your seat for a moment and bend down. Your neck, your fair skin — how beautiful it is!

Then I come to my senses and straighten up.

My senses?

I see you everywhere. Even when you’re away. But it’s as if you’re always with me, wherever I might be. Or am I always where you are?

LAST YEAR...

I cross the yard on my bike or on foot. You are hanging in the glass door. You shout after me. I wave casually. No, I wave with apparent casualness, for I’ve been secretly observing you in closest detail, so that your image will remain as long as possible on my retina. Your slim body slantwise in the doorway, your dark hair still brushed back into a duck-tail — it’s awful! Your plaid shirt, never buttoned quite all the way, always with one shirt-tail hanging a little out of your pants. Your over-grown hands and feet, little grinning gamin face with its soft nose, wide mouth — how beautiful it is! — and your eyes — above all those volatile blue-grey eyes, sometimes soft, sometimes flashing under long lashes which may suddenly lower coquettishly. Yes, languishing, seductive, those deer eyes, those fallow-deer eyes...

Delusions. What am I thinking about?

A fourteen-year-old boy!

A fourteen-year-old boy who clowns around to get attention. Your light, slightly hoarse voice. Your call ringing in my ears. My last name:

“Mr. Eisenhardt, Mr. Eisenhardt!”

I catch myself wishing that one day you will call me Jens.

“Hey, Thankster, shut up!”

They are shouting at you from behind the big glass door, forefinger to temple, shaking their heads. “Thankster,
you’re nuts!” You give me a last foolish giggle and scurry inside where it’s warm. I hear yells. Now you are fighting. I hurry on.

And on and on. Always away...

But that was last year.

Now you don’t call after me any more. It’s more likely that I call to you. You are no longer at the glass door, giggling. Nobody calls you ‘Thankster’ this year. You no longer make a big thing of saying “Thank you” in the Copenhagen manner every time someone passes the gravey boat or a bowl of potatoes at the principal’s table: “Thank you, thank you, many thanks, thanks a lot, thank you....” Even our principal can choke on the cherry soup and the salt pork when the little Thankster gets going.

But this year you’re not at his table.

You sit at mine.

A victory on the very first day. My greatest obstacle overcome:

“We old-timers from last year have to stick together. Sit next to me!”

And that is where you are now.

The duck-tail has been replaced by bangs, which are very becoming. Your nervous laughter has been succeeded by a pleasing smile. You are one of the big boys. And you are studying hard. You are taking Danish with me and you are no longer just a giddy little kid, as your teacher last year — a woman — called you. You are making social progress. In fact you are one of the trend-setters. I follow you jealously, observe you secretly through the long narrow window above my green sofa. You’re in the middle of a group on its way to the co-op. Are you flirting? And if so, how serious is it? I cannot guess what goes on in your mind.

You are good at Danish and you are good at English. This year I don’t have to say:
"Voice that 'S', Kim. Itz, iz, iz... Now, try it again. No, not 'is', as in the Danish word for icicle."

Yes, you're good at English, and at almost everything else, too. Suitably bookish, one might say. No doubt about that. And I lay my plans. I dream. But I still don't know anything about you. I observe you from a distance. I get frighteningly close to you. I almost get burned.

Watch out! Watch out!

Yes, I still remember those words from the first day I met you on the school path.

But I also remember what I saw...
A boy's profile — graceful, yet so shy...
I tore myself away and tumbled down the staircase.
I the fool.

Nobody escapes that easily. Least of all someone wounded. Hit by the arrow. I am wounded. I am pierced.

I am lost.

LATE AT NIGHT I write write some poems to you.

No, that's a lie.

Late at night I write some poems about you.

They are wretched.

I cannot write poetry.

When I try I change you into the boy I want you to be.

I LOVE YOU.

It is so simple and so completely impossible. Deep down I know that very well. Still, I wake up every morning filled with joy over the simple fact that you exist and that I exist, and that I love you and you don't know it.

I see you. I am near you... That's enough, I tell myself. I am at peace as long as you're around.

You jump about before my eyes, quite ignorant of my feelings for you. At least that's what I assume. It seems we have both happily forgotten what happened at Easter.
And this innocent state of yours gives me a sense of power. In my fantasies I hunt you, catch you, and I paralyse you with my erotic venom. I impale you like an insect on a pin. Yet I am anything but a collector. It’s just you, this one unique specimen, I want.

And so I keep my love, my infatuation, my obsession, my mania completely to myself.

Perverted.

Yes, that’s what’s perverted.

You are not an insect. You are not a vision which exists only in my heart, in my so-called soul. You are a little living person of flesh and blood.

A boy.

And I love you

It is insane....

IT IS INSANELY magnificent —

In my thoughts I kiss your hair, your brow, your blue-grey eyes. I let my tongue play on your nose, let my lips glide along your fair chin and come to rest in the hollow of your neck. You are lying down, now, with closed eyes, your mouth half open, a hint of a smile —

But I don’t just walk around, fully aroused, thinking about you. It’s not like that at all. Of course I see your body, your legs — you bow-legged clown — your back, your buttocks, and I’m happy you’re slim and lithe, a nimble little lad. But when I think about you I see you whole. You’re the sum of all those things.

My Kim.

And certainly, I see you through the eyes of desire, but my glance is always at least half-chaste.

THEN SUDDENLY something inside me screams,

‘‘Get rid of him. Get him out of your life!’’

But how can I?
Then go away. Escape. Get the hell out of this place! Nonsense. I’m no idiot. For twenty-nine years I’ve been in hiding. I ought to be able to keep it up it now.
But you’re in love, Jens. Don’t forget that.
Yes, I’m in love. Does that mean I’m lost?
“My beloved,” I whisper, crying, “leave my dream, leave my poem!”

“IS THAT YOUR BOY?” The youngest son of my teacher friend looks at me and points at you with a very small finger. We all laugh. You and I are in Odense on an evening in January sitting at a round table groaning under ham, potatoes — and butter, yes, lots of real butter. They are great gluttons, my pedagogue friends.
“You certainly live well here,” I say, and fall to eating. They agree, even though it’s the end of the month and they’ve exhausted all their credit.
“Skoal!” We toast in their good co-op claret.
You join the round, which is terminated by one of the youngest children smashing his spoon on the table and with a howl tossing his high-chair tray on the floor.
Yes, it is very cozy here.
And it all began because you needed a new coat.
“I have my principal’s permission to buy one,” you tell me outside the school building one day. “Will you come with me and help choose it?”
“Certainly,” I say. In a flash I hatch a cunning plan.
“What kind of coat did you have in mind?”
“Corduroy, just like yours.”
“I know what, let’s pay a visit to the people I’ve been telling you about. They know a lot more than I about what it’s like at the school there. They can tell you what your options are.”
For several weeks I’d been waiting for just this chance to present you to my Odense friends. I would convince
them you were fit to continue on in school. Cautiously and
inobtrusively I would make sure of their support so you
could stay with me, or, in any case, nearby.

Of course, I am also thinking about what is best for
you. After all, that’s what you want, too, isn’t it?

And so one Sunday morning I drag you off.

That is to say, you drag me after you, down the road,
slippery with snow, to the the co-op store where the buses
stop.

“Can’t you slow down a bit?” I beg, half out of breath.

“Sorry,” you say, and then a minute later rush off again
on your now rather long legs.

“Well, it’s nothing you need apologize about,” I pant,
“but we’re really going to have to learn to walk at the
same pace.”

But that’s something we’ll never succeed in doing.

In an up-market mens’ clothing store in Vestergade, after
much thought and trying on many different models, you
choose an expensive, delicate light brown corduroy.

You certainly know what you want.

I discreetly keep in the background, but when you stand
in front of the mirror and shake the sleeves and pull down
the tails, while you turn around and look up and down at
your reflection, you call to me,

“Well, what do you think?”

“You are... It’s beautiful,” I stammer.

Later we catch a local bus and ride out to where my
friends live. It’s right beside a brand new suburban school
of which he has just become principal.

You fit in well, I think.

It’s a warm and safe place to visit. The doors are always
open, people come and go as if they were at home, which
they obviously think they are. They give off that feeling
of energy which goes with inspired work. Everyone is
made welcome. Including us. I like this house.
We discuss plans for your future over a bottle of vermouth I have brought. Our hosts promise to see if you can eventually be enrolled in their tenth grade curriculum, which would lead on into senior high school.

In the meantime, however, we have to see that you are properly prepared.

There is much to catch up on. There are subjects you have never even taken.

But we depart full of hope and high spirits.

“Goodbye, merry Christmas,” says our newly-appointed principal, and farts.

That’s his way of showing he isn’t stuffy.

“I really liked those people,” you say quite spontaneously on the bus going home.

“I’m glad. You can count on them quietly doing all they can to help.”

“But did you hear what he said?”

“Hear who say what?” I yawn, for it is late and the bus ride back to school takes a long time, with lots of detours in the wintry night.

“That kid,” you answer, “when we were at the dinner table and he pointed at me and asked if I was your boy?”

I laugh. “Well, all right, aren’t you?”

And in the darkness I move a bit closer to your body inside the duffle coat and fine new corduroy jacket.

“What a little twerp!” you exclaim indignantly. Apparently you haven’t heard my question.

No matter.

I am happy. We have had a good and positive day, you and I.

It seems that my plans for you and me are going to succeed.
ALL WINTER AND ALL SPRING there is such a special feeling in my little house at lunchtime and for the hour thereafter.

"Welcome," I say when you come up for some extra study. "Would you like tea? Well, I would anyhow. Have a seat on the sofa. You can start. I'll listen while I put the kettle on. No, not 'Lei-ces-ter', it's pronounced 'Lester', as in Goodbye Piccadilly, farewell, Leicester Square... The way we always sing it."

Yes, it is a very special feeling in my little house when we sit on that green sofa and read English and, later in the year, Danish and German. We drink tea or Nescafé, we eat cake and chocolate from the co-op. That is to say: you eat, I shop.

When the sun comes out my room is flooded with such intense light that I have to draw the unbleached cloth curtains over my large window.

THAT WINTER and that spring we are also on a jazz kick: Mulligan, Modern Jazz Quartet, Miles Davis, Coltrane, Bill Evans — What is this thing called love?

Good question, I think as the Evans Trio weaves its sound around us. I'd like to know myself.

But we also listen to old Kid Ory, and Armstrong for that matter. We are open to everything. You read Mezz Mezzrow's My Ashes to the Blacks. We check out books on Jazz from the library and borrow them from my friends. We even start a weekly jazz night when everyone can bring his own favourites and listen to them and discuss them.

But here we fail. The club is not a success. We are no match for Tommy, Elvis or Pat Boone.

Nor, perhaps, do we know how to sell the idea.

Only three others show up in the beginning, later none at all, and the two of us sit back and listen again to Billie Holiday singing Strange Fruit.
And then I turn thirty and our three spinster teachers arrive with the traditional bachelor gifts: three paper boxes, each one uglier than the last.

"Ugh!" you say, and think they are silly.

I love you for that, too.

Soon there is nothing the two of us don’t agree on.

Well, I think as I listen to the Bill Evans Trio, there is still one thing left.

So, tell me, please —

What exactly is love?

SATURDAY EVENING...

We are so happy, just being alone with each other. And then our Home Economics teacher has to come, uninvited and unwanted. Why the hell can’t she leave us alone?

But I can’t very well throw her out.

She has brought a bottle with her.

Sherry — she’s at least been thoughtful enough to pick some up. But sweet!

She sits down on the sofa and, with woman’s prerogative, fills our glasses and starts to talk, as always, about school.

Well, she’s really quite harmless.

But it’s infuriating.

I hate this ridiculous comedy I so often have to play.

"Shall we listen to some music?" I ask, in an attempt to ameliorate my ugly mood.

I put a record on. Menuhin’s performance of Carl Nielsen’s violin concerto. Our Home Economics teacher, poor dear, probably thinks I’m playing it for her, but it’s really for you — you sitting in my arm chair, bathed in soft light from the stand lamp behind, your dark hair, open shirt revealing the long muscles in your neck, your legs far apart, the fly in your pants...
You rest your head back, close your eyes in order to enjoy the music.

The slow movement begins — and runs into harsh interference...

I’ve taught you to love the concerto.

Now I discover you are asleep.

I’m disappointed, furious, in fact. Don’t you realize I’m playing the concerto for you, not for her, not even for myself? I want to make you experience something, so I can share that experience with you — double it, so to speak.

But, damnit, you sit here and snore.

Menuhin reaches the last movement without, apparently, touching you. As the music dies away you wake up and look about in mild confusion. So you smile your courteous, apologetic smile, the one you always have ready for grown-ups. And we really are grown-ups, our Home Economics teacher and I.

Over the head of the boy sleeping in the chair we’d smiled at each other indulgently.

Good God, you are the student.

And all the time I thought it was you I loved.

In just a few minutes, for the benefit of our Home Economics teacher, and all normal grown-up persons, I will have to glance at my watch and ask, ironically, whether you don’t think it might be time for you to go off to bed.

And our Home Economics teacher will sit back and we’ll exchange a few meaningless homilies about what a nice boy you are.

Good God!

I can’t endure it.

THE MARDI-GRAS BALL has been in progress for a couple of hours.
I sit in my house growing more and more furious.
Why don’t you come by? We’ve agreed you would. I empty my glass and rush down to the ball.
There you are...
I can barely look. You are dancing with her. And she is openly flirting with you. It’s horrible to watch. You are a lousy dancer, but the dumpy little cunt obviously doesn’t mind. She has rather pretty eyes, one has to admit, but, damnit, she doesn’t have to turn them loose on you!
Plum stones.
Ugh...
And to make matters worse, you are dancing cheek to cheek!
I smile idiotically at one of the girls, who asks me why I’m not out on the floor myself. I try to catch your eye but fail. That little viper has your total attention. This is unsupportable. You did tell me were coming up to my room. You did tell me you couldn’t be bothered to dance with these wenches. You did, indeed, tell me...
I turn on my heel in a huff and go over to the dining hall, which has been turned into a bar. Here things are more lively, the company is merry. Pale ale is flowing, soda water fizzes. It’s better here. Our principal is in the kitchen drinking beer with the chairman of the school board. I have a beer with them. Then they begin to sing. They call me to join them. I stuff a red sausage in my mouth to show I’m busy. They only call louder. I try to get out of it, but that seems to be impossible. Good God, it is Mardi-Gras, our big costume party. So I ‘make merry’, as they say.
Now I am up on a chair to give it my all...
My solo turn.
‘‘Alouette, gentille alouette,
Alouette, je te plumerai...’’
The crowd in the dining hall bawls along with me, making so much noise we must be heard all the way over in the ballroom.

*You* must hear us. *She* must hear us.

I sing:

"*Je te plumerai la tête...*"

The crowd responds:

"*Je te plumerai la tête...*"

I sing:

"*Et les yeux...*"

The crowd responds:

"*Et les yeux...*"

I sing:

"*Et le bec...*"

The crowd responds:

"*Et le bec...*"

I sing:

"*Et le cou...*"

The crowd responds:

"*Et le cou...*"

And so on and on, until we finally reach the culmination where even the slowest-witted have to be with us:

"*Et... la... stic...*" I sing:

"*Et... la... stic...*" replies the chorus with amusement.

I feel completely ridiculous, performing like a teacher-clown, or a clown-teacher.

Ridiculous to whom?
To you? To myself?

Suddenly you actually are there.
She and you. You and she. Flushed in the faces. Shining in the eyes. So obscenely young.

Have the two of you also...?

But when I finally finish bawling at that insane French bird I see you signal me — a nearly imperceptible toss of the head — and with it you vanish out into the darkness.

52
Discreetly I follow after you, slipping unnoticed through the door. Up at my house you are waiting for me. More beautiful than ever in your frizzy white shirt, your new tan jacket and a pearl-grey necktie you have borrowed from me.

"Whew," you exclaim, and fling yourself into the armchair, "I don't feel like messing around down there any more."

And you light a cigarette, one of those new long ones, and pensively sip the sherry I give you.

In some ways, I think, you're not a really reliable friend to the other students.

But never have I adored you as much as now. I'm hopelessly in love — I, a totally unreliable egoist!

"AH, EISENHARDT," says our principal after the even-song service, "may I have a moment of your time?"

How often through the years have I heard those words! Spoken in a low voice, intimately, almost as if in prayer. Usually after everybody else has left and we're alone. Or, as now, when the buildings are emptying themselves of sleepy students and teachers. A kind of pat on the back, almost a granted accolade.

"Now, don't forget, this week you do bed check," I say with a kind of glint in my eye.

"Oh, yes." Our principal looks at his watch. "But it's a bit early, isn't it? We must give them time to undress."

"Good! I'm coming."

I can't help liking the man. With all these little eccentricities, as if he were something, or rather someone, who's had to struggle to realise himself.

As so often before, he needs to talk. To unload his worries. Without disgrace, without shame. And, over the years, I have trained myself to become a good listener.
“How about an Albani?” he asks.
“Fine.”
“And a vodka?”
“Of course. I never say no.”
Humming and mumbling to himself, our principal goes out into the kitchen and comes back with bottles and glasses. He spreads a newspaper on the dining table, opens a couple of cans of sardines and thrusts a fork into my hand.
A feast.
And an echo from his days at teachers’ college.
“My wife has gone to bed,” he tells me. “She was tired. I dare say we’re all tired. But I need a moment to unwind. Cheers.”
We toast with vodka purchased in Poland the previous summer on our school tour. It is important for both of us that one does more than just talk about peace and friendship across political boundaries.
“Yes,” says our principal, after the second vodka and the third sardine, “isn’t it amazing how fast we’re growing? Already in our fourth winter. Remember when we started off, Eisenhardt? Even you and I could hardly believe it would succeed. Everything was so disorganized...”
He loses himself in reminiscence.
And I, too. For, though I still feel a bit like a guest in the school environment, I have gradually become a member of it. One can’t participate in work like this without getting involved. At any rate, I can’t. We have common work to do. We must stand and work together. And my feelings of loyalty to our school and our principal have grown stronger and warmer through the years. From time to time I catch myself wishing he could be my confidant, as I am his.
But that’s impossible.
He doesn’t know that. He doesn’t know he really houses a viper in his midst. That even now he is sitting in a room with a traitor.

But is this really what is going through my mind?

No, I have so habituated myself to the rôle I play that it no longer feels like a rôle. I wear my mask lightly. I can lie in good faith to my employer and friend, right to his face, and experience not the least discomfort. I have developed to the point of absurdity my ability to dissimulate.

Yet, on a late evening over a couple of glasses of vodka and a bottle of beer, I am seized by a wild urge to confide, to reveal myself as I really am; immediately my inner alarm system sounds and quashes the sentimental impulse.

My instinct of self-preservation is stronger than any compulsion I may have toward honesty. And, in any case, I have to survive in order to protect my love.

But what would happen if I actually said, “Oh, by the way, I’ve fallen in love”?

And our principal said, “So! And who is the lucky one?”

And I said, “Kim Steffensen.”

And our principal said, “Really? How wonderful for you. We must drink to it!”

And it would be a joke, merely a joke. But if it wasn’t taken as a joke?

No, I remember other voices, from the teachers’ luncheon table.

“Oh, this is horrible!” Our principal’s wife is leafing through the newspaper, helter-skelter, back to front, as usual.

“And what’s so horrible now?” her husband mumbles absent-mindedly behind his newspaper.

“All of these sex scandals,” she says, laying her paper
down with obvious disgust. People aren’t yet used to such things.

"They are very sick men," says her husband, "and they
should be treated as such."

"Yes, and now it’s a teacher who is implicated. I don’t
think they should be allowed to teach."

"Well, you are in agreement with the majority of our
people," I say. "According the Gallup poll, over half of
all Danish adults believe that homosexuals should be kept
out of the school system."

"I agree," says our principal’s wife.

And, amazingly, I feel quite unaffected.

I HAVE NOW KNOWN YOU for a year and a half, and
I still haven’t touched you.

Except for my Easter débâcle a year ago.

That we never talk about. It almost seems we have both
forgotten it. Or completely repressed it. But I know better.
The simple fact that you haven’t, on some occasion over
the past year, blurted it out somehow I see as a sign of
loyalty — or perhaps simple solidarity. Haven’t you in so
doing revealed something about yourself?

I like to think so.

Many years later you will confide to me that on your
way back to the farm that Easter night you actually
wondered whether you should tell someone. But it wasn’t
your teachers, my colleagues, you had in mind — you
were thinking, rather, of your friends.

And were silent, as you now are silent.

This just cannot continue.

I am more in love than ever. Each day we sit beside
each other on my green sofa and study languages. The air
burns between us. I feel it as physical pain.

But I will never again act like a seducer!
Therefore I must talk to you. Yes, I have to talk to you. But we talk all the time. No, we chat. Our mouths are always working. We chat, chat, chat. About books, music, politics. All sorts of things. About your future. Your future that gradually I am also making mine. You will acquire more education, you declare, by way of, and amply assisted by, me. And welfare will support you financially. That's good. All looks bright. I push on. Partly for your sake but, in truth, also for mine. Your future is mine as well. The longer you need me the better. But I dare not plan past next year. I dare not have faith in any progress in our relationship. And at the same time I realise things cannot continue as they are.

With words... words... words...

And with those sultry intervals when I fear you will hear my thunderous heartbeats.

And so I explode:

"We did, too, agree on two o'clock! Why didn't you come? I looked all over for you. What was the big idea? Am I being unreasonable?"

No, my darling, I think, but I'm sick of being in love!

Or disappointment over your lack of trust:

"Why didn't you tell me?"

You say nothing.

"Listen, I could have helped you. That's what I'm here for, isn't it? You've got to rely on me, Kim. Otherwise... nothing makes any sense. First and foremost, we must be able to trust each other. Isn't that true?"

Yes, I chat....

I am good at chatting, but I do love you, too. And one day I will have to tell you. But not now. No, not now. How long will I have to wait? My head hurts. My body burns. My hand creeps nearer. My fingers itch....

Good Lord, how much longer?
I’ve lifted you like a kitten by the scruff of his neck and taken you out into the light of learning, desire for knowledge, analysis, musical feeling, rhythmic sensuality, everything I value myself. At the same time I’m egotistically interested, erotically involved. Thanks to my nurturing and care, your abilities have been cultivated, you’ve been led along new, fruitful, generous paths. But, since I admit my love for you and that I want to be as near you as humanly possible, my motives would seem a bit mixed. I see you in light of my longing. I contemplate you through my lust. Everything around me is coloured by my erotic desires, my sensuality.

That is marvellously awe-inspiring.

And I understand that last winter’s infatuation has been replaced by a real, deep and universal, all-embracing, irresistible love.

As a child and youth my secret homosexual dream was of an intelligent boy — like myself. An artistically gifted and politically aware and involved young person — like myself. A dreamy but not overly weak guy — like myself. And, of course, good-looking — better looking than myself. But when I couldn’t find him I sought in defiance his exact opposite, and it wasn’t until you that he was revealed to me in a younger person, someone I could form into an image of the boy/youth I had never met and who was like me.

But if you — the boy of those days — actually came knocking on my door after all these many years, and I yelled, "Come in!" and you stood in my room, would I still be similarly receptive to your simple and trusting magnetism, your questions, your searching, your sweetness? What is it that we see in each other? How does it come about? Do we each create the other in our own image?

What actually happened when I met you?
We call that 'love'.
A word.
A concept.
But I was never in doubt.
Where did the knowledge come from that this really is love?
I don't know.
And you appeared at just that moment when I need what we call 'love'. Have I sought and found it? I don't know. I feel love has come to me, but I don't know how or from where.
It is simply there.
And, brought up as we are to believe in the purity of our motives — as if feelings were detergents — I imagine, in the beginning at any rate, that this... that you have been given me by the fates I otherwise don't believe in.
I have fallen in love; thus I have fallen ill.
I have to see it this way. This is how I've been taught to look at it. I've learned to view such matters in the best, or the worst, high romantic Western tradition. But my type of love is a catastrophe, a disaster, a disease. Where in my surroundings could I find fertile soil and nourishment for its growth? My love is a cancerous ulcer which has to be cut away. Where, in music, literature, could I find works which would certify my kind of love? Which would reflect it and set it in relief? Which would gave it amplitude, identity, tradition? I search in vain. I find nothing resembling even the crumbs which fall from the opulent table of what people call 'normal' love. My ignorance at the time is total. I know nothing yet about the great homosexual tradition which winds through our culture.
I have to invent and construct the image of my beloved alone.
Without models, without references, and in an atmosphere of mystery and secrecy, I breathe life into that flame
which on our very first day, on the school-yard path, you
lit in me. You’ve become everything to me, as no one else
ever has. You’ve abolished my past. You’ve cancelled my
defeats, my disappointments, my dejection. You’ve dried
my tears. You’ve washed the blackboard clean. You’ve
made me light, so very light...
You’ve become my new life.
The other one.
The only one.
The Kim.
And I realise I’ve never taken myself wholly seriously.
I’ve always seen myself through the eyes of others, or at
any rate perceived myself as I believed others did.
And now you are teaching me to love myself because I
love you.
But this love, this longing after my particular form of
love, is not to be allowed me. In our so-called bourgeois
democracy it is allowed to be a rebel, a revolutionary, an
arrant socialist or communist — at least as long as I don’t
become a direct threat to the government and the estab-
lished order. But it is not allowed for me to make love to
the one I love.
And, of course, I know that perfectly well.
Still, it never occurs to me to perceive myself as a
paedophile, and certainly not as a pedagogic paedophile.
On the contrary, I have time and again, during the year
and a half we have known each other, told you I don’t
want to play the rôle of a teacher in our relationship. I
won’t be a pedagogue to you, I say. A somewhat extrava-
gant declaration considering I really am your teacher. But
I’m quite sincere. In fact, what I want is that we be friends
and comrades...
And lovers.
My hypocrisy is disguised in the way I treat the
possibility of a sexual relationship with you. Even now,