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The Deep Blue Sea

By Terence Rattigan

My darling Freddie.
A moment ago I knew
exactly what I wanted
to say to you.
I have run through this letter
in my mind so very often and...
...I wanted to
compose something
eloquent but...
...the words just don't seem to
be there.
I think that's because,
this time, I...
...really do want to die.
I really mean it.
It's not just a line.
I really think you're the most
attractive girl I've met.
- Hester?
- Hello.
- How are you?
- Well, thank you. You?
Very well, thank you.
What brings you to...
I was just...
I survived the battle of
Britain, old fruit, old darling.
Survived.
The mixture of fear
and excitement -
there's nothing like it.
Excitement and fear.
Irresistible combo.
We were doing
something important -
for dear old Blighty.
Old fruit...
...old darling.
Mrs. Page?
Mrs. Page?
Mrs. Page?!
Mrs. Page!
Mr. Miller?
Can you come up, please?

It's urgent.

How many?!

Twelve.

Get me a bowl.

- Is there anything we can do?

- There's nothing you can do.

You don't mean she's dying?

On the contrary.

But she did try to kill herself,
didn't she?

It would seem so.

She'll recover?

60 grains of aspirin are hardly
enough to kill a healthy child.

The symptoms of gas poisoning
are very slight.

Do you think she'll try again,
doctor?

I'm not a doctor.

But I will say she will probably
try again.

Isn't attempted suicide a crime?

Don't people go to jail for it?

People go to jail for all sorts
of reasons.

- Shall we call the police?

- No!

Don't you think you should
just stay in bed?

No, I just...

I just feel a bit -

- dopey, that's all.

I'm terribly sorry...

...for all the trouble

I've caused.

Are you sure you're all right?

Yes.

Thank you.

Mr. Miller - I don't like to
ask, you've been so good...

...but can you come down and
see Mr. Elton later?

He's not well again.

Of course.

And, Mr. Welch, don't forget
to pick up your post
on your way out.
Thank you, Mrs. Elton.
Mrs. Elton.
Please don't say anything
to Mr. Page about my...
...idiotic accident.
I don't want to alarm him.
If that's the way you want it.
Yes - please.
That's the way I want it.
Stop! That man there!
Just back from giving Jerry a
damn good thrashing, sir.
Good show, Page.
Had to ditch the crate in
the drink, though.
No fuel, no ammo left but was
still a whizzo prang, sir.
- Carry on.
- Can I do you now, sir?
They'll do the Navy now.
Range 2,000 and closing fast,
number one.
- Stand by torps!
- Torps ready, sir.
- Fire one!
- Fire one.
- Fire two!
- Fire two.
Oh, we hit her amidships, sir.
Very good.
Stand by to pick up survivors.
All right, you two,
come down to earth.
Oh, I say, kitten.
Humor them, for God's sake,
otherwise we'll get a replay
of the entire war.
Very well, then.
That's all we need,
sound effects.
Oh, you've gone all frosty,

kitten.
Oh, is it agony?
One does hope so.
If it gets too cold you
could always rub
two boy scouts together.
Drinks, gentlemen.
The ladies are thirsty.
Parched.
I love you so much.
We'll have less of that.
They can't ration everything.
No.
Come on - let's go home.
Yes.
Do the right thing.
Go back to your husband.
Father, I came to you
for advice.
I've given it to you.
For support, then.
From you.
From your heart.
You have a husband.
Your first loyalty is to him.
Twin beds.
Again.
Mother has an arcane view of
married life.
How were you conceived, then?
Willpower?
Don't be vulgar, Hester.
We are talking about mummy.
Oh, it's not that bad.
Just don't let her rile you.
Mother?
No.
Thank you.
Will you be going to Wimbledon
this year, mother?
No, since your father's
death I've not been
able to enjoy tennis.
Do you play?

Tennis?

Anything.

I occasionally play a
hand at canasta.

Cards are a pastime.

I meant a sport.

I've always thought of sport
as one of the more pointless
of human activities.

That was almost offensive.

I'm sure Hester didn't mean to
be impolite, mother.

I take it you don't play, then?

Occasionally.

I just find it very hard to be
passionate about it.

Beware of passion, Hester.

It always leads to
something ugly.

What would you replace it with?

A guarded enthusiasm.

It's safer.

But much duller.

Oh, the garden really
is glorious, even at
this time of year.

Yes.

It's my one unalloyed pleasure.

So much safer than people,
don't you think?

No, not in the long run.

Ah, tea.

There.

No, darling.

Hester will pour.

Won't you, dear?

If you wish.

Oh!

You've put the milk in first.

Would you rather I hadn't?

No, I'm sure it'll still
be very refreshing.

The garden is really lovely,
mother.

Yes, even Hester has been
admiring it.
Almost passionately.
Would you like a cake, mother?
Oh, yes.
The Battenberg.
It's a pleasure I've
never outgrown.
Is there anything you haven't
outgrown, Hester?
Yes!
Insensitivity.
I've never been able
to forgive it.
Darling, I'm going upstairs
to pack.
I'd like to get an early
start back to town.
I'm hoping we'll be leaving
for London soon.
- All right, I'll see you
at the grapes.
No. No, not there.
I'll meet you at
Jackie Jackson's.
- Come back soon.
- As soon as I can, Freddie.
- Oh, darling.
- Darling.
- Love you.
- Me, too.
And who else do you
call darling?
I assume this means what
I think it means?
Well, how long?
William.
How long has this been going on?
For some months.
I see.
I'll meet you at the car after
I've said goodbye to mother.
I don't want her upset
unnecessarily.

And that way, at least our
dignity will remain intact.
William.

Shall we send everything to
your chambers, sir William?

Yes, Lincoln's inn.

But I'll take the wig
tin with me now.

Good day, sir William.

Do you realize what
you're doing?

Yes, William.

I do.

It's just a sordid
little affair.

No, it's not.

I love him.

It's infatuation.

There's more to love than -
physicality.

Well, there isn't for
me any more.

You can drop me here, Flitton.

- I won't consent to a divorce.

- Bill.

I intend to make it as difficult
as possible for you.

You sound exactly like
my father.

- What do you mean?

- That tone of voice.

That same mixture of irritation
and sanctimoniousness.

It's hard enough when it
comes from a vicar,
but when it comes from
you it's insufferable!

I'm sorry, William.

I didn't mean for that to sound
as spiteful as it did.

How can you throw away so
much for so little?

I didn't think it was
going to be easy.

Was it so hard to stay
and continue?

Yes, William...

...it is.

Shall I come into
dinner with you?

In the circumstances,
I think not.

I'll never give you a divorce.

I never want to see you again.

You may call for me at about

10:

You may take lady Collyer to...

...wherever it is she
wishes to go.

Morning, Mrs. E.

Still doing post duty?

Saves time, especially in
the mornings.

My tenants can pick up their
letters on their way to work.

Oh, you're a treasure, Mrs. E.

It's all part of the service.

Go right up.

Second floor, front.

Bit of a hike.

Post, Mrs. Page.

- Mrs. Page?

- Yes?

Post.

Oh, yes.

Thank you.

You'll make it look
cosy in no time.

Thank you, Jackie,
that was terrific.

Good afternoon, Mrs. Elton.

How's tricks, Hes?

I have just done 93 down
the great west.

In an Alvis.

Smashing job.

Jackie Jackson gave me a lift.

Well, let's have a bit of
light on the subject.

Christ.

Let's have something with
a bit of life in it.

- Did you have a good weekend?

- Not bad.

I won both my matches.

Took a fiver off Jackie.

He was livid!

And then it started raining
so golf kaput.

How much did you win altogether?

Seven.

Can I have some of it
for the rent?

Oh, hell.

All right, you can have 3.

But I need the rest for lunch.

A job prospect.

South American.

The DFC and bar seems to
have impressed him.

- What South American?

- A bloke I met at golf.

Do you know you've not looked
at me since I came in?

I know what you look like,
Freddie.

I've done something, haven't I?

Oh God.

Many happy returns.

Had you arranged
something special?

Just steak and a
bottle of claret.

I'm sorry.

Come on.

I'm sorry.

I'm so sorry.

I can't say any more, can I?

No...

...you can't.

- Do you still love me?

- Yes.

Yes.

I still love you.

I need a cigarette.

Oh, Freddie, give that to me.

It's addressed to me.

I beg you not to read it.

It's addressed to me.

Forgive me.

Freddie.

Freddie!

Freddie!

William?

How did you know I was here?

Your landlady telephoned me.

I'm sorry but I was

worried about you.

I see.

Tell her to go.

It's all right, Mrs. Elton.

Thank you.

How did she find you?

I'm still in the

telephone directory.

I assume she used

her initiative.

I'm flattered you came.

Don't be.

My motives were

entirely selfish.

I was hoping to gloat.

Are you all right?

You ought to be in bed.

Let me look at you.

Tongue.

You should live to a

ripe old age.

- Are you her doctor?

- No.

What are you, then?

Shall we just say that he

is a philanthropist.

A little more respect might

not come amiss.

I give my respect to those
who've earned it.
To everyone else, I'm civil.
I take it he's not a qualified
medical practitioner?
You take it quite correctly.
So what happened?
I must be careful what I say.
Attempted suicide is a crime,
isn't it?
Yes.
And I am speaking to a judge.
You're speaking to your husband.
Why didn't you let me know you
were back in London?
The last time I saw you,
you said never wanted to
hear from me again.
The last time I saw you I
didn't know what I was saying.
Has he deserted you?
No, he just got back from
Sunningdale.
Do you still play?
I don't go to Sunningdale
any more.
You used to love golf.
What do you do for exercise?
I play tennis with David,
occasionally.
Has he become very pompous since
being made solicitor general?
All solicitors general
are pompous.
Helps their game.
Is he being unfaithful to you?
No.
He still loves you?
As much as he did 10 months ago.
And you still love him?
Yes, William, I still love him.
Is it money?
Sit down, bill.
It's nice to see you again.

I'm glad you still wear it.

Yes.

As yet I've taken no steps
so you can have the
divorce if you still want it.

That's generous of you, bill.

Can I do anything to help?

No.

Well -

- at least I've found
you again.

- Did you look very hard?

- No.

I rather foolishly thought
that my indifference
would hurt your vanity.

Did you really try to
kill yourself?

Whilst the balance of my
mind was disturbed.

Isn't that the legal phrase?

Yes, and what disturbed
that balance?

Anger, hatred, shame.

Of myself.

Of being alive.

- Are you still angry?

- At Page?

- At both of us.

- Yes.

He betrayed my friendship.

You betrayed my trust.

But anger fades and...

...is replaced by regret.

You said just now that his
feelings for you hadn't changed.

They haven't.

But zero minus zero

is still zero.

How long have you known this?

From the beginning.

How in the name of reason can
you go on loving a man
who can give you nothing?

Oh, but he does give me
something - from time to time.

What?

Himself.

For someone like me whose -
- profession is the study of
human nature, I'm...

...very inexperienced in
matters of this kind.

So am I, bill, so am I.

Blame my conventional
upbringing.

I was brought up to believe
that in matters of this kind...

...it was more proper for the
man to do the loving.

I wish you'd try to find a
way I could help.

I'll try and find a way.

- This is a tragedy.

- Tragedy is too big a word.

Sad perhaps, but hardly
Sophocles.

If we'd been able to
have a child...

...would it have made
any difference?

To whom?

Oh.

Many happy returns of yesterday.

Thank you.

Any time you're feeling blue #

any time you feel

downhearted #

that will prove your

love for me is true #

any time you're

thinking 'bout me #

that's the time I'll

be thinking of you #

so any time you say you

want me back again #

that's the time I'll

come back home to you #

how you gonna keep 'em
down on the farm #
after they've seen Paris? #
how you gonna keep 'em
away from Broadway #
how you gonna keep 'em
away from harm? #
that's the mystery #
they'll never wanna see
a rake or a plough #
and who the deuce can
parlez vous a cow? #
Just because I forgot
her bloody birthday!
My God!
If all the men who forgot their
wives' birthdays were to come
home to suicide notes...
...the line would stretch from
here to the Shetlands.
- Can I have the letter?
- Why?!
- It belongs to me!
- It had my name on it.
My God, aren't women the end?
Marries the first man
who asks her...
...and falls in love with the
first man who gives her the eye.
Look, Freddie, I think you
two ought to talk.
I'll disappear.
I've got a whole bloody
lifetime to talk to her!
You stay.
Freddie.
Come home with me, please.
Oh, that cool, calm and
collected act.
Do you see it?
It always works so bloody
well because it's
always so bloody lethal.
I know that I'm going to die!

Just accept that it isn't
your fault.
It really isn't, Freddie.
You can't help who you are.
I can't help what I am.
Well, I'm not carrying the can
for this old darling.
No dice.
I'm not the villain
of the piece.
No one is saying you are!
Haven't you read what I wrote?
I'm not blaming you!
I was the one who wanted to
wait for the divorce.
You didn't.
You jumped that
particular fence.
I never gave myself a
big build-up.
You knew exactly what you
were getting.
Yes, I knew the risk I was
taking...And I took it!
Oh my God!
How I hate being tangled up in
other people's emotions!
I've tried to avoid it
all my life.
It always happens to me!
Always.
Look, you've always said that
I don't really love you
in the way that you love me.
That's not my fault!
Let me give you a case.
Jack and Jill, Jack loves Jill,
Jill loves Jack.
But Jack doesn't love Jill
in the same way.
- Jack never asked to be loved.
- And what about Jill?
That's Jill's hard luck!
I can't be bloody Romeo

all the time!
Come on, you two.
Let's go inside and
have a drink.
Have you got a shilling?
- What?
- Have you got a shilling?
For the gas meter.
In case I'm late for supper.
Freddie, darling.
Would you come home with me,
please?
No, I will not.
You'll start talking
and pleading.
No, I won't.
I promise I won't.
I swear I won't try to
make you stay.
I won't even talk if you
don't want me to.
Trust me, Freddie, I swear.
Freddie, be reasonable.
She's given her word,
for God's sake!
Will you get my wash things
from the flat for me?
I'll collect the rest of my
stuff when I can face it.
It's all right, Jackie.
He knows me too well.
But you gave your word.
He knew perfectly well I had no
intention of keeping it.
That's why he wouldn't come.
I just wanted to be with
him for a while longer.
At least it's stopped raining.
How long have you been with him?
Since 6.
He can do a lot of talking.
Especially when he's drunk.
At least what he says
makes sense.

Does it?
Freddie - was very Frank
with me.
So I know the whole situation.
Do you?
We've all been in love.
But there are other aspects
that are just as important.
Maybe more so.
Like spiritual values?
You have exactly the same
expression on your face
as my father had when he...
...talked about the pettiness
of the physical.
Then he suggested I go to Lyme
Regis to think things over.
Look, Hester.
I'll get Freddie back to my
place and calm him down.
Give me and Liz a ring once
you've got back home.
Who knows, you may still be
able to work things out.
Thank you, Jackie.
And you'll be fine?
I'll be fine.
It looks like bits of crockery.
It's cubist.
It's like a Braque.
Bric-a-Braque.
- That was a joke.
- I gathered.
- We can't all be cultured.
- Can't all be childish, either.
Listen, it was childish people
like me that saved people
like you from invasion.
Why do you have to
bring that up?!
It's beside the point.
No one is questioning
your bravery.
Just your mind.

My mind?
There's nothing wrong
with my mind!
- Fubar!
- What do you mean by that?
You're the clever one,
you work it out.
What the hell do you
mean by that?!
Fubar.
Acronym.
Fucked up beyond
all recognition.
- Where are you going?!
- To the impressionists!
Oh, Mrs. Page, I thought you
were second delivery.
More misdeliveries?
Wagstaff and Quinn.
Undertakers.
They're at the end
of the street.
So are Hawkes and Guyler.
Bleedin' postman.
Lady Collyer, I ask you.
What would she need with
a ration book?
That's mine.
I beg your pardon!
It's for me.
- And Mr. Page?
- Is not my husband.
But I would rather you continue
to think of me as Mrs. Page.
All right.
But I run a respectable house
here and I don't
- want any kind of trouble.
- Of course not, Mrs. Elton.
What people do in private
is best left there.
I neither condone nor condemn.
Thank you, Mrs. Elton.
It's very generous of you.

Do you forgive me?
What do you think?
So why did you go to
the impressionists?
I only did it for the Monet.
See the pyramids
along the Nile #
watch the sunrise on
a tropic isle #
just remember darling
all the while #
see the marketplace
in old Algiers #
send me photographs
and souvenirs #
just remember when
a dream appears #
you belong to me #
I'll be so alone without you #
maybe you'll be lonesome
too and blue #
fly the ocean in a
silver plane #
see the jungle when
it's wet with rain #
just remember till
you're home again #
you belong to me #
I'll be so alone and
without you #
maybe you'll be lonesome
too and blue #
fly the ocean in a
silver plane #
see the jungle when
it's wet with rain #
but remember darling
till you're home again #
you belong to me #
- Hello, Liz?
- Hello.
Have Freddie and Jackie
got back yet?
Yes, they're here.

- May I speak to Freddie?
- I'll just get him for you.
Darling, it's Hester.
Don't ring off.
No scene, I promise, I promise.
I only wanted to know about
the job, that's all.
Did you see the man?
Yes, he might have
something for me.
Good.
Well done.
I've gotta get weaving.
- How soon?
- Next week.
- As soon as that?
- Yes.
Oh, Freddie.
Will you stay with Liz and
Jackie until you leave?
No, you don't have to tell me
if you don't want to.
Look, Freddie, I...I want you to
do one last thing for me.
Will you come and collect
your things yourself?
Just to say goodbye.
That's all.
Surely there's no harm.
In Dublin's fair city #
where the girls are
so pretty #
'twas there that I first
met sweet Molly Malone #
as she wheeled
her wheelbarrow #
through streets
broad and narrow #
crying cockles and mussels
alive, alive oh #
alive, alive oh #
crying cockles and mussels #
alive, alive oh #
now she was a fishmonger

and sure 'twas no wonder #
for so were her mother
and father before #
and they each wheeled
their barrow #
through streets
broad and narrow #
crying cockles and mussels
alive, alive oh #
alive, alive oh #
crying cockles and mussels #
alive, alive oh #
she died of a fever #
and no one could save her #
and that was the end of
sweet Molly Malone #
now her ghost
wheels her barrow #
through streets
broad and narrow #
crying cockles and mussels
alive, alive oh #
alive, alive oh #
crying cockles and mussels #
alive, alive oh #
This is a surprise.
No Flitton?
No, I decided to drive myself.
I thought it best.
I was worried about you.
Please.
Get in. Out of the chill.
Where is he?
Drinking - with a friend.
What's happened to you, Hester?
Love, bill - that's all.
And it's driven you to
attempt suicide?
No.
I drove myself.
Love, it would seem,
drives all sorts of things.
What is that quote about love?
"It comforted like

sunshine after rain...
...and lust's effect is
tempest after sun."
One can't go on living
on a flat plane.
Not after discovering
something more...
Primitive?
Shall we say natural?
In sober truth, Hester,
isn't it lust?
Oh, bill.
Do you honestly think I can
tell you in sober truth
what it is I feel for Freddie?
Lust isn't the whole of life but
Freddie is, you see, for me...
...the whole of life.
And death.
So...
...put a label on that
if you can.
His life stopped in 1940.
He loved 1940.
He's never been really
happy since the war.
He once told me he envied you.
A brilliant lawyer.
That sounds too spontaneous
to be sincere.
No, he meant it.
He said he envied you for other
reasons besides your career.
I knew then - in that
tiny moment,
I had no power to resist him.
No power at all.
During those months, why didn't
you talk to me about it?
It would have made
no difference.
Meaning that I would have
made no difference?
That's not what I said.

The noble judge.
Hung any good Christians lately?
Have you heard about her
little accident?
Did you ever forget
her birthday?
No, you're not the
forgetful type.
Freddie, you're drunk.
Go inside.
Yes, squadron leader!
You see how I'm bullied?
I bet you were never
bullied like this.
Am I being uncouth?
"Yes, Freddie, you're being
very uncouth."
Why don't you come round
again soon when I've
got some self-respect back.
You'll know we're in.
I'll leave 'mother' burning
in the window for you.
Still love her, my lord?!
- The answer to that is yes.
- Please, bill, don't.
Hester, don't you see what
I'm offering you?
And don't you see how difficult
it is for me to refuse?
Is there nothing I can say?
No.
But let's, let's see what
the future brings.
Our future?
No, just...
...the future.
- Belated birthday gift.
- Oh, bill.
Thank you.
"The sonnets."
Thank you.
I've always loved them.
Mrs. Page?

Do you have a minute?
Yes, of course.
What is it?
On your way up,
could you ask...
All right, I'm coming, Frank.
There, there.
Safe as houses.
I can face anything so
long as you're there.
I'll always be here, Frank.
You handsome devil.
You was a real dish,
weren't you?
Yeah, a real dish.
By the way, I don't want a repeat
of that nonsense this morning.
Do you hear?
Sometimes it's
difficult to judge...
...when you're caught between
the devil and the deep blue sea.
A lot of rubbish is
talked about love.
You know what real love is?
It's wiping someone's arse...
...or changing the sheets when
they've wet themselves.
And letting them keep their
dignity so you can both go on.
Suicide?
No one's worth it.
Mr. Miller?
Mr. Elton's ready now.
I'll be down in a minute.
Freddie, let me in.
Freddie, don't be childish.
Let me in.
The South American made
me an offer.
What kind of offer?
A test pilot.
But you said a hundred times
that you wouldn't go back to it.

You told me that you had no
nerve or judgement left.
I know what I said.
But I'm accepting it anyway.
Don't worry about my
nerve or judgement.
A month or two on the wagon
and I'll be the old ace again.
Whereabouts in South America?
- Rio.
- Rio?
When do we go?
We don't.
I'm going alone.
That's what I wanted
to tell you.
Why, Freddie?
Today.
The letter.
The suicide attempt.
We're lethal to each other.
You can't expect a bloke
to go on after he's
driven someone to suicide...
...much as he loves her.
Do you think that leaving me
will drive me away from it?
That's a risk we'll
both have to take.
You're scaring me, Freddie.
It's on the level.
I don't enjoy hurting you.
I'm not a sadist...
...but it's on the level.
- I'll leave now.
- Freddie, stay with me tonight.
Just one more night.
No.
You'll start talking...
And I - I'll be lost.
Both of us will be lost.
Don't be cruel.
How can you be so cruel?
- It's over, Hes.

- No, it isn't, that isn't true.
It's over.
It ended today.
I'm sorry, Hes.
Don't look at me like that.
You've no idea what
it does to me.
All your things are here.
You're going to have to pack.
I won't speak.
I won't argue.
But please don't leave
me alone tonight.
Not tonight.
Please don't leave me
alone tonight.
You look smart.
The old blue serge.
Will it pass?
It'll pass.
But those shoes need a clean.
Yes.
Oh, don't put the shoes
on the table.
It's bad luck.
That's what they say.
Do they?
Did you have any breakfast?
Just a black coffee.
No hair of the dog.
When exactly are you off to Rio?
Thursday.
I told you.
Yes.
Course you did.
By boat?
No.
I'm flying.
London.
West Africa.
And then...
...across to natal.
Sounds exciting.
Oh, by the way, about the rent.

My golf clubs will
probably fetch...
...30 or 40 quid.
So...
...that will take care of the
rent and some more bills.
And what will you do, Hes?
I'm not quite sure.
Get the divorce out of the way.
Tidy things up.
Good idea.
It's never too late to
begin again, eh?
Isn't that what they say?
Yes...
...that's what they say.
Goodbye, Hes.
Goodbye, Freddie.
I'm gonna miss you.
Thanks...
...for everything.
Thank you.
Be safe.
Be good.