

No. 86.

11342 Church Street  
Chicago 43, Illinois  
September 17, 1948

My darling Doris,

My Darling, because I was expecting a very important letter from you this afternoon, I had to cut my last classes at Wheaton and come right home. When I did arrive home, I did find that important letter I had expected. But, Sweetheart, I was very surprised to find that it did not contain the "yes" I had expected.

Yes, Darling, to a slight extent I do understand your position. You would like more than anything else to come to the States to marry me. But, oh, how people - even Christian people - like to talk. And it seems that those who do the least for the Lord are the ones that talk the most. We are deeply in love and we long only to serve our Lord. Yet, we are not permitted to serve the Lord because we are afraid of the tongues of critical Christians. Darling, perhaps you are right, we should wait until you come to the States before we become engaged. That way your friends in Sweden will not know that you are engaged again. But, Darling, will they know? Let me ask you, if you were engaged now or if you were to become engaged later, they still would get to find out about it, wouldn't they? Then, I cannot see the difference it would make if it should be now or later. The thing you are afraid of is not what they will think, but what they will say when they see you. You are afraid to face these people. You figure that if you wait until you come to the States, they can think whatever they want; but you will not have to face them. Darling,

let me ask you, "Am I worth a little embarrassment?" If I am not, it is time that we break up right now, isn't it? I am not trying to be mean; but I am trying to determine how much you love me.

Actually, Sweetheart, I believe people will say little or nothing. It has been over a year and a half since you broke off with Herman. By now you could be both engaged and married. It is NOT too soon for you to become engaged again.

Darling, I am not asking you to do something for me; I am TELLING you what you must do. Please try to understand. If we wait for you to immigrate before getting engaged, we could not possibly marry for about two years. By then I would have not G.I. compensation to support you, and would have to wait for another two years before graduating Seminary. Now the government will support us and help us get a start in our married life. Without support, we could not marry. Then, besides, I do not believe we have that much time. You said that if it looked like the Russians were going to take over Sweden, you would agree to come as my wife. There are two things wrong with our doing this: it would look very funny if we were not even engaged when you decided to come as my wife. Everyone here and in Sweden would say that you were only marrying me to escape Sweden and that you really did not love me. Then secondly, if you were to come as my bride, you will have to come immediately, considering the fact that before long they are stopping the girls from coming as the brides of ex-service men. If you don't come as my bride, Darling, we cannot marry for the next four years. What is your choice, now or in four years? I am waiting for you now; but can guarantee nothing for four years from now. Further more, how could you possibly afford to lose two whole years without any preparation for the mission field. Darling, unless you come to the States as my bride, you never will return to

China and to your parents. It must be now or never.

Let me ask you, which is more important, your doing what will please the people or your doing what seems to be the will of God? Darling, because you love the Lord and want to serve Him as a missionary, I know you prefer to do the will of God. Then, why not forget what people MIGHT say and agree to become engaged to me? In fact, I do not believe people will say very much. If they ask you about your new ring, just tell them that you and the man you learned to love in China have decided to come together again. They can think this man is anyone they please, even H. And that is the truth about the one you learned to love. You admitted loving me in China. Those that you know real well, you can tell the whole truth. Just tell them that you are glad that the Lord caused you to break up with H. Then tell them that you and Bernie have been in love all along and only didn't realize it. I am sure they will understand. And besides, Sweetheart, you are not staying in Sweden very long anyway. They will hear how well we are going in the States later and then how the Lord will be blessing us in China. Then they will hear of the little "twins" the Lord will give us. What can they say then? They will have to agree with us that our marriage is of the Lord. Darling, we have been so sure the Lord is leading us; we must follow Him in the way that He leads. Now, we know we are in love and we know we must marry real soon. Darling, let's not worry; but let's trust Him.

Perhaps you think we must go together before getting engaged. In other cases I believe this is necessary. But in our case, it is NOT necessary. We have gone with each other for a long, long time. We even went steady for awhile. There is no reason for our not finding all about each other by mail. And I am sure that we know more

about each other right now than many people (most people) do even just before they are married. Therefore, why must we wait? There absolutely is no reason. Darling, you know that all this does make very good sense.

You may think you are taking a chance by coming to the States without seeing me first. But don't forget, if you are taking a chance, I am taking a chance too. But I am so sure that we are meant for each other that I am willing to trust the Lord. Trusting the Lord, Sweetheart, is NOT taking a chance. We are so much alike, Darling. We have the same tastes, same desires, same talents, and the same ambitions. We MUST be made for each other. But, Darling, we will be taking a real big chance of never marrying if you don't come to the States right away as my bride. And, Darling, you are taking a big chance of never going to China again unless you come right away. Believe me, I know what I am talking about; you must come to the States immediately as my bride.

Perhaps, Darling, you are afraid that I'll do the same thing as Herman did. That is impossible. Even if I met a girl I liked, I would not do that to you. And how can I learn to know a girl so well if I don't go out with any. Darling, you have my word that I will be faithful to you and will not turn you down. Darling, when you arrive, I KNOW I shall love you and want to marry you. Don't ask me why. Why do you know you are saved? Isn't it the Lord that gives the assurance of salvation. Perhaps He has given me this assurance too. Darling, I am not like Herman. I believe in being true to my friends - to my little wife-to-be. You know that I would never forsake you.

You say that you know that we should get engaged some time. Darling, I know for sure to: I know for sure we should get engaged now.

Sweetheart, I am expecting another letter from you, telling me that you will become engaged to me. Then I want you to buy the rings and tell me the cost. Immediately I'll send you the money. No, I shall not be able to put the ring on your finger. But, Darling, I shall be able to call you and ask you to marry me with my own voice. And I shall hear you say, "Yes, Bernie darling, I'll marry you." Isn't it just as nice to have your Lover call you from half the way around the world to ask you to marry him? There are not many girls who can brag of such a thing. Darling, I so love you and want you for my own. I know you are sensible and will give me a positive answer to this. Remember, Sweetheart, once before you turned me down; there may not be the third invitation. Today this seems like a real big decision to you. But it isn't so big. If you'll only say, "Yes," there will be no more problem.

Sweetheart, if you do not say "yes" to me, I don't know what I'll do. Even now I feel so discouraged that I don't care if I go back to school or not. I love you so much and need you more than you can know. Darling, if even I succeed in the Christian service, it will be because you love me. I do need love - your love. Without it I don't care for anything. If I hadn't started loving you, perhaps it would be alright. Sweetheart, Sweetheart, don't refuse me, not if you love me. If you do, you'll do more harm than anything. Am I worth more to you than what people might say? Darling, accept my invitation to become engaged to me and to come to the States as my bride.

Sincerely, with  
all my love, your

*Bernie XXX*