

Dear Mabel (Please, allow me to inhabit your pain awhile)

I feel awful about the incident today involving the proximal phalanx of the fourth digit on your right hand. We both knew it was never going to be comfortable, but it simply had to happen. I tried very hard to provide my best care. (Could you tell? Did you see me sweat as I kneeled next to you, your delicately swollen purpleblue fingers in mine, fumbling with that trapped and dirty relic as the nurses and students stood around watching as I caused you to cry pathetic, helpless little pain?) I'll never forget how I failed you today. How we cut that fucking ring off anyways. How I thought I knew what was best for you, my patient who trusts me to do no harm.

I'd ask for forgiveness but that's not what this is about.