

# HEART TO HEART

Advice to the lovelorn by Lily Marlene

I

Angeles, Pampanga

Dear Miss Marlene,

*I am a girl in my early twenties. A young man of good family stock has been going after me for sometime now. My friends believe that we are already engaged. But we aren't. My family seems to take for granted that I have fallen for him and that I am going to marry him.*

*He is a very intelligent young man, no doubt, with a very comfortable income. I confess I have a "feeling" for him, as we can chat intimately for hours. If that is saying that I love him, then I guess I do love him.*

*But there is one thing that prevents me from giving my "yes" to his proposing. He drinks regularly altho I must say that he can take it. And the kind of company he keeps does not speak well of him. He goes around and about too much, I think. He goes to bars and night clubs. Besides he hasn't got a steady job and I suspect he depends upon his parents.*

*I haven't given him my final word. But I know I love him. Do you think he will change if I marry him? Do you think I can reform him by marrying him?*

*Please help me. I have no one to turn to for advice. I'll wait for your answer in the coming issue of your magazine.*

Sincerely,

Mary

Dear Mary:

*It is a great mistake to believe that one can "reform" a person by marrying him. If there is any reforming to be done, the time is before marriage and not after, when the vows have been made and there can be no backing out. You may influence his behavior to a great*

extent, but you cannot change him.

If you are certain that he loves the bottle unduly, that he associates with objectionable persons and frequents objectionable places, that he is undependable and refuses to work, then you are certainly taking a big chance if you marry him, hoping to change him afterwards. If he really loves you, now is the time for him to prove it by trying his best to measure up to your expectations. If he is not strong enough and man enough before marriage, it is almost a dead certainty that he will not become so after marriage.

## II

*Manila*

*August 23, 1948*

*Dear Lily Marlene:*

*I am a girl 23 years old. A year ago I had to undergo an operation which will make me incapable of bearing children.*

*I am very much in love with a young man. He is a very good man, kind and humble, and I know that he cares for me too.*

*What I want to know, Lily Marlene, is this: Have I any right to encourage this man to marry me, knowing that I will not make a good wife because I can't have children? He is very fond of children. Another thing: Knowing that God's purpose of marriage is the procreation of children, have I any right to let anyone marry me?*

*Please help me, Lily Marlene, I love him so deeply, and the thought of myself makes me very unhappy, desperately unhappy.*

*Thanking you and assuring you of my prayers for you.*

*Lourdes*

*Dear Lourdes:*

I shall give you Father Daniel Lord's advice:

"If a girl is capable of exercising the marital act, she may marry, even if she knows that there will be no children of the union.

Children are however a very important factor in the happiness of marriage. A marriage that does not result in the birth of children is a marriage that is handicapped. Hence it would surely be folly if a woman who knew herself to be incapable of bearing children did not reveal that fact to the man who asked her to marry him.

In most cases where people are really in love the fact of sterility does not interfere with their desire for marriage. Honesty and a decent

regard for the future however seem to demand candor on this most important subject."

## III

*Dear Miss Marlene,*

*For a year and a half I have been engaged with a neighbor of ours—to whom I have given all my love, faith and devotion. She has been a devoted Catholic since childhood and knowing her love for me, I knew she is worth while trusting. Thus we have trusted each other, shared each other's joys and sorrows and done nice things for each other as true lovers do.*

*But time went on. Now I feel that she has changed a lot in her acts she had recently been showing me. And I know well that it was only after she went to a certain place for a vacation that she changed thus. Since then I have always thought and feared that she has been caught in a net which seems to her too hard to escape from. I have been crossing her paths, trying to find out the truth of my make-believe. As luck would have it I was able to find something which I believe is enough to prove my doubts. Just then I went to her and asked her the truth. She denied me fully and ignored all the findings I've made. Because of my great love, faith and trust in her I believed her denials, though in my heart was left the feeling of jealousy.*

*Not long afterwards I again found a more convincing note that she really is in love with the man I'm jealous of. I then could no longer hold myself from accusing her of unfaithfulness.*

*I now ask and plead for your help, Miss Marlene, to suggest to me the right thing to do. A lover as few had ever loved is tortured by the unfaithfulness of his ideal girl. I hate her to have deceived me, but I feel I can't part from her inspite of what she has done. That's the trouble I'm in with my dear girl. Please give me suggestions with which I could get rid of my worries and could once more live in the realms of love, peace and happiness with her if that's still possible.*

*I thank you in advance.*

*Gratefully yours,  
Someone in Distress*

**Dear Someone in Distress:**

Are you sure you are not making a mountain out of the proverbial mole-hill? Have you been paying too much attention to gossip and idle-talk? Perhaps you have allowed your jealousy and suspicions

run away with your better judgement. Instead of brooding and worrying yourself into your present state of distress and confusion, I'd suggest you ask her for a real showdown. Get her final and definite answer to your proposal. If she loves you, she will consent to marry you, if she loves someone else, then the sooner you realize that, the better for your peace of mind. One cannot force one's affections, so if such is the case, try and "fall out of love." It can be done.

## IV

Sept. 1, 1948

Dear Miss Marlene,

*I am writing you this letter to ask your advice on the problem of my most intimate friend. I found her problem to be so extraordinary that having asked her permission I decided to write and ask you about it.*

*This is the problem. For almost two years now she had a strange feeling within herself which she later realized was love. However she was greatly puzzled, for this love of hers was given to a nun. The nun concerned doesn't know anything about it since my friend never showed or expressed these feelings to anyone except me. My friend, now is anxious to know whether this is only one of those "crushes", a girl, may sometimes feel toward another girl of the same sex, regardless of their station in life, or is a religious calling?*

*Unfortunately this friend of mine, although inclined to a religious life, has not the health to embrace that state. Must she therefore fully forget this feeling and enter society where she can meet people and associate with them? She knows that the spirit of the world is contrary to the spirit of a religious. Yet must she hope for a religious life which seems impossible to her at present, or must she be in the world and yet remain poor in spirit?*

*Please kindly help her and answer this letter that she may know what to do. Thank you so much.*

*Your sister in Mary,*

Dear Sister in Mary:

You and your friend seem to be quite confused about a number of things.

As a general rule, one may say that the invitation to perfection embodied in the religious state is intended to any Catholic who has the right intention — which means a firm resolution to serve God in the

religious state, and is mentally, morally, and physically fit for the duties of that state of life.

Since your friend lacks the necessary health, then obviously God does not require her services in the cloister.

Regarding the "feeling of love" she entertains for a nun, it would be advisable for her to try and forget the entire business. Nothing wholesome or helpful can ever result from such affections, only the contrary may be expected. And certainly that is no sign of an inclination to embracing the religious life.

Perhaps the whole situation stems from the fact that your friend insists on shutting herself up, away from normal and wholesome friendships and associations. She should be encouraged to come out of her shell, be a good mixer, meet people, and enjoy the companionship and recreation of young people of her age. Contrary to what your friend thinks, the ability to deal with people is one of the greatest assets a religious should try to acquire.

V

Gapan, N. E.

Dear Miss Marlene,

*I love a girl. I have promised to love her dearly and forever. Being frank, I have told her everything regarding my love. She asked me to wait and said that I will know her answer sometime.*

*When the day came, she told me that I was too late, that she IS already engaged. But she added if I can wait it's alright. I asked her if I have hope and she answered: "Yes, you have."*

*I think she loves me, she goes on dates with me. The thing is she doesn't want to be a double-crosser to the one engaged with her. What shall I do, Mam, shall I continue my love for her.*

*Is it not bad to win her love from somebody who owns her already? Of course I love her very much for she is always in my mind almost day and night.*

*Do you think, Mam, that she will give up their engagement and instead will be mine forever? How can I be sure she is positively mine already?*

*That's all, Miss Marlene. Thank you in advance.*

Sincerely,  
PEPU

V

Dear Pepu:

Obviously your girl can't seem to make up her mind. If she really loves you, and knew all along you were awaiting her answer, why did

she engage herself to another?

However, if you believe that she does love you (going on dates with you is no proof though) there's no harm in finding out. In fairness to the three of you, the sooner she makes up her mind, the better for all concerned. She isn't married yet, and if she loves you and not the man she's engaged to, then what are you waiting for?

## VI

*Bayombong, N. Visaya*

*July 13, 1948*

*Dear Miss Marlene,*

*I have been in love with a girl named S... for almost three years now. I have written her about 30 times, but she never cared to answer my pleadings. Yet her actions and attitude spoke of her love for me. The trouble is I never had a chance to speak to her. Not having answered my last letter (Jan. 8, 1948) I made up my mind to forget her for awhile and to love another. In no time I fell in love with C... studying at present at FEU. I was rather successful in the attempt, for after 3 months, C... surrendered her love to me and recently has requested me to get engaged with her.*

*Now my questions are: (1) What shall I do? Shall I heed the request of C...? (2) Shall I forget all about S...? (3) What shall I do to forget one of them? (4) Shall I forsake them both and look for another one? (5) Whom shall I choose in case both S... and C... are sincere to me?*

*These are all my questions which trouble me day and night and so I hope that thru your kindness you will send me your advice.*

*Yours in Christ,*

*V.M.C.*

**Dear V.M.C.:**

You alone can answer these questions. You know these girls better than I do. I can only give you a sort of a standard which any God-fearing man expects of his wife. Who, according to your honest judgement, would make you a better wife, a faithful and pleasant companion in your journey thru life? Who can inspire you to a nobler and holier life? Above all, who can return your love for love, sharing your joys and sufferings, your better and your worse until death do you part? In the last analysis these are the things that really count in a successful marriage—and not money or beauty or popularity.