



the alembic

Providence College

# *the alembic*

**alembic**

*noun* ■ **alem·bic** ■ /əˈlembik/

an obsolete distilling apparatus. for our purposes, a figurative “distillation” of the collective talents of a literary community. just as an **alembic** distilled each season’s yield of grapes to produce fine wine, we also gather and distill the year’s yield of creativity, in hopes of producing a palatable artistic vinatge.

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# **THE ALEMBIC** Spring 2015

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# My GPS, My Love

WALTER B. LEVIS

Garmin, my love, this is difficult. I'm nervous. You know how I feel about you, but—well, I won't even try to come up with something original: I want to marry you.

Let me explain (and yes, I'll stop and pull over). You've been so much more to me than a mere global positioning system. Before I met you I was—well, lost. And like a lot of guys, I was in denial. I thought I knew the way, thought I didn't need to ask for help. But I was wrong.

You...you've shown me the path—the purple, highlighted path. And I know now what direction I'm going. I'm confident. With you, Garmy, by my side (or on the windshield under the rear-view mirror), I can go places. Goals, dreams, destination points—I've never felt this way before. And it's all because of you.

I look back on my life. So many wrong turns. So much time wasted in shallow relationships. MapQuest, Google maps, or (I'm ashamed to admit) I once was infatuated with those crazy paper maps that unfold across your lap like a cheap strip-club dancer hoping for a big tip! Not that I've ever been to those places...sorry. I didn't mean to say that. But it just shows how deeply I trust you. And why I want to marry you. As my therapist says, trust is everything in a marriage.

And I'm not afraid to be completely honest because—unlike my first wife, who never hesitated to call me a dumb jerk when I goofed—I never feel judged by you. If I miss an exit, make a bonehead turn, drive right past our house, you just calmly offer to help. In fact, I sometimes take a wrong turn intentionally just to hear the sweet sound of your slightly computerized voice say, "Recalculating." Just thinking of it now, I shiver...

But this is no silly crush on a pretty voice, believe me. I've thought long and hard about us. The equality, the mutual respect. For example, if I mess up when entering an address, you come

straight at me: “No Address Found.” I like that. The direct communication. As my therapist says, communication is everything in a marriage.

We also bring out the best in each other. Like the time last week when I fiddled with your settings and requested the “shortest possible route,” hoping to shave off a few minutes because I was running late—I didn’t fool you. You simply displayed the accurate time of arrival. Being late was my problem. And you helped me accept that responsibility, which is exactly how it should be. As my therapist says, taking responsibility for yourself is everything in a marriage.

Consider too how well we work together. Your memory never fails to astonish me. The other night, while holding you in my hands, I gently looked under your “recently found places” and there was that Italian restaurant we went to in Lake George—three weeks ago! Immediately, I selected, and how smart you were to ask if I wanted to store it as “a favorite.” Yes, yes—that’s exactly what I wanted. How did you know? It’s like sometimes you seem to read my mind. Really, I feel this way often. You tell me to “turn in three hundred feet.” And it’s as if you *knew* that without your reminding me, I would have driven right through the intersection. Such empathy! My therapist didn’t say it, but it seems to me empathy is everything in a marriage.

...Okay, I know we’ve discussed this, but I want to say it again: my little fling last Christmas in Fort Lauderdale when I rented that luxury car with the built-in GPS—it meant nothing to me. Her flashy features, the split screen zoom and all that, it’s no wonder I hit a bus. I deserved to have that accident.

But it makes me even more certain about us. Honesty, respect, clear and open communication—together, Garmy, we will always know where we are and where we are going. And I promise that I will alphabetize our favorite places and update your system and keep you current and never let your battery lose its charge until death do us part. Please, my dear sweet Garmin, my love, marry me!