

B. L. BATES, D. D. S.
OVID, MICHIGAN

Feb. 4th, 1945.

Lt.(jg) E. D. Haynes, N. T. S.(GL),
Room 668, Hollywood Beach Hotel,
Hollywood Beach, Fla.

Dear Lieutenant:-

We were on the lookout for your letter which reached us today. May I congratulate you upon the frankness with which you presented your case. Mrs. Bates and I are amenable to your plea and more than anxious to believe that there are fifty-two cards in the deck which you have placed on the table.

Like you, I would much prefer to have this customary procedure carried off in person as I am finding the reply a little hard to make. It would have been much easier yesterday and it must be perfectly obvious to you the why of that statement as Mrs. Bates and I are of families in which there has been no record of divorce as far back as we can trace. I believe that there must be just cause for the exercise of this institution and yet when I review many of the cases known to me, I feel that in most instances they were not one sided affairs. Perhaps I'm implying too much, but I wish to be frank, too. Now is the time and place for candor between us and when I have stated my feelings in the matter, you will not hear further from me along this line. We will forget it.

You are not asking for the hand of my daughter in marriage which is not necessary since you and Emily have attained the age where you are your own masters. You are simply announcing the fact that you are betrothed and my reply is, "God bless you both and may you be happy always!" Were it in my power to give or refuse, I might reply something like this - "You are asking for one of the finest possessions I have - my first born. I value her more than my life. To me she is a rare and priceless jewel - so lovely, so talented, so competent, capable, dependable, intelligent, ambitious, considerate, generous and with half a chance will make a wife of whom you may be very proud. But Emily is also very human, possessed of certain foibles to which all flesh is heir. However, I am sure there are so few objectionable traits on this side of the ledger that if you exercise a moderate degree of tolerance, your patience will always be rewarded with better understanding. So I am giving and I want you to fully realize the value the donor places on the gift."

I have this feeling about it. I have a very beautiful and valuable ship. You make application to be her master. Your record reveals that your first ship was wrecked. That is all I know about it or can learn. Was it a hopeless storm? a fault of its crew or its construction or were you to blame? I accept you with all these questions in my mind and while I shall be watching for any slight symptoms of carelessness on your part, I still love my ship and will be pulling for you to take her safely from port to port through the coming years.

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If Emily thinks you will do, that is all there is to it. Any doubts in our mind can be easily dispelled by your future conduct. We are prepared to like you and to welcome you whole heartedly into the Bates clan which boasts no coat-of-arms, lays no claim to uncommon virtues or honors, but has always tried to keep its feet on the ground. We shall be counting the days until we meet.

Mrs. Bates and I expect to reach New Orleans via plane, Monday, Feb. 12th, at 6:30, P.M. and have made ^{return} plane reservations for Emily also on Feb. 25th. Just when she will reach N. O. seems uncertain but we have reservations at the Hotel Roosevelt until the 17th when we must find accommodations elsewhere as hotels in that city limit your stay to five days. These plans were made before we knew of the contemplated wedding and may be altered to suit your desires.

Sentiment has it that Emily should be married in our home but the war and expediency indicate that New Orleans is next best with any other place in the U. S. being satisfactory, depending on what arrangements are possible for you to make.

Most sincerely yours,

B. L. Bates

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