



HEART TO HEART

Advice to the lovers by Lily Marlene

Dear Miss Marlene,

I have just finished my college degree at the State university and my trouble started some time ago when I was almost finishing my high school course eight years ago. I was just 16 then when I met the fellow whom I cannot forget and up to now he has me still reeling if I'd still cast my lot on him.

The fellow I'm referring to is almost finishing his law career, is very attractive, intelligent, two years my senior and works his way through college.

The thing that's puzzling me much is his seeming muteness. Of course, we had an affair which we never broke off up to now. But his seeming quietness, infrequency of his calls on me which would take even months before I'd see him is troubling me very much. He tells me and his kins too, about his determination in finishing his course.

I remember some time ago after cooling off for 3 years when he suddenly broke off the ice by sending a letter of endearment. This is what usually happens. At times when we'd both be at a dance, he'd dance with me once or twice at most, neither will he take advantage of our loneliness. He never asked me for dates. This of course I greatly appreciate for he has a very good esteem for me.

Is he justified in acting as such? Of course he is apprised of the strictness of my family and their being against him. This he made mention to friends and my cousin. Are his actions biased by my kin's prejudices for him or for some other person? So then what's best for me to do?

Eufrosina

Dear Eufrosina,

Offhand, I would say he does not really care for you. Because if he really loved you, I don't see how he could stand not seeing you for months

of a time, or being content with one dance with you at a party. One of the signs of being in love is the constant desire to be near one's beloved, to monopolize the loved one's company, to stake an exclusive claim from which everybody else is to keep off.

However, it may be possible that the young man is biding his time until he has finished his law course and is earning enough to support himself and in the near future a wife and family. So if you wish you could wait a little more — since you've waited all this time anyway — until he is in a better position to consider marriage and its attendant responsibilities.

If then, however, he still persists in this lukewarm attitude towards you, then I would strongly suggest you forget him and look around for somebody else. Very likely you have believed all along what you wanted to believe, and all the while he has never entertained anything more than friendly intentions towards you.

Dear Miss Marlene,

I am a girl in my middle teens. I have decided to enter the cloister without the advice of my parents. I fear to tell them my decision as I figured out they will be against it including my relatives.

You see we are only two; my brother and I. I am the oldest. My parents are in their late fifties. Do you think this is a hindrance to the vocation I've chosen? What's the best way to break the news such that I won't hurt them much?

My sole motive is to seek happiness and peace. I have considered the married state and think that I will not be happy in it. Am I doing right? Will my motive be accepted by the Rev. Mother Superior of the order? A million thanks.

O.O.A.

Dear O. O. A.,

You are still quite young, and I doubt if you are mature enough to decide your choice of a state of life. However you seem to be a sensible and serious-minded young girl, and if you think you have a vocation to the religious state, pray God that you may persevere.

For the present, though, I wouldn't tell your parents anything, because they would surely say that at your age you can't possibly know your own mind. I would advise you to go to a wise and kindly father confessor regularly and follow his counsels. He will be the best judge as to your fitness and the sincerity of your motives.

Dear Miss Marlene,

I am 18, a senior in high school. A distant relative who is only a year older than I, proposed to me a year ago.

I haven't answered him yet for I doubt him. First, he does not do the duties required by our Catholic faith, second, my mother is against him. He told me he would go to Mass and do all these duties of the faith if I would accept his feelings towards me.

I know he is nice, only a little bit spoiled, being the youngest. I am sure of my self that I love him only I doubt him.

Would it be safe for me to accept him and in so doing save his soul, which I would not want to lose, or will this act of acceptance endanger me in my faith and future as a Catholic girl?

L. O.

Dear L. O.,

You are both quite young, especially your young man. So "take it easy" and weigh the matter carefully.

You are right in hesitating to accept one who does not fulfill his duties towards God. Such a person will likely be negligent also in his duties towards a wife and family. However if you sincerely believe he will change, see to it that he does his reforming before, not after marriage. If he does not change for the better now, when he is trying his best to win you, what guarantee do you have that he will later on, when he is sure of you.

At any rate, this is no time for you to become engaged, not until a couple of years at the earliest. You may be sure of yourself — but then a girl at eighteen is sometimes more mature and emotionally grown-up than a boy at nineteen. So for your sake and his, and for your future happiness, take your time and enjoy your youth and freedom before tying yourself to anyone for life.

Dear Miss Marlene,

I am a broken-hearted girl. I hate to use this term to describe myself, for it would be the last one I'll ever choose in the world of love, but it is simply the most appropriate for me.

Please help me Miss Marlene. I feel so miserable and unhappy that often I wished I have never existed. In the past three and a half years I've been trying to forget my first love whom I've lost. Many times I just cry and cry at night when no one can see me and countless times when I receive news about him and his girl I cannot help but feel a thousand deaths within me.

What happened is this. I knew him since childhood and I fell in love with him since I learned of first pangs of love for a man. He expressed his love for me since my early teens. At first I hated him for feeling that way towards me, but gradually I learned to love him so that four years we had frequent contacts and finally we promised to

love one another and be faithful to one another for better and for worse — that is whatever circumstances may arise.

But then for no reason at all — that is we haven't quarreled, he told me one day, after failing to visit me for almost a month that he "fell out of love" for me. He told me further that we were only infatuated with one another, that gradually I'll forget him and that I must.

I was so young that time. I didn't know any so-called "tricks or technique" of love, that after once he told me not to hide from him anything, I made known to him my love. That's the only reason I can think, that made him "fall out of love for me" — my immediate admission of my love. After he said such a thing I couldn't hide my feelings and I cried hard in front of him. And we parted that way.

This is the question, Miss Marlene. Tell me, am I really infatuated only? Why then does an infatuation last so long? Why can't I simply forget him no matter how busy I am in the midst of hard work, studies, examinations?

I never lose my trust in God; I do pray every day, I practice my religion and furthermore I engage myself in apostolic work. I study other things besides my regular college work in order to make me extremely busy.

Polly Ann

Dear Polly Ann,

What makes a person fall out of love? I can't say. Nobody can. It's just one of those things, like falling in love. Especially does it happen to first loves, and to very young people like you who make the mistake of concentrating on one particular person instead of a wider circle of friends. Remember that as young boys and girls grow up, their ideas and ideals change.

It is a very normal and quite the usual thing for young people to believe themselves in love with someone and then later wonder what in the world did they ever see in that someone to make them think they were in love. This is what has happened to your young man. He has just grown up and out of love, and the sooner you realize this, the better off you will be.

So stop blaming yourself or anybody else for what has happened. And stop pitying yourself. You say you trust in God. Well, be convinced that God has allowed this break-up because it is for your own good. His motives may be hidden and hard to understand, but be sure they are prompted by His all embracing love and wisdom. There are other good Catholic young men — just give them a chance. Cultivate a wide social

life, make friends, and keep on with your activities. The less attention you pay to your "broken heart", the sooner it will be mended.

Dear Miss Marlene,

How pious must I be to become a Religious? Please tell me in very simple language, because I am rather ignorant or dumb. To whom are the counsels of the Gospel given or who are called by Our Lord to become religious? At what age should I enter the convent?

I am already seventeen, and have wanted to enter the convent since I was fourteen, but my parents do not want to allow me because they say I do not know what I am doing, that one has no experience of the world. So must I get tired of the world before entering the convent?

Q. J. C.

Dear Q. J. C.,

One does not have to be a saint in order to become a religious. The glorious choice and privilege of becoming the spouse of Christ, of dedicating one's whole being to God's service, is offered to every Christian who will take it.

Any Catholic can be admitted to the religious life provided he is not hindered by any impediment, has the right intention, and is mentally, morally, and physically fit for the duties required by that state of life.

At what age should one enter the convent? That all depends — on a number of circumstances — depending on each individual case. You are only 17, still very young, and duty bound to obey your parents. Of course it is very wrong and an affront to God Almighty to presume that only after one has tasted and tired of life in the world should one offer the left-overs to God's service.

But since your parents seem to think so, and you are still too young to do anything about it, I would advise you to stop fanning the flames of their opposition by insisting on having your way now. Let things stay as they are for the present.

The best course would be for you to consult a wise father confessor regularly. He will be your best guide and will help you to preserve your vocation until such time as even the refusal of your parents can not prevent you from answering God's call.

Dear Miss Marlene,

I am a senior in High School of a Catholic institution. I am 19. Since I was in the first year I felt that I had vocation (a religious vocation). Yes, it is true that since then I have already proposers. One of them being a townmate began seven months ago. He is good and what I appreciate more is that he is a practical Catholic.

My problem is that he is jobless and it is only due to this fact that my folks do not appreciate him. They said he has no initiative and is irresponsible. Although my folks are in contradiction to his courtship we keep on communicating through the mails 'cause we can't talk things at home.

Well the truth is that I love him, too. We have a mutual consent and you know most or rather almost all of it was settled through mails only. Is it right that we acted so? Well then shall I pursue my contact with him in spite of the vexing hatred my parents have for him?

What shall I do if in case my folks will learn of this matter? Suppose they will tell me to drop him or if I will not do so they will not let me pursue my studies. I know there is still much time but he said he will wait for my decision 'cause he will finish his studies too.

Well as for my vocation I still do have but my folks again opposed. I promised to one sister that I shall enter the convent. But I must retract my words. Hope you will help me. So long. Many many thanks in advance.

X—Y.

Dear X—Y,

Your parents can hardly be blamed for disapproving of a young man who has no job and no prospects or means of support. After all, one has to be practical, even when one is in love and has a tendency to overlook such seemingly unimportant and prosaic considerations as money and the ability to support a wife and children.

Parents are naturally solicitous for their children's best interests, and they would do anything to insure their future happiness. So do not be so impatient and resentful of your parent's very natural concern over your welfare.

As you yourself admit, both of you are still studying. So why not wait until you have both finished and your young man has had time and opportunity to look for a decent means of livelihood before getting involved in secret engagements and the like, which will do nobody any good, least of all you.

If he is the right sort of person, he will try his best to finish his career and establish himself in some promising work before making you give up your home and your parents' love and protection, or being the cause of dissension and ill-feeling in your family.

As to the promise you made to a sister to enter the convent, you are not bound to do so if you believe that you have no vocation for it. Unless yours was a solemn vow under pain of grievous sin — in which case you would need a special dispensation. But I don't think it is.