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Terra J. Wright to Mr. Meredith (2 October 1962)

Terra J. Wright

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Oct. 2. 1962.

Dear Mr Meredith

I would like to congratulate you on your enrollment at the Mississippi University.

I know it is not; as you quoted, a very happy time for you, but it is a time of triumph for your race. You are the beginning of a great era Mr Meredith, and you can hold your head high because you are a very important man, very important to the future of your race.

You have great courage to undertake what you have, and you have the admiration of myself and many of my race.

I felt compelled to write to you because it was heartbreaking for me to see members of my race, banding together like savages against one single human being, because of the difference in skin pigmentation. I cannot understand how educated people can think this way.

But these people who are banding together against you, cannot take all the blame, for they are just products of their parents, and they, their parents. This prejudice has been handed down from generation to generation since the time of the emancipation by Abraham Lincoln. I'm sure that great man would turn over in his grave if knew what was happening now.

It will probably take the rest of this century before this prejudice is completely wiped out. We, unfortunately may not live to see it. Sometimes I wish I could be born two centuries later, then perhaps we could see your race accepted as equals to any man. But this is all in the future, and you are part of the beginning of a change-over in the way of thinking of the white population of this country.

Your race has contributed greatly to the arts, they excel in almost anything they do in that line, especially in entertaining, I have enjoyed many of their performances. You should be a proud race. Many of these people who think they are against you have watched members of your race performing either on T.V. or in the Theatre, and have thoroughly enjoyed it. This race hatred is just a thing with them, one can argue with them about it, and they cannot give you any sound reason for their thinking the way they do.

So, Mr Meredith, unfortunately you were born in this century, and it seems you will just have to make the best of it, and forgive these people at the same time. You will probably make many friends among your colleagues at the university, as when this rumpus dies down, people will start acting normal again.

So Mr Meredith Sir, I wish you all the luck in the world, I hope you turn out to be a great scholar. Hold your head high, you should be proud to be a leader of the great fight that is to come. Try not to let it get you down you are doing this for your children and their children.

I will not only be praying for you, but I will put my two cents in every time I hear of anything against you.

yours sincerely

Jenna J Wright

Baltimore

Maryland