

Monday - Feb²⁵ '80

My dear Mom -

It is hard to believe I wrote so many letters. They seemed to write themselves. I believe I wrote them more for myself than for you.

I wanted to clarify something for myself.

I wanted you to see Ernest as the fine person I knew from the time I first saw him when I was thirteen until I graduated from high school at eighteen. He was the soldier boy I wrote to and bought a sweater for. When he came home I

saw him only occasionally, for a trip to Petoskey, without a car, seldom happened.

I saw him at Horton Bay as part of a swimming group. My friends and I were considered and called "the children" Kate Smith called us "the rabbits".

There was no romance, but I thought Ernest the greatest, the best looking, the smartest, a true hero of adventure.

Then he was in Petoskey and took me to school dances. He was the first

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There was no romance, but I thought Ernest the greatest, the best looking, the smartest, a true hero of adventure.

Then he was in Petoskey and took me to school dances. He was the first

boy I ever dated. My prestige grew because
an older boy chose me. Then after about
three months he was gone. Then came
the letter to me saying the slate was
clear. I didn't understand it, so I was
hurt. For me that ended that
phase of our friendship. I was
never comfortable with him after
that. He never explained the letter
and I didn't ask him about it. I
assumed he was interested in another
girl. I never dated him again,
I began to be invited by other boys.
Grandmother and I didn't go to his
wedding because he didn't include
my mother in the family invitation.
For some reason he blamed my
mother for breaking up our friendship.
That could have been partly true
for she read that letter and

resented it because it made me cry.
She always felt he was too old
and worldly wise for me to
spend so much time with.

So that is all there was. Perhaps
that can sum it up for you
better than all the letters. He
wrote to me occasionally thru the
years but I saw him only the one
time he stopped in Almond Beach
for a few hours.

I know Ernest has been a hero
to you. I have thought that perhaps
you identified with him too
closely. Yes he was a genius
and should be forgiven much. But
he also had power to hurt people. I
believe he grew to love to use that
power. Until he was twenty one
I adored him - and some of that
adoration still lives. I don't know

why. You have been a factor in
bringing back that long ago
person. I have read every few of
his writings because they make
me uncomfortable. For me the
Ernest I knew wasn't, or I should say,
isn't there.

I hope you will burn those
old letters. I was searching for
the truth, but could have missed
some of it.

Sid has just been here for a
few days. Georgie and Barbara's
daughter Cynthia will come March
28th for six days. That will be
good.

Love to you both

Marge.

I will ask Bill Ahle about his
little boat. I no longer have mine.



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