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Letter, 1970 January 20, from Jester J. Hairston to Eva Jessye

Jester J. Hairston

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Jan. 29, 1970

My Darling:

How very sorry I am to hear that you are in the hospital! Didn't you receive our Xmas card? I think I asked you then, why I had not heard from you. The last time you wrote me you were on the road with your choir. I believe. And I thought I answered you. Gee! I hope you are almost ready to come out by now. And that the tests they are making will all turn out to show you are only 39 and perfectly well.

I just came home yesterday (Sunday) from conducting a hi school choir festival (500) in Omaha, Neb. It was a fine choir and so well trained, in the music I had programmed for them; back in Dept. I opened with O Magnum, Mysterium, by the Spanish composer, Victoria. I usually open with a 16th. Century motet. Then we did a contemporary number; "Cry Out a Happy Cry," by my friend, Royal Stanton. We did my Japanese arrangement of "Sakura, Sakura." And the other 3 were my spirituals. I always like to let them know I'm a "musician" and not merely a Negro musician.

How are you coming along with your book

on your life in the theatre? It should be one of
the great stories of this century, Sweetheart; because
you have had such a rich life in the theatre. I am
so grateful to have studied at your feet and Hall's
also.

My season is just beginning, but I shall be busy
till the 11th. of July. I shall be conducting the N. S.
Air Force Band and Chorus, in a group of my
songs, on Sun. Mar. 27, there in Washington,
D. C. and on Wed. May 13, I'll be conducting the
Westminster A. S. School Choir of Westminster, Md.
Don't know just where that is in Md. but I've
had the contract almost a year already. That's the
way white folks do business. Most of my dates are
contracted for a year in advance. I have several
already for 1971.

In a short while you'll be seeing 4 of the songs
I brought back from Africa and arranged. Please
let me know how you are coming along. If I don't
hear from you in a little while I'll call you. Marge
sends love to you also. Give your singers my regard.
May God keep you in health and peace. G. H. You
know how very much I love you.

Fairiston