

Hotel Doutscher Hof. Mots, May 1912

To Ernest Weekley,

You will know by now the extent of the trouble. Don't cure my impudence in writing to you. In this hour we are only simple men, and Mrs. Weekley will have told you everything, but you do not suffer alone. It is really torture to me in this position.

There are three of us, though I do not compare my sufferings with what yours must be, and I am here as a distant friend, and you can imagine the thousand baffling lies it all entails. Mrs. Weekley hates it, but it has had to be. I love your wife and she loves me. I am not frivolous or impertinent. Mrs. Weekley is afraid of being stunted and not allowed to grow, and so she must live her own life. All women in their natures are like giantesses. They will breath through everything and go on with their own lives.

The position is one of torture for us all. Do not think I am a student of your class-a young cripple. In this matter are we not simple men? However you think of me, the situation still remains. I rate we ought to be fair to ourselves. Mrs. Weekley must live largely and abundantly. It is her nature. To me it means the future. I feel as if my effort of life was all for her.

Cannot we all forgive something? It is not too much to ask.

Certainly if there is any real wrong being done I am doing it, but I think there is not.

D. H. Lawrence

June 11, 1852

I have but one thought, Susie, this afternoon of June, and that of you, and I have one prayer, only; dear Susie, that is for you. That you and I in hand as we e'en do in heart, might ramble away as children, among the woods and fields, and forget these many years, and these sorrowing cares, and each become a child again - - I would it were so, Susie, and when I look around me and find myself alone, I sigh for you again, little sigh, and vain sigh, which will not bring you home.

I need you more and more, and the great world grows wider, and dear ones fewer and fewer, every day that you stay away - I miss my biggest heart, my own goes wandering round, and calls for Susie - - Friends are too dear to sunder, Oh they are far too few, and how soon they will go for their remembrance now will have us many an anguish when it is too late to love them! Susie, forgive me Darling, for every word I say - - my heart is full of you, none other than you is in my thoughts, yet when I seek to say to you something not for the world, words fail me. If you were here - and Oh that you were, my Susie, we need not talk at all, our eyes would whisper for us, and your hand fast in mine, we would not ask for language - - I try to bring you nearer, I chase the weeks away till they are quite departed, and fancy you have come, and I am on my way through the green lane to meet you and my heart goes scampering so, that I have much ado to bring it back again, and learn it to be patient, till that dear Susie comes. Three weeks - - they can't last always, for surely they must go with their little brothers and sisters to their long home in the west!

I shall grow more and more impatient until that dear day comes, for till now, I have only mourned for you; now I begin to hope for you.

Dear Susie, I have tried hard to think what you would love, of something I might send you - - I at last say my little Violets, they begged me to let them go, so here they are - - and with them as Instructor, a bit of knightly grass, who also begged the favor to accompany them - - they are but small, Susie, and I fear not fragrant now, but they will speak to you of warm hearts at home, and of something faithful which "never slumbers nor sleeps" - - Keep them 'neath your pillow, Susie, they will make you dream of blue-skies, and home, and the "blessed countrie"! You and I will have an hour with "Edward" and "Ellen Middleton", sometime when you get home - - we must find out if some things contained therein are true, and if they are, what you and me are coming to!

Now, farewell, Susie, and Vinnie sends her love, and mother her's, and I add a kiss, shyly, lest there is somebody there! Don't let them see, will you Susie?

Emily Dickinson

To Miss Joy Agnew, in London:

TUXEDO PARK, NEW YORK

Unto you greetings and salutation and worship, you dear, sweet little rightly-named Joy! I can see you now almost as vividly as I saw you that night when you sat flashing and beaming upon those somber swallow-tails.

“Fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky.”

Oh, you were indeed the only one – there wasn’t even the remotest chance of competition with you, dear! Ah, you are a decoration, you little witch!

The idea of your house going to the wanton expense of a flower garden!—aren’t you enough? And what do you want to go and discourage the other flowers for? Is that the right spirit? Is it considerate? Is it kind? How do you suppose they feel when you come around - - looking the way you look? And you so pink and sweet and dainty and lovely and supernatural? Why, it makes them feel embarrassed and artificial, of course, and in my opinion it is just as pathetic as it can be. Now then you want to reform - - dear- - and do right.

Well certainly you are well off, Joy:

3 bantams; 3 goldfish; 3 doves; 6 canaries; 2 dogs; 1 cat;

All you need, now, to be permanently beyond the reach of want, is one more dog - -just one more good, gentle, high principled, affectionate, loyal dog who wouldn’t want any nobler service than the golden privilege of lying at your door, nights, and biting everything that came along - -and I am that very one, and ready to come at the dropping of a hat.

Do you think you could convey my love and thanks to your “daddy” and Owen Seaman and those other oppressed and down-trodden subjects of yours, you darling small tyrant?

On my knees! These - -with the kiss of fealty from your other subject - -

MARK TWAIN

OAKLAND, APRIL 3, 1901

DEAR ANNA:

Did I say that the human might be filed in categories? Well, and if I did, let me qualify - - not all humans. You elude me. I cannot place you, cannot grasp you. I may boast that of nine out of ten, under given circumstances, I can forecast their action; that of nine of ten, by their word or action, I may feel the pulse of their hearts. But of the tenth I despair. It is beyond me. You are that tenth.

Were ever two souls, with dumb lips, more incongruously matches! We may feel in common - - surely, we oftentimes do - - and when we do not feel in common, yet do we understand, and yet we have no common tongue. Spoken words do not come to us. We are unintelligible. God must laugh at the mummery.

The one gleam of sanity through it all is that we are both large temperamentally, large enough to often understand. True, we often understand but in vague glimmering ways, by dim perceptions, like ghosts, which, while we doubt, haunt us with their truth. And still, I, for one, dare not believe; for you are that tenth which I may not forecast.

Am I unintelligible now? I do not know. I imagine so. I cannot find the common tongue.

Large temperamentally - - that is it. It is the one thing that brings us at all in touch. We have, flashed through us, you and I, each a bit of universal, and so we draw together. And yet we are so different.

I smile at you when you grow enthusiastic? It is a forgivable smile - - nay, almost an envious smile. I have lived twenty-five years of repression. I learned not to be enthusiastic. It is a hard lesson to forget. I begin to forget, but it is so little. At the best, before I die, I cannot hope to forget all or most. I can exult, now that I am learning, in little things, in other things; but of my things, and secret things doubly mine, I cannot, I cannot. Do I make myself intelligible? Do you hear my voice? I fear not. There are poseurs. I am the most successful of them all.

JACK LONDON