

March 29, 1945

Dear Ned,

Again I turn to you as ever  
for a little favour.

Being faced with a certain  
amount of danger one, without  
being too sentimental and morbid,  
thinks of certain inadequate things  
he would like to say. I have  
written a letter to Anna, enclosed,  
which I would like for you to  
give her should anything happen  
to me.

I think she is sufficiently aware  
of the dangers of this business  
without further painting it out  
by sending the letter direct to her.

I trust that before too long you  
will hand it back to me personally  
and no one be the wiser for my

having written it.

Thanks, Ned, for this and  
a world of other things you  
have done for me.

Yours faithfully

Harold

March 28, 1945

My Darling Anna,

The time approaches when I shall be exposed to the real dangers of this war. In my letters to you I have minimized the dangers to which I shall be exposed. Although I could be in much more hazardous duty still there is serious enough danger to speak frankly about.

Every man wonders what he is going to do when in grave danger. I shall do no boasting as to how brave I shall be for I am ready to admit no extravagant quality of gallantry. I just hope my responsibility to these men and my desire not to be selfish will keep any shameful reactions from getting the best of me.

I wonder if I could willingly suffer and perhaps die for a cause. I mean a cause which I would choose, not one into which I was dragged as into this. I could choose many better ones than this but because they were better they would be a lot harder. Still I am not better as to the cause for my fighting, just a little

Anna



sad perhaps and too a little hopeful  
that something good might come out  
of it.

It would be my regret at losing some-  
thing precious to me rather than a fear  
of death which has foremost place in my  
mind as I think of this eventuality. Death  
itself would be rather an adventure. But  
I love so much more I should like to  
get from life and give to it. It would  
be that that I would regret, and the  
thought of your reactions should something  
happen to me.

The fact that you love me makes my  
heart ache for you in the suffering which  
my death would cause you. To try to  
convince you that it shouldn't hurt would  
be foolish, but to beg of you not to let  
it unhitter you and to strengthen what  
you already know (that suffering can make  
fine character) I would do with all my  
heart.

There is no pain of body or mind which  
cannot be born. We have both made  
that comment and you know it from  
experience better than I do.

Be thankful, darling, that you can  
suffer. Those who suffer the least are

those the least developed morally and  
mentally; those who have climbed the  
least of the ladder of human develop-  
ment. So with those on the higher rungs  
let your suffering run deep and calm,  
not in turbulent grief, for the former  
can be tempered by thought and resolution.  
The latter may turn into sentimentalism.  
The former will bring you less sympathy  
at first but greater admiration in the  
end. The latter will become tiresome.  
There is more than truism in "weep and  
you weep alone."

Don't brood, darling! and don't just  
endure pain purposelessly. It can be  
endured, but can it be used? There is a  
power created by suffering, else we  
would have had no Christ. That ~~power~~  
suffering you offer to God as a "reason-  
able, holy, and living sacrifice" and in  
return He gives you a power to offer to  
man that you may love your neighbor  
as yourself. Surely without suffering  
you would have less to offer to either  
God or man. The symbol of Christianity  
is the cross of Christ which is also the  
symbol of suffering.

To talk of our love for one another in a letter of this kind is like twisting a knife in a wound. yet I must if for no other reason than gratitude. It has been such that the deepening of our lives thereby could not be taken away from one should the either of us die. With the one of us it would have been a joy which made life worth living and with the other I see not why it should not make life still worth living. Its effect upon character is indelible. Therefore I beg of you, cling to what it has done to you and let not the bitterness of "might have been" blight your heart and fog your perspective on the good life which is still yours to live.

From how many many upheavals of experience in life do we sift out little kernels of character. We don't remember all the joys and pains of our growth. But we are what we are because of them. It is well. With the death of one of us the other should allow the subjective side of our love to recede naturally leaving the naked heart of the thing indelibly fixed within our character.

If I could but wait until a later time to mention your marrying again it would seem less odious to you. But I cannot, <sup>and</sup> yet I want you to think of it sometime. For you to remain faithful to my memory and never allow yourself to love another would be a willful waste of a gift of God. If you can make me as happy as you love you can do so for someone else. In so doing, by a rule of life, you would make yourself happy also. And, please let me say this, someone else could well make you happier than I have. I think of Timothy also.

Timothy's creation so sums up everything, for it is the sign of our love for one another in the hand of God. We (especially) can take so little credit for his being, yet without one another he would not have been. I would like to see him and help him become a man but if I cannot I have the everlasting satisfaction of the miracle of his being.

Whenever I die I shall hope that Timothy and any other children we may have will be my real memorial. Memorials in stone are all right but should something happen to me out here I feel a desire for something more living than granite. Therefore if you feel a desire for something physical in my memory put what you might have put into a stone into something like the organ for little Grace Church or into that church which I have dreamed of. That would be a pleasure to others as well as to you.

Please do not take this letter with a morbid feeling. Perhaps I should be more kind than to write it at all. It is a hopelessly inadequate expression of what you already know and feel. Yet I feel compelled to say something which may help to strengthen that which is already within you.

I thank you for your love, my darling, but don't love me for what

I am, or have been, or for any of the little things about me that you like. Rather love me, as Elizabeth Barrett Browning so beautifully writes, "for love's sake only" "that evermore thou mayest love on [not "love me"] though love's sternity".

May God bless you and Timothy forever.

Harold