finition of which I shall write. It is of a great and beautiful happiness, and, in spite of that nightmare in my closet, I am, for the first time in my life, happy. Strangely and supremely happy—oh, how happy!

It all happened so suddenly until it is still hard for me to convince myself that it is true or real, and that it is all not just a strange and fantastic dream, from which I will suddenly awaken and face again that bitter, miserable and unhappy existence which has been my lot for three long and awful years! But it is all so, regardless of the fact that it happened so suddenly!

It is hard for even me to believe that it is possible to meet a man and fall madly in love with him in one day! It just doesn't seem possible.

Yet that is exactly what has happened to me. Yes, it has happened, and I am, after all the tragedies, the scandals, the sordid, bitter hopelessness that has been my lot, actually in love; in love as I have never been in my life before—and with one whom I feel is the most wonderful man I have ever met or known! So tall, so straight, dark, strong-willed and dignified—a genuine gentleman, the kind I didn't know that our race possessed!

I know that he is an honest man, brave and resolute and true as steel and I trust him above all else. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to feel as I now do! I want to pray and give thanks to Him on high, who decreed that this should come to me at this point in my previously unhappy life! You know my secret, dear Lord and I ask you to guide me and help me to be strong and teach me how to labor and to wait. For somewhere and somehow in the days to come, all that has been in error and is still so terribly in error that I cannot even hope when it will all end, please guide me correctly. Meanwhile, that terrible and indefinite nightmare which has enveloped me and has been holding me in a peculiar thraldom of unhappiness and misery, must battle now with a new and

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strange force. The love and protection and confidence of the brave and resolute man whom fate decreed that I should this day meet.

This morning he walked up beside my car, coming as if from nowhere; and standing there, he looked at me and his eyes must have fathomed to the bottom of my soul! I am sure that his eyes saw clear through me. Standing looking strangely down upon me, he told me that he saw something in my face; that there was a story of unhappiness and misery and bitterness behind a shield of make-believe which I have tried to put forth. I tried to resent his boldness, and I resisted it. I tried to make myself believe that he was uppish and impertinent—even impudent! I tried hard to dissuade him, even to defy him. But I am conscious now—in truth I was even then, that I was fooling myself—but I was not fooling him!

I knew in my heart that the words I said to him were not true but plain lies. I was afraid to believe or acknowledge that within five minutes after he crossed to my car and looked at me so oddly, so strangely, that I was in love with the man, hopelessly and desperately in love with him! I could not, of course, understand then that that peculiar something which I was feeling was love. I'm sure that he did not, either. Yet, I was soon to know that what I felt and what he told me later, that he also felt, was that great and glorious thing called love. God help me! I cannot longer help or control myself! It is that great love which we are both now enjoying!

You know, dear Lord, how long it has been since I gave up even hoping that I would ever be happy—could be happy, and as I write these lines it still seems a little vague and indefinite, even to me! I know that I have no right, in view of this cloud hanging over my life, to hope for anything. I may never be free in my soul to accept anything but the misery and unhappiness that has been my lot for so long. Yet, I find myself daring to believe, because of meeting him, and

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having him hold me in his arms and kiss my passionate lips, that there will come a day when I can partake of the glories of that great and tender love. I know that my future is as indefinite as judgment day; and that I may never, until the end of my life, be free. Yet I simply, as of today, refuse to believe it. I feel like defying it; calling it a lie!

I am daring to believe, just as surely as there is a God above us, that there will come a day of judgment and I am possessed with a peculiar confidence that soon, somehow and in some strange and mysterious way, this man will come to me and take me and marry me and love me and call me his dear wife, and take me in his arms and love me as I have so always wanted to love and be loved—forever!

I was sure that, above all else, when he said that he was going to investigate my past life, find out what had happened to me to make me like he found me, that I didn't want him delving into that tragedy in my life. I felt that, or tried to feel at least, that he, a stranger, had no right to be so bold and so impertinent as to go prying into the secrets that were my misfortune, and I tried to be angry with him. I felt that I had a right to be angry. So I left him standing there in the gas station, looking after me sadly—just like he had been badly hurt—yet was he not?

I drove away, but before I was out of his sight I was sorry and wanted to go back and tell him I was, but I couldn't then! It would have left me bad in the sight of his eyes. Instead, and trying to be brave, I drove straight to the man's house whom he had told me that he was going to ask to tell him the story of my life—that sad, futile and hopeless life, with all its tragedy, sorrow and unhappiness.

I was in a mental panic until I met Bob Martin on the street, driving toward Beale Street to meet and tell him, when my loved one asked him for that awful story. Not realizing that I had just met and talked with him, Bob would have told him everything, without knowing what a great wrong he was do-

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ing to me. Then he would not have brought him on a surprise visit to my door where he was so shocked to find me that for a time he was speechless. My plan had worked. Bob had not given him any chance or time to find out anything about me, before, sitting there on the way to Forest City, close by his side he had a chance to study me, talk to me, listen to me and learn that I was not a bad woman as he might have feared, had Bob told him my story in advance of my becoming better acquainted with him, and permitting him to judge me in my true light and as I really am—or at least am trying to be.

And now, as the hand on the clock before me nears the hour of midnight, I am anxious for him to be told by our good friend, Bob, all of the things that happened to me. Strange, yes, but it is true. I not only want Bob to tell him everything, but I am anxious for him to do so. I shall not be happy now until I know that Bob has told him all—everything from beginning to the end.

My fear when I realized that I was in love with him and that I wanted him as I had never before wanted anything, was that he, after Bob Martin had told him my story, would hate and despise me; and would never want to see me again. Now I know that I was mistaken! He *will* want me and he will come to me, just as quickly as he has heard it. God bless him! My own sweet, beloved one!

It is late now, hence I will close this chapter and retire to dream of my Walter. Tomorrow is another day and I feel that I will hear from him. I shall be waiting with a loving and anxious heart, any words he may want to say to me. Until then, sleep peacefully, dear Walter! And when you think of me, please remember that I will be loving you always —and always!

Tenderly.

Dorothy

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