

11342 Church Street  
Chicago, Illinois  
September 26, 1948

My little Darling,

Dad, Sister Eleanor and I just returned from the undertakers. We weren't going to go there until this afternoon; but Dad wanted to see Mom this morning. I am glad we went. We only were there a short time when Dad was satisfied and willing to return home. Then we stopped to see the new home of my uncle's, Joel Swanson. Uncle Joe kind of cheered us up a bit too.

Mom looks wonderful. We were so happy to see a smile on her face even as she lay in the casket. I love her so. There were a number of things that caused her going. But I guess most of all it was a clot that went to her lung. Uncle Joe went to the hospital immediately after she died and saw her then. He said that she had a very distinct smile on her face then too. Perhaps she saw her Lord calling her home. We like to think so anyway (and with good reason). But anyway, it is very clear that she did not suffer as she was going. We are thankful for that.

The Lord has strengthened us wonderfully, Sweetheart. Last night there were several hundred people who came. And I don't believe I've ever seen so many flowers. My uncle gave a hudge spray with five orchids in it. Then in Dad's casket spray were three more orchids. And the grandchildren bought a beautiful orchid for her dress. Everyone remarked how peaceful Mom looked. I was so glad to be able to tell them that there was a reason for her to be peaceful and for us to be calm: we have hope of a resurrection.

Most of the people from Church are not giving flowers. Instead Dad suggested that they ~~give~~ the money to the pastor for China missions. I think this is very nice, considering how interested Mom was in the Lord's work in China. Always I was Mom's favorite little boy and she hated like anything to see me return to China. But she said that she was glad and proud that she had a son who was willing to go. Though she would miss me, she said that more than anything she wanted me to return to China if that should be the Lord's will.

Three years ago, when I was in the Marines, Mom felt that she was to leave. But then she prayed the Lord that He would let her live until I was able to return. Her prayers were answered and the Lord in His wonderful mercy gave her till I would return and two extra years besides. I am sure her work was done and the Lord spared her a lot of suffering by calling her home. Because I know this fact, I praise Him for taking her from us.

Doris, Mom always was interested in you. All the time she would ask me how you were. Just through me, she learned to know you real well. She was so sure that we were made for each other and was so glad to hear that you had decided to come to the States. Her only wish was that she might meet you and for us to marry. When she received that letter from you, she was so happy. Dad just remarked about it today. And she wanted to answer it as soon as possible. But then she took sick and could not sit still long enough to write. Just about a couple of weeks ago she told me that she wants to get on her feet as soon as possible so that she could write you. When you asked about your being welcome, she just laughed and said that of course she wants you to stay with us. In fact she wanted to pay your expenses over and to pay for our wedding. Of course I would not stand for such a thing.

You never knew it, but it was Mom who really started me writing to you again. She knew I was deeply in love with you. She would hear me speak of you often and she would notice my looking at your pictures. I was stubborn and unwilling to go back to you. But she kept asking when I am going to drop you a line. Finally to please Mom mostly, I did write. And then she kept asking how you were. Darling, Mom was the very best friend I ever had. I always called her my little girl and then she would take my arm and squeeze me real hard. When we went anywhere together, I always called her my date. She liked this and would smile at me so beautifully. We ~~were~~ real pals.

When Mom went to the hospital the last time, she left her engagement ring home. It is a nice ring with one large diamond and two small ones. Being Mom loved you so much and admired the ring that she wore, I would like you to wear it as our engagement ring. The diamonds are the original, given to her over forty years ago; but the setting is within the last few years and is up to date. Already I have talked to the family about this and they said that they would like you to have it. If you care to ~~were~~ Mom's ring, I'd appreciate it. Please answer me on this matter. I'll have it made over for you.

If you care to wear Mom's ring, Darling, will you send me a ring that fits you perfectly. You mentioned that the one you sent is a little large for you. So I need one that is a good fit.

Sweetheart, I was so glad to receive your letter, saying that you would come to the States as my bride. As a matter of fact, I received your letter on the day Mom died. It meant so much to me when I felt so bad about Mom. I wish she could have known your answer; but perhaps she does know. I hope so.

I can't write any more, Sweetheart. We need you now more than

ever. Dad and Mom were real sweethearts all their lives. If Dad left the house without kissing Mom, she would be broken-hearted all day. And when Dad would come home, he would take her in his arms and call her his girl. We would kid them all the time for acting just like a couple of kids just married. They only would laugh and would go on hugging each other. Darling, that was real love. My only wish is that you are I can be as happy together as Mom and Dad was. Dad said all he has to look forward to now is your coming to our home and our getting married.

Sweetheart, when I was with Mom this morning, my heart cried out to God in thanksgiving. Tears were in my eyes; but in my heart I was singing, Once almost I started singing. And as I went into the lobby, I did start singing "The Love of God." I just felt that way. I missed Mom awfully. But I also remembered what a wonderful Lord we have. Without the debt that was paid by Christ on the tree, I would never see Mom again. And without His death, there would be no resurrection for Mom. So, this morning my heart ached, but also it sang out in praise to God for the wonderful salvation he has wrought. Darling, how can I do otherwise than to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ to dying men and women. There are thousands that die each day who are just as precious to someone as Mom is to me. But they have no hope. My only hope in life is to bring men to a Saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first chance I get, I'll answer your letters; but I just can't do it today. Please don't worry about my not loving you. I love and adore you with all my heart. Everything is alright. I love you.

Yours because I first was His,

Bernie XXOO