

Konnarock, July 13

Dear Margaret,

The longer I sit here, the more depressed I will become, and the more difficult it will be for me to avoid writing you the kind of letter you do not want to read. Thank you for your letter, although it was full of misunderstanding and misapplied advice, and it came at a time when I was wholly unprepared. Now you are probably still in Princeton visiting the friend of whom you think that she needs you so much, of whom I think that you need her no less. Your advice concerning the "love" which one must feel toward other people seems much more applicable to you and your friendships with those people with whom you "have nothing in common." *than to me.*

You should have sowed your good counsels on less barren ground. "You will not be a good doctor unless you can love your patient..." Why don't you become a good doctor? What makes you assume that I even want to be a "good doctor?" There are so many "good doctors" in the world, that there is no need of me. Surely Alex has so much more "love" for people that he will be a hundred times better than I. Besides, how is it that you think I even want to be a doctor, not to speak of a "good doctor." I don't want to be anything, or, to say it more positively, I want to be nothing. My going to medical school is nothing but the expression of an impossibility; hence it sounds queer when you speak of my patients, and even queerer when you suggest I should "love" them.

I think it would be perfectly sufficient if I "liked" them, and much more pertinent to ~~xxxx~~ my task if I knew from what disease they were suffering. For although past and ~~present~~ future might be very amusing to contemplate, the present is what would concern me more. When I apply your theory to my own experience, I am reminded of last May when I waited for you at your school. Although it is just as real to me this evening as it was then, I will not recapitulate it. The moment before I was anxiously waiting for you, then you walked past me with a group of people who needed you. The moment after was a kind of terror and despair, which comes to me again and again, though not as acutely as in the instant itself.

Mrs. Jarden wrote me. Her letter came this morning. She tells me to come on August first, and I shall come, unless you write me that you do not want me. However after the first two weeks I will no longer be alone there and then I must look for some other place to stay. Perhaps I shall then go to Cambridge. Could you find out whether Margrit is planning to stay with me before she goes to Connecticut. I am very much afraid that she will invite all her friends to come and visit her there, where I hoped so much to be alone.

You will laugh or be sarcastic, if I write you that I hope my letter does not hurt you. Will you laugh less, if I write that I hope it does not hurt you as much as yours hurt me? Probably I was hurt more by what your letter did not contain than by what it contained. But whatever you do or say, I have much need of you, more than ever before. Usually something in me which waits for you by the river and searches for you outside the church can find you. But today you were too far away.

Dein

John.

July 13