation if only I could see you.

Yet, every way I turned it seemed that it was not the Lord's will for me to go to Sweden. At first I could not understand why He should not want me to take this trip. But then I started thinking that it probably is the Lord's will for me to finish school at a certain date. And if I took the time off for the trip to Sweden, I would not finish school when He wants me to. Darling, listen, maybe its the Lord's will for us to meet even though I don't go to Sweden. All the time I kept receiving those negative answers, I was so sure that the Lord would have us together as man and wife. I knew that the Lord expected me to do all I could; and I did do all in my power. But, Darling, there is something else; the Lord also expects you to do all you can. And we both know that you have not done all you can that we might be brought together.

Sweetheart, I believe I know what you should do. For so long you have been indecisive as to what to do. Here is what I want you to do for me; so hold your breath. Because it is impossible for me to get to Sweden, I want you to come to America. Boy, that sounds like a lot, doesn't it? Yet, if you love me and want to become my wife, you must do just that. I don't want you to go back into nurse's training; but I want you to come to America as soon as you can. After you get here and we are together, we can decide whether we should become man and wife (and I am sure of what our decision will be.). Darling, I know you are afraid and are not sure what to do. But this is not as bad as it sounds. Let me explain it in another way:

You are going to go back to Stockholm to get your clothes and things. Then you'll visit your friends at the hospital and with a big smile on your face you'll say, "Guess what, I've decided to go to America." Then the girls will tell you how lucky you are. But then they'll say something else; it will be something like this, "Dodo, I'll bet you're going to America to marry Bernie." Then

you'll blush and say that eventually you hope you and Bernie will be married; "but for now," you'll say, "I've got another reason for going to America." Then you will tell them that your brother Roy will be leaving for the States in a few months and that you are going on ahead to prepare the way for him. You'll tell them how you need a rest after your illness and that this is a good chance for such a rest. Of course, you mention that you have many friends and relatives in the States with whom you'll stay, (of course, you'll live with your friends and not your relatives - in other words, you'll live with us). I'll be in school, Sweetheart, and you can have my room. The folks will be tickled pink to have you. Darling, even if we never marry, there is not a reason for you to stay in Sweden. If we decide not to marry, you can enter any number of hospitals in the States free of charge. If we marry and you are well, and wish to, you also can re-enter training. You need a rest now anyway and a couple of months off will not hurt you at all. I am sure that you can transfer your training time from Sweden to the States; so, Darling, you see how you lose nothing and gain everything. And why should you be in Sweden when Roy is in the States? And there is no need for you to wait until Roy comes to the States. You MUST come right now when you can afford to take the time off from work for a rest.

Here is what I will do for you. I will give you the money for passage to the States and transportation to wherever I am. If we don't marry, you may pay me back the money whenever you are able. If you feel you can never afford to pay me back, that will be alright too. But I am sure that we WILL marry when we meet. You may stay with the folks until we do get married or until you get another position as a nurse.

Darling, maybe this seems like a lot for you to do, but I don't think so. As I said, you have nothing to lose and all to gain.

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I know you will like America and I know everyone in America cannot help but like you. And best of all, we shall be together.

Sweetheart, when we are man and wife, we'll have so much fun together. I don't believe a fellow and his wife should stick around the house and "act married." Rather, I believe they should be "play-mates." We'll be outside much of the time, eating in the parks, playing tennis, taking rides, and so many other things. And I believe a fellow and his wife should be together always. I don't like to see a man go his way and the wife her's. Rather, what they do, they should do together. Darling, I want you for not only my wife, but for my "pal." Life is serious; but that doesn't mean life is not to be enjoyed. Sweetheart, if you'll be my wife, we'll serve the Lord with all our might; but we are going to enjoy Christian work, because it is the Lord's work and because we shall be serving Him together. And every minute we can spare we'll be out doing things together - day and night (wow).

I know you'll want to write your parents about this and I want you to. But before you write them, please give me your answer. Remember, I want your answer before you write your parents. The reason for this is that I want to write them the same time you do and explain to them just where I stand and assure them that I still love you. Darling, our three words, "I LOVE YOU."

Sincerely, your  
loving hubbie,

*Benjie*

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