

'To R': Barbara Pym and Richard Roberts

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*Paper presented at the 20th North American Conference of the Barbara Pym Society
Cambridge, Massachusetts, 16-18 March 2018*

Most of the subjects of Barbara Pym's novels largely reflect her own personal experiences – country and suburban life, the Church, anthropology, learned societies etc. So how did Barbara get to know anything about the world of antiques, as depicted in *The Sweet Dove Died?* The answer is through Richard Roberts, the 'To R' to whom she dedicated the novel.

One of Barbara's closest friends from the early 1950s was Robert Smith, a civil servant, who, on his posting back to England, was introduced to her by Robert Liddell, who had met him in Egypt during the war. Bob and Barbara had many interests in common, especially the Church of England, and corresponded throughout Barbara's life. After her death Bob gave his letters from Barbara to the Bodleian. This is the only example in the Archives of sustained two-way communication.

Robert Smith, always known as Bob, brought Richard Roberts, whom he had met in Greece, into her life in the summer of 1962, and it is from Bob and Barbara's letters that we learn much of what we know of Barbara's relationship with Richard, which flourished from 1962-1965, but continued almost until her death.. By now Bob was a lecturer in history at a Nigerian University.

After the meeting between Barbara, Richard and Bob, on the latter's return to Nigeria, he wrote to her from Ibadan on 8th October 1962:

I'm glad you so evidently liked Richard Roberts. I suppose you've not seen him again as I think he has been away for a month or so – but I long to know if he met Robert Liddell and a few days later she replied,

We haven't seen Richard again yet as he is still away, or was last week...we did like him so much and hope to see him again; like you I want to know if he has met Robert.

Apparently Richard had been in Greece, and Barbara had given him a letter of introduction to Robert (Jock) Liddell. From the start, Barbara seems to have made the running with Richard – many of his letters begin with an apology for delay in replying to letters, or for 'neglect'

In November Richard wrote from his flat in Sussex Gardens,

Dear Barbara

Many thanks for your kind letter. You make me most ashamed for my long neglect. I should love to come out and see you and Hilary...

Richard Roberts was a descendant of one of the first white settlers in the Bahamas, who had left Bermuda in the 1640s in order to practise their Puritan faith without restraint. These settlers were extremely poor and had hardly the means of survival, but a group of New England Puritans collected and sent £800, which enabled them to establish themselves. You may be interested to know (or you may know already) that later these Bahamians sent valuable timber to their benefactors, requesting them to sell the cargo and donate the proceeds to Harvard University.

Over the centuries the Roberts family had prospered, and Richard's father, George William Kelly Roberts, was a lumber merchant with other business interests, including a small fleet of boats carrying mail around the islands; he named three of these boats after his sons, hence Richard's nickname Skipper. His father became a Member, and later President, of the Executive Council of the British Colony, and was knighted in 1958. Richard always went back to his home in the winter, from where in 1963 he sent a New Year greetings card to the sisters.

Before Richard's return to England, Barbara wrote to Bob,

The first thing you wanted to know about was Richard and Robert Liddell. The latter has told me of meeting RR and his friend 'Michael from Bangkok'. He thought they were nice, but rather overawed by Elizabeth Taylor, who was there at the time. [*That's Elizabeth Taylor the English novelist, of course, not the actress.*]

Richard dined with us at the end of November, so we got a fuller picture from him of the 'literati' who flock to see Robert, and he was really funny about it all ... Hilary and I are very fond of Richard – we dined with him in December. Now Richard is in Nassau with his parents, and is, I believe, intending to go to Mexico.

She wrote to him about her current novel, *An Unsuitable Attachment*, and he replied from the Bahamas,

Dear Barbara

How nice of you to write. I hope by now you have found a marvellous title for your book, to which I look forward. I have been reading Malcolm Lowry's "Under the Volcano", a masterpiece in its way, but dreadfully depressing. It was by way of preparation for my Mexican journey, which I hope will begin next week ...

What was Richard's attraction for Barbara? He was tall, very good-looking, a charming and friendly person, and had the novelty and mystery of a foreigner while still being very British. For his part he was impressed by the fact that Barbara was a published novelist – he liked successful people. But he was born to affluent and influential parents, and in spite of a good education at McGill University, seemed neither to need nor desire a positive career plan. He seemed essentially self-centred, continually seeking new experiences, and leading a hedonistic life, travelling and picking up new acquaintances along the line, many of whom he disowned, as his letters revealed, when he knew them better. There appeared to be little depth to these friendships, and he tended to dissociate himself from other people's inconvenient problems. However, in other respects, he was an entertaining companion, very amusing when discussing objective issues, as when he informed her on local matters.

Nassau's high season is now beginning to move into top gear. More tax-dodgers – that international white trash – arrive daily, to vie with each other in lavish entertainments. Basically these people are identical spiritually with the ex-patriot lotus eaters of the Greek islands. Money is the only difference, but this makes everything efficient, and eliminates unemployment; consequently, outside of Oxbridge elite, there is no political ferment.

To everyone's amazement, the right wing European party won three-quarters of the seats in the Legislature in a scrupulously fair election with universal suffrage. As the Creole is outnumbered by the Negro 20:1 this is extraordinary. My Mother correlates it to the sensibility of the women voters, who can't abide "uppity niggers" that have been educated in England. She's probably right! ...

Love to Hilary, Richard.

I should perhaps point out that Richard used the word 'Creole' in what I think is its original sense, i.e. a non-indigenous native.

In January 1963 he went to Mexico for few weeks, and then, as Barbara told Bob

Poor Richard was last heard of on a postcard from Palm Beach, 'having a madly ungay time with Mother' – one hopes he will come back soon.

Richard and his mother had a somewhat fraught relationship. As the unmarried son, Lady Roberts looked for greater attention from him than he was always prepared to give.

In May that year, Barbara wrote to Bob,

Richard Campbell Roberts has invited us to an exhibition of Thai paintings ... he is evidently back in London and it'll be nice to see him – he brings a bit of joy into life because he is so much not of this grim everyday world ...

Later, Barbara told Bob,

Richard's exhibition was splendid – masses of champagne, but the pictures all much too expensive for us...Richard was very sweet and wearing a becoming summer suit of some dark silky material.

And a few months after that:

Richard Roberts came one Saturday and stayed for a drink and an informal lunch. Haven't seen or heard of him since, or whether he has opened his shop. I must ring him up.

This seems to be the first mention of Richard's antiques shop in Sloane Street, named L'Atelier, his first attempt, perhaps to set himself up in business.

Richard's shop must be open by now but I haven't yet been to see it. We are going to the theatre with him on Tuesday, so we shall hear then. He has been reading some of my books – I gave him *Excellent Women* and *A Glass of Blessings* – do you think that a good choice? *Excellent Women* he found terribly sad, but 'witty' – why is it that men find my books so sad? Women don't particularly. Perhaps men have a slight guilt feeling that this is what they do to us...

Richard's next letter to Barbara is on 7 Jan 1964 from Nassau.

...up to about 3 days ago I was having a perfect relaxed time, then Mother and I had a fearful row, and it has taken its toll of both insides and outsides. My inferiority complexes all got the better of me, and while she loves me, I feel she dislikes me intensely as a person... Nassau is very packed with rich proles, and if I can I avoid it I don't go into the town at all, except of course to buy the air-edition of THE TIMES. The latter I find is as necessary to me as tea is to you... What a pernicky old man I'm going to turn into, or am I already?

Something has actually been sold at L'Atelier which pleases me, but I've managed to keep the establishment out of mind almost completely. That has been the most restful thing of all.

We must try to do some of the things in '64 that were impossible last year for a great number of reasons, like repeat visits to the Kardomah. Much love, Richard.

In January 1964 Barbara wrote to Bob

Richard's shop is lovely – I went down there one afternoon just before Xmas – and I hope he does well. He comes to see us quite often, his car now knowing the way...

There is no further communication until June, when Bob, on leave in England, told Barbara

I lunched with RR yesterday (and did buy a picture - a water colour). He seems to have a psychological, physiological and pathological aversion to red wine.

On 24th of that month his father unexpectedly died while Richard and his mother were in England. Barbara must have written Richard a consoling letter, for he replied:

My dearest Barbara, The warmth of your affection has done so much for me during the last ten days that words really fail to express my gratitude. The worst of course was the night in London trying to comfort Mother, and then the long, long journey home...there are very complicated legal entanglements to Daddy's sudden death, but the chief problem of my

whole existence now is Mother. She is 55 today...she hasn't said so, but I know I am expected to make a home with her...

Such a letter, expressed in the warmest tones, must have misled Barbara as to his feelings for her. They apparently saw quite a lot of each other that summer. Hilary went to Greece for the three months leave given to her by the BBC as a reward for 25 years service, so was not there to warn Barbara against getting too fond of Richard. For her part, despite the difference in their ages – he was 17 years her junior – and the assumption that Richard was homosexual, she recklessly allowed her feelings to override her good sense, and no doubt this letter in September would have further encouraged her:

My darling Barbara, How marvellous last night was – it smoothed over the rough patches of the last week with great gentleness. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

But as he continued to worry about his future he paid less attention to Barbara:

Do forgive, or better still overlook, my peculiar behaviour of late. I am really rather beset by difficulties, one of which means giving up L'Atelier.

About the same time, Barbara answered a letter from Bob,

You ask about that 'creole' and hope I am seeing a lot of him. Well, perhaps not so very much lately, though last night he called on us and took us out for a meal. I think he is a bit worried and pre-occupied about things – the shop, probably. I only wish I could do something to help him ... but as it is I feel I must just leave him to go his own way, and be there if needed. Of course, I have become very fond of him, as you must have gathered, especially this summer, and he has been very sweet to me. I wish he could be happier, but perhaps it is not in his nature.

By November it seemed that L'Atelier was to be sold. Bob told Barbara,

I'm sad about Richard's shop. I am sure he is right to cut his losses, but again I don't think he could have expected it to catch on in a year or less, do you?

And that same month another apologetic letter from Richard:

My dearest Barbara, do forgive me for Saturday. Not being able to help it is no excuse, but I really throw myself on your goodwill and pity.

Barbara to Bob on 11th November 1964:

I expect you have heard that Richard is going to Nassau for Xmas...things seem a bit better for him. At present I am agonising over what to give him for Christmas. If only love were enough!

And in March 1965 she continued,

As you will no doubt have heard, Richard came back from Nassau almost the day he was expected, and looked very well and brown. His life there is full of such rich material for fiction. The shop did rather better when he came back, though last week he seemed depressed again. Anyway, he isn't selling it at the moment as far as I know – but then he changes his mind about things so quickly. He took me to a sale at Sotheby's – an enjoyable and enriching experience.

Hazel Holt suggests that, by introducing Barbara to the world of antiques and auctions, he was trying to put their relationship on a mutually satisfying, but less personal, footing.

In April, more apologies:

Dearest Barbara, Do forgive me for my seeming neglect, but I have been away for almost ten days. I do look forward to seeing you soon. All my love, R.

At the end of May he invited her and Hilary to dinner on Barbara's birthday, and a month later Barbara wrote to Bob,

I had meant to write to you this morning but Richard came and we sat in the garden by the vine and the irises, talking and trying to persuade him to go to Greece.

Richard has given us some very nice jumble for our sale... We have seen quite a lot of him lately, but he is in restless mood and I'm sure he'll be off to the Bahamas before long. Last night we had dinner at [his friend] Maurice's flat, which is very elegant... Richard was there in an enfant terrible mood, but don't tell him I said so. ...

Miss Pym is still frequenting the sale rooms – a week or so ago Richard pushed me into the end of a sale at Sotheby's and made me bid for a book on the Bahamas for him, which I got.

At the end of the year, there was a letter from Lucky Hill, Nassau, the Roberts's home:

The holidays were spent hectically [sic] with the family – too much so, as I have a spoilt little horror for a niece. Mother obviously transferred all her affection from Father to Clare. The latter and myself are on a Minerva-Richard relationship, so you can see I am a cruel monster when it comes to cats and children.

One of the few things Barbara disliked about Richard was his aversion to cats, which he visited on Minerva, the reigning queen of Brooksville Avenue.... He wrote some verses on the subject which you will find below.

I leave for Mexico on 10th ... I feel cut off from life here, my only contact being the 8 am BBC news ... By the way, if you see 'Thunderball' it will give you a false impression of life in the Isles of June, and it is by far the worst of the James Bond films. ... Ever yours, Richard.

In the new year Barbara wrote to Bob,

Richard writes from Nassau, not in the best of spirits – too much family perhaps. But he is leaving shortly for Mexico with his mother so maybe that will divert him. We have seen quite a lot of him this last autumn with various friends.

About this time Richard had taken up with one Gordon, who worked at the BBC. From this time on Barbara and Richard's friendship began to wane.

On 10th March, 1966 Barbara wrote in her diary:

Hilary and I dined with Richard and Gordon at a Greek restaurant in Notting Hill Gate. Drinks first at 231. Gordon fortyish but dressed and coiffed in Beatle style. Has brought Richard a present of a drying cloth patterned with dachshunds. All the time they are, as it were, flirting with each other, a thing I hadn't observed before. I can only cling on to small details – Richard using the little Worcester sugar bowl I gave him to hold the olives, and other times when he wears the scarf and gloves I gave him ... In my bedroom, lonely at the weekend, I can look around and see the Victorian cup and saucer, the little glass bird, the plates he gave me, and sniff the pomander on my bedside table.

And in a later letter,

Richard had dinner with us last night and is now on much better terms with Minerva, though she is still wary when he is in the room.

An Easter card, a birthday card and a postcard from Venice were received in due course, and on 31st May 1966 Barbara received another somewhat enigmatic letter from Richard:

My dearest Barbara, A letter is always safer at times like these. I do pray all our clouds have rolled away, and that we can meet on your birthday as planned. What would you like – a party or just dinner for two somewhere or perhaps something more imaginative? Do let me know. With much love, Skipper.

On 8th July, Barbara muses in her notebook on what Richard might be thinking about her:

‘Barbara is looking very strained – she’ll be going on holiday soon. Abroad, thank goodness – only postcards needed and the weather and complete change will do her good – perhaps she’ll fall in love with somebody (and out of love with me).’

But is that what he really wants? R was put on this earth to be loved – a great responsibility. He is evasive about Gordon. It occurred to me that he may want to protect him from my sharp tongue and ‘sending up’.

In September, Barbara to Bob, referring to his leave in England that summer:

I hope your lunch with Richard was a success and that you didn’t have to drink weak white wine. I have had no word from him so I suppose I must make an approach myself if I want to get all that rich assortment of jumble before October 15.

Barbara had expressed to Bob her feeling that Richard was avoiding her. He replied in October,

I wonder if Richard has re-entered your life yet? I feel sure that he has.

And she returned,

To answer your query about Richard, it would now seem that he has definitely ‘offloaded’ me, which I think he has been trying to do ever since he came back from Mexico...there is now no communication between us at all, except that I asked him to dinner a few weeks ago, and he came, bringing jumble for St. Lawrence’s. We are friendly, of course, but no longer ‘en rapport’. I shall certainly send him a birthday card next week, perhaps even a present, but if he doesn’t want to see me, that’s that.

However, she did go to Richard’s birthday party on 26th October and noted in her diary,

The birthday party – when all these people come bringing gifts and tributes, some presented to him, others lying discreetly in the hall. Books, paté, liqueur chocolates, drink, objects, things to wear like scarves and gloves and pyjamas. Bulbs in a bowl ... It was a great gathering together of his friends and lovers, past, present and future. Interesting to speculate which had been which.

The next day Richard thanked her for her birthday gift:

My dearest Barbara, I don’t deserve either your lovely book and/or the even more precious sentiments of your card and note. They were however priceless additions to yesterday, and added to my joy. All my love, Skipper.

In spite of this very affectionate letter, so capable of being misconstrued, Barbara was sceptical; Bob wrote

I am sorry and sad that you conclude that you are no longer en rapport. I know that he does get himself terribly tied up, and feel with him that if I lived in London I might see him so rarely that if we did at last meet it would be an embarrassment. But with you it is different, and I think that Richard will be back.

But in December, Barbara tells him,

As for news of R, I fear it is all over now – he did get in touch once but I think it was only because he wanted to get rid of some jumble...perhaps my sardonic tongue has sent him away or he has just lost interest.

Clearly she was right – it seems Richard had had enough and wanted to end the connection. In 1964 Barbara recorded in her diary 10 dinners or suppers, 5 lunches (many in the Kardomah), 3 phone calls, three teas and 5 outings, and in 1965, at the height of their relationship, 10 dinners, 6 lunches, 2 teas, 4 drinks parties, 2 letters, 5 outings, 7 visits, and no less than 47 phone calls, 33 of which were from Richard. In 1966 the numbers were reduced dramatically, and there is very little communication between the two in 1967. That year Barbara thought to get in touch with Richard, and in August wrote in her notebook:

The other day in a fit of boredom I nearly telephoned Richard for a bit of conversation but then I was afraid he might feel awkward and that I might not be able to think of anything to say, so I didn't. So unflattering to feel that a person really doesn't ever want to see you again. Now, alas, I am too old to change myself but shall just be more cautious in future – not allowing myself to get too fond of anybody.

In November she told Bob,

... of course, no contact with Richard. I did write for his birthday a month ago but he didn't answer ... in my better moments I wish him well, or at least not ill! All the same, life is restful when one has got over the pain of being deserted.

Hazel Holt thought that Barbara was content to love without expecting any return, but I feel that she did, unrealistically, expect much more. But what, given the circumstances, could she expect?

At Christmas Bob told her,

You were right about Richard in that after all he did not give up his shop, thus one could still put a hand on him. I've not heard from him (card, present or letter) this year.

And she replied,

Richard sent me a very beautiful card, with a tender message. Mine was perhaps a little less beautiful and tender, but who shall say which was the most sincerely meant? ...

A year passed before there is mention of Richard in her diary or letters:

We had a jumble sale at St. Lawrence's on Saturday (Oh for Richard's fine jumble and that of his friends, the most bitter loss of all, perhaps.) We made £25.

And yet another year went by before Barbara wrote to Bob that

Richard sent us a notice of an exhibition of paintings of Venice at L'Atelier, so one day I went down there and had a long chat with him. He was very charming and wrote me a fulsome note afterwards and of course I was charming too. But no lunch invitation or anything has come out of it yet! I have neither the desire (nor the energy) to make any further effort but I suppose if either of us were to die tomorrow it would be comforting to feel that we had a friendly conversation.

Towards the end of the year Barbara, still in pursuit of the unattainable, apparently asked Bob to give a message to Richard asking why he was ignoring her, and subsequently accused Bob of being loath to deliver it. He replied,

Honestly, I wasn't 'loath' to pass on your message to RR. I just couldn't find an opportunity and he did seem a bit evasive. Anyway, I did pass it on a bit inadequately, and then, having to write to him, did so explicitly. He wrote back to say how very much he continued to miss you, and implied (though I find this odd) that he thought that Hilary did not care for him, and perhaps he's a bit afraid of her. I would have thought you would have heard from him by now, but he's in the Bahamas for Christmas

On 31st December 1970 Barbara replied,

Sorry I went on about you giving the ‘message’ to Richard. You obviously did your duty and it is equally obvious that he has no intention of ever getting in touch with me again if it can be avoided. It is easy to say that one ‘misses’ a person but you would think that if he really did he would have done something about it after four years. The ploy about Hilary is very thin – I am the one he fears. All the same it is rather nice the way you stick up for him and perhaps also try to save me from the painful truth, which I couldn’t have really faced in 1967, but which I now can. He sent me a Christmas card but I didn’t respond. But it still makes me a little sad to think it has all come to this.

Hilary and I drove past L’Atelier on our way to Clapham one Sunday and found it entirely empty and the windows plastered with those posters advertising winter sports holidays etc. What has he taken up now, I wonder? Perhaps he doesn’t need to do anything, at least from the financial point of view...

Richard sent Barbara a birthday card in 1971 inscribed ‘Fondest Greetings for your birthday.’ This is the last recorded communication between them for several years.

In 1977, on publication of *Quartet in Autumn*, Richard surfaced again, one feels because Barbara was once more in the limelight, and therefore worth cultivating. By now he was living in Dog Kennel Cottage, near Liphook, Hampshire, from where he wrote on 15th September:

My dear Barbara, Just a short note to say how thrilled I was to see your ‘profile’ in yesterday’s TIMES – all so long overdue. The review this morning was long on plot but short on style, at least to me. Nevertheless I’m sure the book will be a commercial success as well as one of esteem. I will be among the first customers. With much affection, Richard

And another letter the next month:

My dear Barbara, I finished *Quartet in Autumn* last night – it is, in my opinion, your masterpiece (should one say mistresspiece?) if overwhelmingly sad. May I send it to you some time for a hoped-for inscription? The golden haired young man in Hatchard’s said your book was selling well – it was displayed with the re-issues. How lovely to be making jam – it is the old England still. With love, Richard.

Barbara apparently answered this letter while Hilary was in India, because Richard wrote in November,

Dear Barbara, It was good to hear from you again – your correspondence must assume alarming proportions since *Quartet in Autumn* was published. ..I’m not in a delicate condition I hasten to add, but driving seems to reduce me to a quivering wreck, and the dogs are a problem. They, unlike that matriarch Minerva, are only five and a half, but demand a strenuous daily walk which is very good for me. Their names are Jake and Jasmine, and they are not welcome in every home. You will miss Hilary – is there a chance of joining her later and putting the pets in a cattery? Outside the Taj, I didn’t much care for Mother India, but I’m sure you would find all that exoticism rewarding ... With love, Richard.

And in July 1978:

Much touched by the book which greeted my return from the Bahamas two days ago. Will write very shortly. Much love, Richard.

A little later he wrote another letter, guilt showing again:

My dear Barbara, I feel awful not having written earlier to say how much I enjoyed The Sweet Dove Died. Life here however seemed to get ‘out of hand’, what with visiting nieces and the weather keeping the whole ménage indoors. Your novel was savoured a little at a time. I dreaded finishing it too soon as it seemed my only solace for a time. The dogs are demanding their afternoon walk, so I must run. With love, Richard.

In September Barbara received a postcard from Indonesia:

This is real anthropology country – I don't know really how I found my way to it! Just to say that I think of you with love and affection. Richard.

Just over a year before her death he wrote the last letter to pass between them:

My dear Barbara, I was delighted to hear from you, and yes, you were right about my birthday – it was my 48th. I returned here actually on 11th October, after my sojourn among the Toraja in the Celebes. Despite the advent of tourism, there is still a large field for aspiring anthropologists. I spent a month in Indonesia, and can recommend Bali if you'd like to get away from it all.

What splendid news about your publications in America – perhaps (seriously) you'll be invited to lecture. I gather that the circuit is both interesting and lucrative. You are certain anyway to get fan letters. Let me know.

And he again ended with a classic excuse for ending a letter when there is nothing more to say:

The dogs are demanding their afternoon walk, so I must run. With love, Richard.

Yvonne Cocking is a founding member of the Barbara Pym Society, was formerly its secretary, and now serves as its archivist and historian. A retired librarian, she worked for more than two years in the early 1960s at the International African Institute in London, where she made the acquaintance of Barbara Pym and Hazel Holt. She lives in Oxfordshire and has spent countless hours sifting through the richness of the Pym archives at the Bodleian library. She has spoken at numerous Barbara Pym Society conferences in the US and UK and is the author of Barbara in the Bodleian: Revelations from the Pym Archives (2013).

APPENDIX

Many of Barbara's friends, and indeed she herself, liked to express themselves in verse.

Richard did not much like cats – a bone of contention between himself and Barbara. In February 1965 he wrote these lines showing his animosity to Minerva, Barbara's (Ilanthe's) cat, 'the queen of Brooksville Avenue'.

With apologies to All Good Poets from Catullus to Sandy Wilson.

Who is Minerva, who is she?
Purring gently on Ianthe's knee.
Goddess of Brooksville, queen of cats,
Pampered Neuter, fantastic fat;
Delighting my mistress with feline graces,
All thoughts of me away she chases.

And when I come on bended knee
Ilanthe's making pussy's tea.
Matchless Minnie, cunning cat,
Remember well we had a spat,
And I thee whacked with spiteful glee
To show you could not vanquish me.

But now you jealous wicked kitty
I must pretend to show you pity,
Else I fear Ianthe's rage
Will turn upon me page by page.

So, sluttish 'Nerva peace I offer,
Bowling, scraping, humbly proffer:
Now hide thy claws, come out from Telly
And let me tickle thy vast round belly.
Then once again will Ianthe smile,
Prettily deceived by all this guile.

Oh perfumed pussy, betray me not
Or doomed I be to a sad, sad, lot.

In her turn, Barbara summed up their relationship after it ended with this Valentine's Day poem. It is not certain whether she actually sent it to him.

O, Sweet Bahamian, cruel Fate
Has sent you to me much too late
Tormenting me with many a Scene
Of Happiness that might have been...

Yet I must love you, Dearest Boy –
My Jewel, my Treasure and my Joy –
For though you never can be mine.
At least you'll be MY VALENTINE!