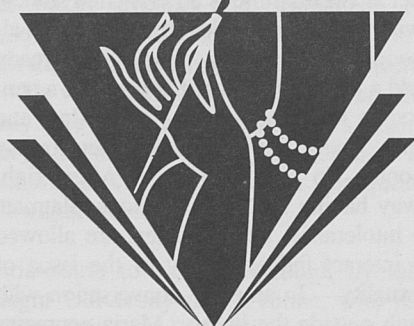


WRITE YOUR
AUNTIE PEARL



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Dear Auntie Pearl: I know you always tell it "straight", so I'm asking for your help. I've been trying to talk my friend "Ed" out of doing something extremely stupid. He's a college professor, and he's attracted to one of his undergraduate students, who I'll call "Tony". Ed says he can tell that it's mutual, and he's getting closer to telling Tony how he feels.

Auntie Pearl, there's twenty years between them! I hope you'll agree that this could never work, not to mention how dangerous it is if anybody at the school found out. I'm out of ideas, and I hope you'll give me a way to convince Ed that he's about to make a mistake.

Concerned

Dear Concerned: Age isn't the issue here. Power is. Teachers who bed their students have nothing but their own in-

terests at heart. Unless Tony is pre-med, Auntie doubts he'll be able to afford the therapy it'll take to dislodge from an unbalanced relationship with an authority figure.

You tell your Ed that his Auntie expects him to enjoy his crush, but to handle it responsibly. If Ed really cares about Tony - and not just this particular student body - he'll wait to disclose his feelings until after the final grades are in.

Dear Auntie Pearl: This letter is only partly a question. Mostly, I want to say something that's overdue about how lesbians have to hug each other every time we see each other. I run into a friend and she'll hug me like it's been years. And then she hugs goodbye like she's shipping out tomorrow for the front. It's even worse when it's somebody you hardly know. I'm not the only dyke who feels this way. But how do you back out of hugging people you're already on hugging terms with? I'm not out to be rude. If I were, I'd hug somebody.

Don't Maul Me

Dear Don't Maul Me: Auntie couldn't agree more. Indiscriminate clinging has set sincere affection back decades. Make a clean break. If a woman thinks nothing of getting you in a clinch, she won't feel invaded when you grab her hand and give it a heartfelt shake. If she tries - and she will - to have her enmeshed way with you, tell her you charge by the hour for that sort of thing. ▼



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