Dear Mr. Lookith,

I doubt you're receiving a flood of mail from well-wishers. Let me add a word to theirs. I suppose it takes a coward like me to really appreciate what you're doing. I'm from New Orleans, and I remember how scared I was the first time I sat down next to a colored person on the bus. Rather than stand as the other white people were sitting because I honestly thought it was wrong to sit and think that way. The trouble is, it's not just the first time that's hard. I don't think I could even get on the bus or look at me or stare at me. The comments I hear aren't much the only reason I kept at it was that I knew the people I sat next to, like you, knew some through infinitely worse all their lives, and if that's not enough, I don't know what is.

What I'm saying can't be much of a comfort to you. I know in fact I ought to be too ashamed to say it. But I'm sure there are students at OM who are glad you're there and who'd like to be friendly but they're afraid of the others and in a way afraid of you because if they go out of their way to be nice you might think they are patronizing you, and in a way