

'I Am Still Fond of You, but. . .'

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As a young man, Charles R. Drew confessed his ambitions in letters to his fiancée Lenore Robbins. "For years I have done little but work, plan and dream of making myself a good doctor, an able surgeon and in my wildest moments perhaps also playing some part in establishing a real school of thought among Negro physicians," wrote Drew, who became a renowned physician at Freedman Hospital in Washington, D.C. But as the following letter shows, he was also plagued by a strange malady.

Darn it all Lenore,

*I'm supposed to be here working,
but work is the farthest thing from my mind.*

I'm simply no good at it. It's terribly

*disturbing, disorganizing, inefficient,
demoralizing, upsetting, frustrating,
understandable-delightful. The sap
has gone crazy, grins at himself,
preens, struts, blushes, smiles,
laughs, whistles, sings and then
just sits in a daze. Got heartburn,
palpitation, indigestion,
anorexia, psychasthenia,
euphoria and delusions of
grandeur. Hallucinations by day
and insomnia by night. Got misery
and ecstasy. Dear Dr. Robbins what
is my trouble? Only you can tell me.
Please answer soon.
I'm in bad shape.*



Dr. Charles Drew
to Lenore Robbins,
A Sunday afternoon,
1940

Charlie

