

Goethe, *Sorrow of Young Werther*, 1774

She doesn't see, she doesn't feel, that she is preparing a poison that will destroy her and me, and with voluptuous delight I drink the cup she hands me to the last dregs, and to my ruination. What is the meaning of that kindly look that she so often – often? ...no, not often, but sometimes gives me, the graciousness with which she sometimes accepts a chance expression of my feelings for her, the compassion for what I am enduring, that is written on her brow?

Yesterday, as I was leaving, she gave me her hand, and said “Adieu, dear Werther.” Dear Werther! It was the first time she called me “dear” and I felt it to the core of me. I have repeated it to myself over and over again, and last night, when I was about to retire and was talking all sorts of things over in my mind, I suddenly said out loud, “Good night, dear Werther!” and had to laugh at myself.