Dear Father

by Simarillion

Summary

One day Hannibal receives a letter. From his son none the less and he has an interesting story to tell.

Notes

Disclaimer: Almost none of the herein featured characters are mine and therefore I do not make any money with this story. They rightfully belong to Thomas Harris and DeLaurentis Pictures.

Only Attila is mine and he is just the best there is, I swear.

Notes: Let me warn you right here in the beginning that this newest story in the Hannibal Lecter story arc is an AU.

I had an idea where Josh would meet Hannibal's son and I thought that it would be fun to write a story where the two young men have the hot lovin' that we wish their fathers had. But the story was not interesting enough to have me ever truly consider writing it. Some months later I read a sort of challenge where it was suggested that Will's son finds out about an affair between Will and Hannibal and it made me remember my original idea. So...to cut it short, I greatly revised my original idea and came up with a new idea. I have to admit the idea to write it as a letter was inspired by Franz Kafka. He was not the first to write to his father and he definitely will not be the last.

See the end of the work for more notes

Dear Father,
I can see you sitting at your big desk, wondering why of all things I send you a letter. I am also certain that shortly after that you will find amusement in this strange action of mine for it will remind you of a famous letter we discussed so extensively in the past.

You chastised me for my intolerance and lack of understanding for the writer's point of view and behaviour. And now, here I find myself writing to you as well.

Please do not take this letter as a sign of fear of a verbal confrontation about the subject of this writing. Neither is it an attempt to take an easy way out. The decision to write was made on impulse and felt right and fitting for this particular purpose.

I sit here in a small café – you would like it here father for it much reminds me of the cafés we frequented in Italy and Vienna, the same comfortable but elegant atmosphere that eases the mind and inspires it to creativity – and watch the people outside hurry through the day as if they were racing for some priced goal, exhaustion and dissatisfaction on their faces.

Much is the same in the United States as in Europe and even more is different. I find a strange freedom in the differences that set me apart from the people that surround me but there are times when I find myself quite lonely.

I know you always encouraged me to make my own way and let nothing hinder me from achieving my goals, not etiquette, not society, not the law and not propriety. There are not many people believing so entirely in themselves and in their judgement that they are willing to go against everything to achieve their dreams and goals and so we are mostly surrounded by ordinary people that make up our fellow men. It is rare to find a truly extra-ordinary person.

I imagined my studying in New York City to be a continuation of my excellent education – another step on the road that has so far been plastered with successes – but reality does not fully live up to my imagination. Do not think I do not enjoy pursuing my interest in Art for I greatly revel in the classes offered. What I did not take into account in the equation though, is that every society has its particularities and so does their system of education.

I have yet to decide if the variance to my expectation is to be seen as something positive or to be seen as something negative. I will in this letter just summarize this subject as something that needs more evaluation before a judgement can be passed.

Now you will surely want to remind me to stop talking – well, in this particular case, writing – about things that could have as well been discussed over the telephone and are actually of little consequence at all. It is just that I find it somewhat difficult to exactly differentiate between worthless blather and important facts. I will force myself to focus on the subject at hand.

There have been changes in my life and to tell you about them is the purpose of this letter. I am sure that you remember our last discussion after the ball at the palais of the Turgovs. You were quite cross with Mrs. Van Fleet and her dear friends because they tried to help my luck and my future happiness out by throwing their adequate though eligible daughters at me.

If my memory serves me correctly you accused mother of conspiring with them – which I still believe not to be true – and insisted in refusing to attend any future gatherings where they would be present. You do realize that this will render you incapable of showing yourself in any society since these illustrious women are the very heart of the society we are moving in?

If my memory serves me correctly you accused mother of conspiring with them – which I still believe not to be true – and insisted in refusing to attend any future gatherings where they would be present. You do realize that this will render you incapable of showing yourself in any society since these illustrious women are the very heart of the society we are moving in?

I remember quite clearly what happened after we returned from the ball – you left earlier than mother and me, something that vexed the charming Mrs. Van Fleet to no end – when you accused me of showing no backbone and letting these women run all over me. Do you remember this talk as clearly as I do? For I still can relate everything that had been said, word by word.
"I expected better of you than mindlessly going along with those mentally challenged women."
Weren't these your words on the topic and the evening? I know that they were. You accused me as well of not being true to myself and communicating clearly that none of the offered young ladies was to my liking. Yes, I will admit that I could and most likely as well should have dealt with the situation differently and had I known then what I know now, I would have made you proud. Alas, one learns with time and so it took me until today – or rather these days – to finally realize what was to be learnt from this incident.

Father, I know you to be a very stable person, a person that can be relied on, somebody who will not change his mind and opinion on a whim. Nor would you ever allow anybody else to influence your decisions and opinions on any matter. But I keep wondering if there are exceptions to this rule. Maybe there are circumstances where even your consistency breaks and you behave differently than expected? I shall find out about that shortly.

First things first though. I want to take this one step at a time, as much as to slowly introduce you to the core of the topic as to buy me some more time to phrase everything the way I want it to.

Last week I was talking with mother on the phone. Imagine my surprise when she said she was planning on visiting me in New York City. She added as an afterthought that you would not be joining her – you can't come to the United States? I always wondered why you refuse to travel to the North American continent. Is it about the people or is the country itself?

While talking to mother I realised that I had stopped talking to you – both of you, father – some time ago. Now don't get me wrong, I still talk to you on the phone and I will and did visit you but my life is so much vaster than the two of you know or can imagine. Does that sound conceited? I can't help but feel as if I have finally become my own person since living here on my own. There is so much that is going on that I haven't told you about. Some things might not interest you or are not important enough, other things again are just too important.

What is it that makes it so hard to talk about certain topics? I was always of the mind that there was nothing that could scare me but I have had to revise this assumption. There definitely are things that I am afraid off, even some things that I am terrified of. They are not things or topics that are dangerous or provocative, more like topics that are too personal and that I am too attached to.

I will stop this right now and get to the point.

Easier written than done, I am afraid. But I swore a long time ago that I would always be honest with you father and that I would trust in you infinitely. I will not stray from this attitude.

Do you remember our last conversation on the phone, father? You asked me why I was so determined to study in the United States – we had these talks for a long time before I started university, didn't we? – and I once more explained in great detail the appeals of doing so. You suspected me of not being fully honest about the reason why I won't return to mother and you during the autumn break – why is it that you won't come and visit me here?

Back then I was not really sure if you were right or not – not because I didn't want you to be in the right, but because I hadn't given the reasons for my decision that much thought – but since then I took the time to carefully consider my thoughts. The major reason why I am not leaving during the break is of course the project I told you about. There is no way we would be able to finish the project until the deadline, should any of us leave during the autumn break – the projects accounts to 35% of our final grade – but there is another reason as well and I must be honest with you, the second reason is more important to me than the project.

Father, during my living in New York City, I had the pleasure to make the acquaintance with a lot of nice and even a couple of interesting people. Some of my professors would definitely be to
your liking. I can see you discussing the importance of Florentine Renaissance society on Dante's "Divine Comedy" with Dr. Bertolotti. He loves Florence as much as you do, of that I am convinced.

One of the acquaintances is one of the few extra-ordinary people that are so rare to find. This person has become very important to me and I find I loathe having to part for Europe for even one week. I am sure that you have already conducted that this person is as important to me as mother is to you. I know that you understand my reluctance to visit with you during the autumn break and know that I will be deprived of this extra-ordinary person for the duration.

Are you getting what I am implying, father? Surely there must be a way to visit mother and you with this person, right? Father, are you wondering that? Maybe you already suspect the reason for my long silence and my incapability of getting to the point. I am sure that you realize what I am trying so hard to convey with my writing this letter.

Father my extra-ordinary other is a man. Are you surprised? I am surprised that I finally was able to write that down on paper.

Once – I was very young at that time – you said that you did not condone same-sex relationships. No, that is not correct. You did not condone a same-sex relationship of our acquaintance, but from that time on I always perceived it to be not proper. Somewhat of a taboo.

I don't want to hurt mother or you with this revelation and I regret disappointing any of you. But I feel pressed to make it clear that this is one of the situations where I am willing to go against everything. He makes me extra-ordinary as well.

How did all of this come about? That is a story that is surprising in its simplicity. I met him on campus. He is of such a type that his inner light must brighten everybody's life he meets. Father he has become my life. Is it strange to hear me say something like this? I always said that nothing would hold me captive; I could and would not give up my freedom. He proved me a liar. Please, do not think that he uses me or holds me against my will. I am held captive of my own will.

My meeting him was so ordinary that the impact his presence had on me shocked me even more. Do you remember me telling you about my still life project? I had decided to take the title of the lecture literally. I had planned on a series of pictures about the morgue and the bodies kept there.

The project caused a lot of controversy. My professor refused to accept the pictures I handed in. He reasoned with me – no, that is not right, he threw a tantrum like a child – but I talked to the programme director who found my project to be very creative, accepting my work and passing me the course.

My excursion to the morgue resulted not only in my best photography project so far but also in my meeting Joshua. He was preparing for a class on forensic medicine. He is a police officer – no, that's not totally right, he is a member of the SWAT team – and he studies to broaden his horizon and change his profession. Can you imagine what it is like to meet somebody in such a way, father? There I was trying to find the responsible person to get permission for my photos, dead people all around me and all of a sudden I meet the most fascinating person I have ever come across.

Father I can't express adequately how big an impact his presence had on me. I felt like standing in front of an abyss. My heart was beating so hard, my head going empty and light. He did not notice me at first but when he saw me standing there and staring, he took pity on me and started the frustrating and thankless task of conversing with me. Father I am not exaggerating when I say that I was unable to say any one thing of sense.
Now don't be too strict with me – even less laugh at me – I was so taken by surprise I was totally out of sorts. This sudden and strong attraction took me by surprise. Never had I imagined to feel so drawn to any one person.

You can not imagine how embarrassed I felt. There I was – known for my self-confidence and calm – unable to string two words together while he tried everything to save the situation. All of a sudden he stopped talking and started laughing. Not mockingly or gleefully but full-heartedly with all of his being. Later he told me that the situation struck him as incredibly funny. He tried to explain something about a "giggle-loop" but I never got that.

My first instinct was to turn around, walk out of the room and wait for lightning to strike. I was furious with myself. How was it possible that in one moment of surprise I had forgotten the entire English language?

Joshua quickly noticed my longing looks to the door and saved me by saying his goodbye and leaving for work. Even after his departure I remained rooted to the spot, unable to move any direction. And that was exactly the condition the professor, I had been looking for, found me in.

The next time I met Joshua, I was working on my project. I was this time prepared to some degree but still, my attraction towards him, the strength of it, was very overwhelming. I covered my embarrassing behaviour by shortly nodding at him and then continuing with my photos. He took no offence in my weird behaviour and prepared for his class.

I remember this one day in winter; I was all but a child of nine, when I got to read Cicero. All the excitement about the privilege that was to be bestowed on me made me so nervous and excited, mother had to revoke the privilege before I even got to read the first word in 'Res Publica'.

The same excitement and tension made it so hard for me to converse normally with Joshua. It was as if I had the special privilege of being in his presence, a privilege that was something that put everything else to shame. He was in my eyes perfection, flaws included.

I have been waxing poetry about his personality and inner light but I admit readily that I am shallow enough to not consider a person that has no outer appeal at all. I am quite aware of the fact that one is supposed to judge people by their character and not their looks but honestly there is nobody that would consider a person that does not please his or her eye. If the appearance is not attractive there is no way for intellect or charm to make up for that. Of this I am convinced.

Well, I think it is needless to say that a lack of good looks is not a problem in Joshua's case. He is more than attractive, by far. This admission might cast me in a worse light than I have been before but I have to be honest here. His appealing looks are not what makes him so perfect but because of them he is sexually attractive to me. Otherwise we would most likely have become good friends but not lovers.

There, I wrote it down. Joshua Graham is my lover and will stay so for a very long time. He completes me in ways that I never knew I needed completion. Here I go again writing embarrassing words and phrases like an adolescent girl with a crush but the difference is that instead of gushing about my latest object of desire I write exactly what and how I feel. It frightens me to quite an extent that I am able to behave in such a way.

Is it wrong to think and feel like I do, father? Do you feel the same way about mother like I do about him? I know that the bond between the two of you is the strongest link between two people I ever witnessed. With Joshua I feel the same and now that I finally experience what this is like I appreciate the love between the two of you even more. We are truly blessed.

I have to admit thought that the second meeting in the medical university's morgue did not go
much better than the first but at least it ended with me being invited out to coffee in the afternoon. I do not remember what I answered to Joshua’s invitation, the only thing I do know is that I found myself in my apartment later, a piece of paper in my hand and a time and place written on it. I was not sure, not at all, if I should go to the coffee shop and meet up with him but I was too much of a coward to bale out. The next encounter at university would have been most awkward, trying to make up a good enough fake excuse for my not turning up at the agreed upon time.

So, please stop laughing about my behaviour father, I tried my best to prepare for later and my ”date”, for this was exactly the way I thought of it, while pretending not to be nervous at all. As you can surely imagine I failed horribly at that.

Let me summarize the coffee as nice and very relaxing. Joshua was early but he covered this by pretending to study. He knew that I was more nervous than anything else about the meeting and he was willing to make it easy for me by disguising the date as a study session. Even though we both knew that the reason for our meeting had nothing to do at all with university or our studies, it was the perfect chance to find out more about each other without the embarrassing and most taxing task of flirting and trying to impress the other on the first date.

More coffee study sessions followed and they were joined slowly by lunch breaks and the occasional weekend meet ups. After the second or third ”date” I was finally able to act natural around him and I was slowly starting to accept that there was more I wanted from him than only friendship. It is true that I had noticed my attraction towards Joshua from the beginning but I was not sure if I was willing to enter into a relationship at that time and most of all if I was willing to enter into a homosexual relationship at all. I do not know if I am gay but I do know that I do not care if my loving Joshua puts this label on me. It is only a word and it does not change me or my feelings at all.

By the time my project came to an end and I started my private fight against the lecturer, it was already clear that there had to be made a decision soon. The pink elephant of unresolved sexual tension was growing so fast that it got harder and harder to even enter the room. It is some kind of ironic that even though I was always the more reluctant one, the one constantly needing more time, it was me in the end that took the first step and turned our relationship into a sexual one.

Even though I am anxious about yours and mother’s reaction towards my confession – it is not really a confession now, is it, since it is not something that I have to repent for – you always taught me to never regret what I do or did. My grabbing this chance at happiness once it was presented to me has led to my becoming even more a person to be proud of. I am sure, no, I know that you would have done the same in my situation.

Now, autumn break is closing in and I was anxious about how to break the news to you and mother about my no longer single status – poor Mrs. Van Fleet and her adequate daughter will take this development none too lightly I am afraid – and when mother informed me about her intention of visiting me here in New York City, I realized that I had stalled long enough and that it was time to be honest with you. It was not so much the fear of rejection as the unwillingness to disappoint you in any way that staid my hand so long. But I am convinced that you will be less disappointed by my revelation than by any attempt of hiding the truth. Honesty has always been of great value to you.

When mother visits me I would love to introduce Joshua to her. There are a lot of similarities we have, Joshua and me, for example the former professions of our parents. Like mother his father was a former investigator for the FBI – well, not so much investigator, more along the lines of special investigator.

Unfortunately both of Joshua’s parents are already deceased. They died three years ago in an accident. It was quite grisly from what he told me, a truck loaded with large iron rods crashed into
a drunk driver that was driving too fast on the wrong side of the road and the load of the truck got lose, perforating the car behind it which was the car of Joshua's parents. His father died before the ambulance arrived, his mother three hours later in the emergency room.

Please do not think that I am trying to endear him with this heart-breaking story about his parents' death, I just felt the need to tell you about it, like it was the right thing to do.

I want to extend my invitation to you father. I know that you do not want to come to the United States but I would greatly appreciate at least your considering coming here and visiting me together with mother. I do not need but would welcome your approval of Joshua and I do not want to bring him with me to visit you and mother before knowing that he is welcome in your house.

After the finals I am planning on visiting Joshua's uncle and aunt and we are going to spend some time in his house in Florida. I want to travel to Europe though next spring and I hope to stay with you and mother as well, if you will have us, that is.

Since I overwhelmed you with a load of information here and there is no way I can write everything I want to – not because I do not want to but because I lack words to express myself – I will conclude my letter at this point. I am surprised that I actually managed to tell you about Joshua, I was undecided about how to approach the topic and in what way to convey my emotions, but I am also happy that I finally was able to invite mother and you into this part of my life.

Thank you for everything that you taught me and for always encouraging me to be myself, without your help and guidance I would not have been able to get as far as I did.

Sincerely,

Attila Lecter

End Notes

As a visual reference:

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!