



UNITED STATES NAVY

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Hollywood Beach Hotel
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30 January 1945

My dear Dr. Bates -

This is one of those letters that is written once in a life-time. Its subject and purpose are very clear but its composition proves to be a bit different.

Years ago, seven to be exact, in New York, I came within the sphere of the Bates family but for various reasons my stay was short-lived. At that time you may have heard of me through letters from Emily. Be that as it may, I did leave and am now back again, very much indeed because, to give it to you quickly and, I hope, painlessly, I am the man who is going to marry your Emily -!

Someday in the future I am going to make her pay for having turned this job over to me. It is a very important one, I suggested it in part and have not had any forebodings about it but the principal subject is so vital to you of the family and to both Emily and me that I don't want to make a mess of it. I believe I am wise enough not to try to argue a foregone conclusion (our getting married in the very near future), to fail to acquaint you fully with myself and the background of our very great love and possibly to antagonize

you by expressions in this introductory letter that would never enter into an ordinary conversation.

I know that Emily spoke of me when she was home for Thanksgiving, just after my sudden appearance from overseas but prior to our seeing each other on my way back to the West Coast and again for the week prior to her departure for Mexico and mine for Florida and eight weeks in this Training School. She couldn't have told you much then because neither she nor I knew very much except that that we each anticipated with pleasure the fact that we would be seeing each other a few weeks hence.

At that time I was a Pharmacist's Mate, First Class, returned from about a year overseas, mostly in the Marshall Islands, awaiting this commission as a Line Officer. My status at present is self-evident except that I have not yet received my orders to my subsequent billet and cannot say where and for how long I will next be stationed. I cannot even make a guess because of the wide variety of services an officer may be assigned to after this 2 months of preliminary training, terminating Feb. 19th in my case. I have 2 years and three months behind me in the Navy but I am very much USNR, meaning that, so far, nothing has appeared which will influence me toward a Naval career after this mess is cleaned up.

By the same token I hesitate to say just what I will be getting into, post-war. I give it much serious



UNITED STATES NAVY

2

thought but feel that I must remain an opportunist and have faith in the fact that I have always been able to make a respectable living, keep a good credit standing and a high degree of self-respect. My chief experience in the past has been in the export business but whether that holds any attraction for me later on is problematical.

My 36th birthday will be next June 28th, my only physical defects are alopecia prematura and the replacement of ~~the~~ teeth Nos. 7, 8, 9 & 10 by a permanent bridge. My police record is clean, my worldly goods are practically non-existent but there is one feature of my status that is important to me and to Emily and to those who have a right to pass judgement on our intentions.

I am a divorced man and the father of a very wonderful 5-year old daughter. This is the matter that has caused Emily the most apprehension, not for herself and her attitude toward a child by a former marriage, but for your reaction. This is not the time nor place for an exposition of my divorce and its background except to say that it was one of those misfits which Linda's mother and I recognized more than three years ago and considered advisable to be cleared up at a time when Linda was not yet 3 years old and would not be affected

by the necessary readjustments. No one is or was mad at anyone else and my relations with Helen Haynes are very cordial. Our agreement includes my contributing to Linda's support, an item which I am more than willing to accept and which, so far, has not caused too much strain.

I stated before that my marrying your Emily is a foregone conclusion and that is as much a fact as sunlight. However, we have both felt that it is only fair to acquaint you with the fact as much in advance as our circumstances might permit, negotiate some kind of an introduction to her father and her family and at least give you the opportunity to bestow your approval and blessing on an eventuality that is nearly as important to you as it is to us. Pages and pages could be devoted to telling you of our finding a love that surpasses anything we had ever dreamed of and which seems to increase our joy of knowing and pain in being separated with each day. Each of us considers that he has the wisdom of a burnt child so that we have endeavored to view our affection with a mature attitude, comparing personalities, foibles, artistic and recreational preferences and we always come up with the same result. Our love is very real and deep and gratifying and there is no one else in the world that matters.

Believe me, doctor, I may be taking the initiative and giving you facts about Emily and myself before you hear them from her but I am not presuming in the slightest. Emily has not coached me in the least but has given me carte blanche in the writing of this letter.



UNITED STATES NAVY

3

Emily is doing essentially the same thing in writing to my mother who is now in Maryland, living with some relatives. I might mention that my father died in 1942 and that I have an older brother who is now a 1st Lieut. with Signal Corps Intelligence in China. When I saw mother in November I let her know something about Emily and of my own feelings which were none too clear at that time. Since then I have told her of how everything has come clearly into focus and of our intent to consummate this business at the earliest opportunity.

I have told Emily that it is my sincere wish that she be given away by her father. God and the Bureau of Naval Personnel willing, that will take place. However we have both taken a realistic attitude toward what my forthcoming duty may allow and, in case she hasn't told you, she is holding herself in readiness to return to whatever point I may designate, in accordance with the orders I will be receiving within the next week, and we will start from there. She has also mentioned meeting you and Mrs. Bates in New Orleans but in a letter received today she indicated doubts as to what your plans are and consequently has made arrangements to go to San Antonio on Feb. 10 or 11. The fact is, she is coming back, and in a hurry, and to me. It's as bad as that!

I have about an hour before traps to get a letter off to Emily, just about a daily occurrence, and I know she will be pleased to learn that I have dispatched this ice-breaking letter. From my standpoint I will be extremely interested in receiving your reply, including your unreserved approval of the important matter of my marrying your daughter.

Of course much has had to remain unsaid in this letter but I shall look forward with great pleasure to meeting you and Emily's mother and the rest of the family, as one of you, and clearing up all doubts as to my eligibility for providing for Emily's welfare and happiness from here on.

Sincerely

Ellsworth P. Haynes