
Letter to Clarissa “Cris” Ware from Jay Lovestone, [exact date undetermined (1923)]

Photocopy of handwritten original in Jay Lovestone Papers, Hoover Institution, Box 711, Folder 16.
Underlined and notated in Clarissa Ware’s handwriting.

My rapidly fading but evermore charming Schickselle,

I am going through the worst and most serious crisis in my life. I don’t know whether I can weather the storm but I’ll do my best to.

You see, Crissie, I have prepared a lifetime to live for you. *For a while you believed you also found in me the ideal. Then stopped. Then you swayed back and forth.* [“Not Correct”]

Today you no longer see in me the ideal. I am crude, I am rough, I am childish, I am mechanical, *I am not good enough for you.* [“Not Correct”] So long as you were not interested in anyone you struggled on with me; now, you are definitely entering upon a definite campaign to drop me and substitute Ruthenberg. *You love Ruthenberg.* [“Not Correct”] *You don’t love me.* [“How can you say such things?”]

All your skillful tactics are <illeg.> steps to lessen my pain, to prolong my educative process and thus make it easier for me. I know your love [“You have no right to use this word”] *for Ruthenberg will be only a brief spell and you’ll come back to your Jan who will forever be loyal and welcome you no matter what you do and how you do it. Crissie, I welcome your thought of me in the slow medicine you are administering to me. Your interest in Ruthenberg is stronger than your interest in me, but there is a great Party crisis brewing. I am quite keen, and observe, and see more*

than I say. I see and feel changing winds. I hope you will be able to do more good to the movement through loving Ruthenberg [“Damn you, how can you use this word?”] *than the loss to the movement from the effect on me brought on by your losing your love for me. But, Brownie dear, I know love can’t be ordered. I know love can’t be created. I have lost you. You have lost yourself.* [“Incorrect quite”] *I will find you only when you find yourself.* [“As long as you gone on this way you can never find {me.}”] *And you will find yourself merging your <illeg.> with mine much sooner than you now hope or dare to suggest to yourself in your wildest of nightmares — for today chaos, agony, pain, and nightmare are the heralds of the once-loved Jan.* [“Pardon, you have {slowed?} interest my Jon with the breath that you used when you talk of my love.”]

Yes, Jon is young. He must learn. A harpoon has been sunk into his idealism. [“Really — how about the loss of my illusions?”] *Will he sink also? Will his youth, his idealism, his hope, his dreams, his aspirations also go down with him? Will they all go down? Jan will struggle and struggle hard.* [“If they go, let them — they had better.”]

Jon has loved and loves evermore his Crissie. [“A Goddamn lie — love builds <illeg.>, it does not destroy—”] *Jan is no longer loved. Jan must learn the frailties, the cruelties, the pains, the horrors of life. Jan was just in the midst of getting big things going. Jan was looking forward to*

live for Crissie. In the midst of it all a bombshell, a thunderstroke, and earthquake. No plans, regardless of how well calculated they be, to keep me busy can save me from the pain. [**“How about my pain?”**] With ruin and turmoil and chaos and disease in my mind, how can I work, how can I live? Godspeed my death-dearest! Godspeed my end! [**“Unless you have a future your death will do no harm—”**]

I wish I could learn if it is at all possible to re-establish our former spirits and love. [**“I have set down terms & you can not accept them.”**] No terms you lay down will I reject. Of course you may set down terms which will be part of your educative process you have outlined for me. Well, what can I do? As it is I have been beaten — but I am not yet licked. [**“You have licked yourself & beaten me.”**] Romantic idealism, fleeting humility, softness, poetic illusions — for these you are now in a receptive mood. [**“You are a damn liar and have no appreciation for my effort of last night — I should not have spoken.”**] You are not ready for me now. You hate me. You are going through a fleeting period of your life, a cyclonic epoch! Ruthenberg is now your ideal.. [**“Another goddamn lie but you can be sure you are not.”**]

And at 25 — all within a year I have learned the bitterest of human experiences. Disappointment, pain, and horror crown my superhuman efforts. Someone else in my place might find solace in another woman, in sex intercourse. As a matter of fact anyone else would. [**“A damn shame you are so perfect.”**] I can't I love you too much — and you can't destroy my love for you no matter how hard you will try. [**“I shall not bother — if this be *love*—”**] Condemn me or commend me, it is so.

But Schickselle, I propose definitely to remove myself from all your personal life within two weeks, that is as soon as Ruthenberg comes back. I can't and won't be a hindrance *to you in your new efforts*. [**“I have never made any efforts, new or old.”**] Please, in the name of the *love you once had*

for me, [**“Did I?”**] let me be as much as possible and as near you as possible during this period. [**“Why, in God's name?”**] It will help me gather strength to weather the growing storm. Do it for Jon. Do it out of pity. [**“I have none — it is not a characteristic of mine.”**] Do it as a mother. I beg you. Save me. [**“If you are worth it you will save yourself otherwise!”**] Then I will leave from your personal life — because I feel that you are steady developing a well-planned policy calculated to cut me out of your personal life.

Of course, *charm*, I would be the happiest, *most constructive person* on earth to re-establish immediately our love. You have not yet gone for with *Ruthenberg's love*. Your withdrawing from him will not hurt him. It will not hurt you — I hope. And you can revitalize ourselves and intensify a thousandfold the gains for the movement. [*illegible notation.*>] And we'll be happier than ever.

Come back my Crissie! [**“Impossible — I do not go backwards.”**]

Come back my charm! [**“The use of the word back is quite typical”**]

Come back my Schickselle!

Come back my Brownie!

Get hold of yourself. [**“Thanks, I have.”**]

Get hold of your hold on me! [**“Unimportant.”**]

God — I love you and am *dying to live* for you. [**“Romantic but your method is a bit destructive—”**]

I am begging you to give me the chance. [**“You have made it impossible for me to give you anything—”**]

Please do! Save me!

Forever,

Jon

[What!? How can I love a weakling — a mad, insane, jealous male thing — destructive and destroying?

I will work with you as long as your work for the movement is worthwhile — at the moment you fail the movement then I am finally through! †

Cris—]

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*Two appended pages scrawled
in Cris Ware's hand:*

By your work and by your work alone — through your work and through your work alone — can you and I know each other. You have absolutely severed whatever bond may have existed between us and I *only ask that as a white man you will never refer to it — the past or present — to me or to any other living being*. This much control I must ask of you — and I repeat — you have failed — personally. Fail now in your work and your failure *will be complete*. Suffer because of your personal reactions. Suffer because of your personal reactions if you *<illeg.>* then it can do the movement no harm to [dispose?] with you now. Better now than in a graver crisis later—

†- Lovestone and Ware both worked for the WPA's Research Department.

Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.

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