
TO MRS. C. L. EHLEN¹

14 February 1896

If of me you sometimes think
Send me back my bow of pink.
If to me your heart is true
Send me back my bow of blue.
If you are another girls fellow
Send me back my bow of yellow.
If to me your heart is dead
Send me back my bow of red.

[unsigned]

TO WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS²

17 September 1907

Carlos, Carlos, how good your letter did sound. I want to answer it before I sail & know if I let it go much longer it will be impossible.

In about two weeks I'll be starting from home for Philadelphia: from there I sail on the 4th of October.

¹A neighbor who lived at 202 East King Street. On this postcard, Augusta Demuth wrote: "Charlie made a number of these valentines at 11 years." According to Emily Farnham's *Charles Demuth: Behind the Laughing Mask* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), Demuth wrote postcards to his family from Atlantic City in July and August 1895; she cites Richard Weyand's scrapbooks as her source. Some of the Weyand material disappeared after his death in 1956; the remainder is now in the Beinecke Library at Yale University. This valentine is the earliest of Charles Demuth's "letters."

²American poet and pediatrician. He and Demuth met in Philadelphia when they were residents in the same boarding house; their friendship endured until Demuth's death.

But getting back to your affairs, you [have] no idea how your letter affected me. I have always felt that it would happen to you some day—that you would simply have to write. However hearing that it would happen this minute was grand news. There's a young chap in New York now, his name is George Frederick—he has written some very good things, poems. He had them published in the spring—the collection is called "Nineva." I wish you would read some of them if you can get ahold of the book. I have never met him but have several very good friends whom are also friends of his. You may not like his stuff, I can't tell, not having talked art to you for so long a time.

I will not be able to see you before I go—yes, it is too bad. Still Carlos when I come back—when I come back—well, we may both have a start in a small way then. I will be over a year at least, perhaps longer. You see, I have just a certain amount of money to spend while abroad & when that is gone I must come back. If I can make it last over the year, of course I'll stay. So I may see [Edd?]—who can tell?

And Carlos even though nothing happens after your six months work in Boston don't give up, will you? It's worth all the money & tears, after all. To feel the joys of creating for a single moment seems to repay one for a year's work. Of course, I know, so do you, that at times it's hell. When you feel like giving it all up & then you think, but what would become of me if I really was made to give it up for ever. Heaven be praised neither one of us will meet such a fate—I hope.

Ever since I started to write this letter parts of what will follow keep popping into my head:

"High, Higher than seventh heaven above,
Low, Lower than deepest hell beneath,
We rise and fall—you & I.
In ecstasy more full,

In sorrow more intense,
 Than all these fools could ever guess,
 We rise and fall—you & I.
 Back and forth—
 Forth to the Idea,
 Back—to where?
 No place or mark is there!
 All this for beauty
 Veiled, eternal, sure,
 The essence of the morning's mist,
 Of feeding flocks & lovers' close embrace."

I can't remember whose this is—perhaps they're mine¹—one does fight at times especially when you expect to see the sights of Paris within the month.

Good-bye, good-bye with the very best wishes.

Demuth

TO ALFRED STIEGLITZ²

19 April 1916

My dear Stieglitz:—

The photographs came to-day. They are fine, aren't they?

Hartley³ will tell you how anxious, after seeing his, one time abroad, I always was for you sometime to do me. And now it's done!

¹The poet has not been identified; Demuth may have written the lines himself.

²American photographer and art gallery impresario, and Demuth's strongest professional mentor. They met first through Stieglitz's 291 Gallery in New York; later, Stieglitz regularly featured Demuth's paintings in exhibitions at his Intimate Gallery and American Place. The bulk of Demuth's extant letters were written to Stieglitz.

³American artist Marsden Hartley, whom Demuth had met in Paris, and through whom he met Gertrude Stein in the winter of 1912–1913. There is no evidence that they were ever lovers, but their homosexuality doubtless influenced their long-standing, intimate friendship. For a study of its influence on their work, see Jonathan Weinberg, *Speaking for Vice: Homosexuality in the Art of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and the First American Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

Thank you very much for them and may I too thank you, here, for the something which I found so often this winter at 291 and which you make so possible.

Best regards for Mrs. Stieglitz.¹

As ever,
Demuth

TO JOHN REED²
[circa autumn 1916]

Jack:—

The [Provincetown Players] meeting I am told is to be at your rooms to-night.

You might tell said meeting that I will be in my province until November 10th or 15th. After all there is no place like one's own home for a slow season; the only possible place for a complete "get away" from the "drama" (in America) and artists of all kind! You need not mention this last outburst to the gathered elders.

How are you? I hope o.k. Best for Louise.³

As ever,
Demuth

¹Emmeline Obermeyer, who divorced Stieglitz in 1924; he then married American painter Georgia O'Keeffe.

²American poet, journalist, and anarchist. Reed and Demuth met at the time of the founding of the Provincetown Players on Cape Cod in 1915; the previous summer Demuth had become involved with other artists and writers there. Both Demuth and Reed appeared in plays on Cape Cod in 1915 and 1916; the company took up residence on MacDougal Street in Greenwich Village in the fall of 1916.

³American journalist Louise Bryant. She was alternately the lover of Reed, after the breakup of his affair with art patroness Mabel Dodge (later Luhan), and Eugene O'Neill between his first two marriages. Bryant subsequently married Reed; after his death, she married socially prominent American diplomat William Bullitt.