

5-1-2016

How Hypochondriacs Say 'I Love You'

Lissie K. Mays

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Recommended Citation

Mays, Lissie K. (2016) "How Hypochondriacs Say 'I Love You'," *Forces*: Vol. 2016 , Article 44.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.collin.edu/forces/vol2016/iss1/44>

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HOW HYPOCHONDRIACS SAY 'I LOVE YOU'

Lissie K. Mays

I was sure I would die from
a piece of plastic I swallowed
A sticker on an apple

I was just seven
"Uh-oh," I thought.
"Will I go to heaven?"

I was sure I would go mad if
I thought something bad and
didn't tell my mom.

Didn't matter if I meant it
If I thought it,
It was real

I was twelve, I suppose
Who knows?

A sting meant
nodes

An ache
scoliosis

A twinge was
a torn hamstring

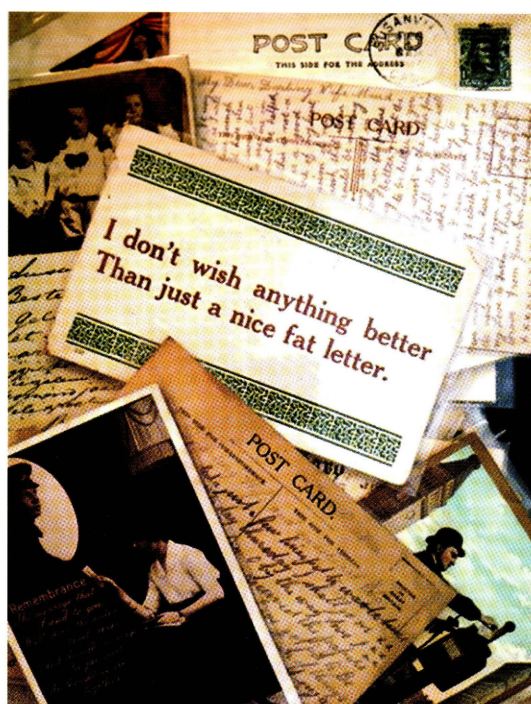
A tickle
cystic fibrosis

Must.
Touch.
Both.
Faucet.
Handles.

Hot and cold
Doesn't matter which is needed
just so long as I
take hold

THE LOVELY WORDS POSTCARDS FROM BEYOND

Dallie Clark



of a stupid
obsession
that has my mind as its
possession

a silly dis-
order
that puts my life back in
order

Stupid obsession
Silly disorder
That's what they all say

They try to be helpful
They are to a degree

There's no doubt I'm more free

Then you said you loved me

I believed it too hard

You even kept track of the times you said it
"I love you. That makes 26 times today!"

And I thought it was so sweet that
you wouldn't lose count

Such admiration repetition
Such numerical precision
Why, even I have my own arithmetic system to
keep everything in place

But what good is a system
when the door slams in my face?

You gave in
You gave up

26 "I love you's" a day?
Sometimes more?

How could you waste such valuable oxygen on
nothing more than a
mere concoction?

Ah, now I see
You're afraid
like me

A person whose
biggest fear is

a sudden deterioration of well being

Love

The sting
The ache
The twinge
The tickle

They have all returned to
let me know that
what I felt then
what I feel now

is not
stupid
is not
silly

So now I can be sure
There's no doubt I'm more free

Bet you wish you were me