

246 Woodside Road,
Beaconsfield, Quebec,
October 17th, 1972.

Dear Adam Keith Justin Thomas

You see how I have named you fourfold. That's a fourfold numbing which I consummate by enfolding you in myself. At the moment I take you into my words. You dissolve, numb, in these words, these symbols, and come alive again in me. That is requital. It is a poor requital, if you compare it to coming alive in my arms or in my lips. But we are poor people, weak people, who cannot always enfold one another strongly and adequately. So there are these words and symbols of me, signifying that the arms & lips are there supporting you, supporting me, belonging everyone, supporting everyone. All I have at the moment for you are these words, these symbols. They let you trust that there is more. Without them: how could you be sure?

You are a dangerous person to write to. The danger lies in the fact that my words may end up somewhere in your act. The danger lies in the fact that, you will not believe me when I say we are poor and weak. You may call on resources that are so tentative in me, so precarious, that you will only feel cheated in spite of disregarding my warning that my own strength can never be stronger than the strength you find in yourself. How can I be more clear? I am not writing to the Joker; I am writing to the two of hearts.

How good of you to send me the two of hearts. You are letting me back into the pack. I did not ask to be an Ace or a jack or queen. Deuces are wild. Play them where you like in my game. Take my queen or king. Take my brother, the prince. But take them with love. I have the two of clubs and the knave of spades; I don't have to ask you for them. I don't have to cheat in my game. I know the violence of clubs, the dark evil of spades: I live with them all the time. That's why I ask for the two of hearts, the love that will help me deal the pack not justly, not fairly, but compassionately. Or if you prefer, certainly, choose to observe my game from outside the pack, laugh at me, joke about how badly I play, how stupidly I throw away all my trumps and get ripped off by those players who are so much more clever, more scheming, more strategic. Watch me lose. Will you tell me what I have lost, what those who triumphed over me have won? No; you will say there's no winning, no losing. Finally you will say there's no game. Then won't the two of hearts look very foolish facing the joker? That will be a cruel put – down – to tell me I deluded myself into playing a game of love that doesn't exist. You'll say, as the joker, that my two of hearts is a symbol trapping me in an illusion. All that suffering for nothing.

Take my queen or king with a two of hearts. You may say I am not wearing a queen's royal robes. That is true; the queen is inside me, enfolding in my arm, my lips, a faggot queen whose tender and gentle touch comes from the dark queen of spades, struggling from mud and blood, whose energy is from the bitch goddess, the queen of clubs. I do not have to wear drag to act the part of queen. That's because you have given me the two of hearts. Deuces are wild. Take my king; he doesn't look like a king, only a beggar at a

street corner begging for compassion. Your father, your mother: all our mothers and fathers, begging for compassion. The king in me wrestles with the black forces, too, drawing strength from them so that he can penetrate the dark and release the lightening flash of love without hurting or being overcome by the evil and dark. If the two of hearts, like a willing page boys, refuses to serve the king and queen they would succumbed to darkness & become evil, hurting themselves, hurting me. I might not be able to bear so much pain. I might cry out for help. Then, if I was lucky, another two of hearts would reach out of the pack and hold me. Or the Joker might say: if you can't stand it, leave the pack. Kill the king and queen and come with me – to oblivion.

But I say: dear Joker, I love you, too; please pretend that you are the two of hearts, because as you know, the two of hearts was with me till I was trumped. Now I am nothing and I can't stand the pain of nothingness, heartlessness, loneliness. Come back into the pack with me and pretend you are the two of hearts. After all, you are the wisest of us all and you really do look like of two of hearts when you remove your mask, your costume. With you as my ally I'll find strength for both of us. Take my queen. Take my king. Take my brother, the knave. I cannot give Myself: take it. And, of course, the joker can be used for any missing card in the pack: he reaches out and holds me with compassion. I am his servant. His?

You see, perhaps, why I don't want my privacy which is now your privacy, used in a public act. This has nothing to do with your way of sharing yourself very beautifully with others. That is your choice. My choice of sharing is different. I am sharing only with myself – with god. I am sharing only with you – god. And I have not overcome my fears of all the things you list, because I have chosen the pack; more precisely, the two of hearts in the pack. So I am very vulnerable and very afraid. I am afraid of the spades and clubs and hard diamonds. I am afraid of Aces. They are all in my game and very threatening. I try find the strength to accept their awful power without at the same time losing myself, my love, my humanity and light. I need help. Those of us in the pack making this effort the lamp lit in the lighthouse, to salvage enough oil for the lamp, all need help. There are not very many of us. Over millennia there have not been very many of us. Only a few making valiant attempt to keep consciousness alive. These few work against formidable odds. But they will succeed, there is no doubt about that. If I go down there will be others. If you go down, not finding enough strength, there will be others. Consciousness is assured – supremely. I think we must find help among one another, among those few who have the courage & daring to make the efforts – and it will be that much easier then for everyone. Because if we don't make it happen, millions of years may pass before someone does find the strength. If we fail, at least our effort will be in that strength a million years from now – the strength of the two of hearts. Would you like me to return the two of hearts to the pack? To your pack?

Love,
Mark.