

B artonsville, Vermont  
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L-89  
P 11

My dear love,

My sweet, dearest, unimaginable God, if possible I love you more than ever. Your three letters from Lisbon finally arrived at mother's house, and were sent up here where I am recuperating from everything except this fever of love, which I wouldn't lose if I had the desire to do so. I am now sitting in front of an open fire and weeping for both joy and sorrow. Oh my darling, how lovely to hear you say all the things I had to hear so that I wouldn't despair! How kind of you not to feel restrained and reserved, as I did when I wrote you on the boat! I was so very fearful that you would forget the urgency of my love, and forget that you had loved me too, that I wanted to be careful for your liberty of action. Now that I see that you haven't forgotten, I am practically hysterical with happiness. But oh my dear how long to wait! I see we feel the same things about this long period to be faced, which becomes longer rather than shorter with the passing weeks. Someone more philosophical than I said in some silly book that "patience is beauty", a lie if there ever was one. (My poor dear William, you will have to face the fact that your wife cannot spell, nor even so much as consult a dictionary - but I do know that "philosophy" has two ph's in it) Perhaps towards the end of this time I shall have acquired merit and patience, but now it seems that months are years, and that in any case you are too wonderful for anyone but a particularly efficient angel with an enormous amount of patience. You know, I have been writing letters to you mentally ever since six o'clock on October 31st, but now that I have the typewriter in front of me I can't think for the thoughts that crowd in. Of course, there is really only one thought with its various cells, whose names are all W. L. Krieg. You know in your heart, do you not, that I cannot love anything or anyone in the world except you? And that because of you I love everything, even the slowness of time? Never think that there is a moment's change, or ever will be, but understand that I am always loving you completely. Very wise people have told me to be coy and reticent and keep the immensity of my love to myself, in order not to tire you, but how can I? You must know that you are absolutely and entirely everything in the world and beyond it for me.

I am very worried about your safety.

The night before last I met your sister, whom I would like even if I hated you. It was very difficult to keep from crying, from the first moment, for her eyes look like yours (except that they are not the color of green grapes in the sunlight,) and from time to time she says something quite the way you would. Also, while we were having some martinis at the Fifth Avenue Hotel she said things that made me want to hug her, to wit: that she had always thought everything you said and did was wonderful, to which I could only stammer that I understood, having a brother myself (what a hypocrite!) and that she thought you were probably lonelier than you admitted, and would be better off with some sort of wife. Mon dieu, it would have been so easy to scream! I took her to dinner at the Lafayette, where I could hardly take my eyes off of her, since in addition to being a most understanding and sympathetic girl, she looks like my love. Then the trouble came. We went back to my hotel, where we talked on and on about ourselves and you. I only said that I was planning to separate from Jimmie, and did not elaborate. She was as sweet about that as about everything else. I had told James that I wanted to see him that evening after seeing your sister, and although he came very late, she was still there, and completely unaware of the real situation. That fact Jones didn't know, and immediately started a scene. Just as you would have acted, she did, coming through with a noble bang. I told Jimmie that this was all news to her, whereupon he told her that I was in love with her brother, and that he didn't like you because of that. She said, then you probably don't like me either, and I can completely understand. He said no, he didn't, would she please go. I said no, you go away and let me talk to her for a few minutes. Instead of talking I just cried, and she rushed over and hugged me and said she could understand (as always) and was on my side, and liked anyone her brother did. It's all so difficult, because as you know I do so like Jimmie, who doesn't mean any harm and is in such a ghastly state! Also, sweeter than he ever was to me before, naturally. I hate with all my heart to hurt him and to see him miserable. When he came back Janie put on her coat and said very kindly that she hoped to see him again under better circumstances, and all Jones could say was that he hoped not. Whereupon I sat down and had a long talk with him. I have decided not to see him again for quite a while, for his own sake, and I told him that although I was going to wait a while still, there was no hope for him that I would change my mind, none whatsoever. He was feeling better by that time, and took it quite easily, although not calmly as I had hoped. When he left I went to bed but not to sleep. Anyway, the worst is over now, but it was awfully painful and I was heartbroken to have put Janie in such a situation, even unintentionally. I was so happy to see anything connected with you that I am afraid ~~was~~ I was thoughtless of everything else. The next

morning my favorite aunt, who ownsthis farm in Vermaont although she lives in Indiana, called up and kindly urged me to come up here with her for a complete rest and to get away from Jimmie. I am such a coward, that I con't see him suffer without wanting to help him, and although the obviously logical thing to do is to cut clean, it was very difficult. Now that I have done it I feel much happier. It was very hard to have him love me so futiley, while all my heart and all myself is yours. I left at noon on the train, and before I left I wrote a note of apology to Janie, saying also that I wanted to see her again if I might, after I came back to New York. Mother called me up to say that your three letters had come, which fact for some reason made me weep copiously all the way up to Bellows Falls. Darling, we are going to love each other so well all our lives that these days will be compensated for, aren't we? Another philosopher said that anyone is happy who is confident of the ultimate fulfillment of his highest dreams, so as long as we are confident we can be as happy, or almost as happy as if we were together ~~xxxxxxalready~~ already. L-29 p 1v

My father, as I fear I have mentioned too often before, is a fine feathered friend, and my monma is a very good-hearted screwball. Both of them are very patient and kind to me, and only say it would be a good thing if I went off to the wilderness to think. Which I am doing, but of course it's all about William, and the many virtues I shall have to acquire before I'm even approaching (Heavens, that's worse than usual!) ready to marry him. One other thing that my father wants me to do is this: ask Janie if she would mind giving me the addresses of some responsible people who know and knew you in Newark. Pop is a cautious man and his only failing is a tendency to feel that his daughter, a little white angel with delicate mauve wings. He wants to know all about you from some other angle than that assumed by the lovelorn. It would be such a long time before I could get approval from you that I am going ahead with it as soon as return to New York, feeling completely sure that you and your family haven't so much as the dry dust of an elderly skeleton in your closets.... On second thought perhaps I did spell approaching right, but I'm certainly not going to let it haunt me, even if it's wrong. Love is blind, so I hope you won't be able to read it in any case.

You know I don't like to have people speak to me, because they interrupt my thoughts of you. I love you.

You must tell me as soon as you can, what the situation/in re your home leave or my coming to Africa, so that I can make plans. Never having been divorced before, I don't know how it's done, nor how quickly where. I should like to get it over with as soon as possible, it's such a nasty business. I am afraid it would take quite a while around here, so I shall probably have to seek elsewhere, and even after that there would be a lot to do. I hope that nothing in the way of a war turns up and makes everything dreadfully difficult, even more than it is now. However, in Lisbon we said that nothing would stand in our way, and since I still feel that way, I want you to also. Just remember that you are still free to do as you like, and always will be.

This is lovely country, with hills. It's all grey now, but beautiful in a subtle way, and I think I shall enjoy walking around the farm and the mountains. Need I say that the only thing lacking is you? My aunt has a nice old house, very square and prim, painted white with a prancing horse weathervane on the barn, and several large fireplaces always going like mad. My mother's farm turned out to be extremely nice also, but only one room is completed as yet. That one room is darling, and surprises one by being very beautifully furnished in the midst of the country. When I went there I immediately thought that it would be a perfect place to be with you. At the risk of being repetitive, let me say again that I love you with all my might, and shall probably continue to do so forever. Everyone is very condescending and tolerant, knowing that I am absolutely gone mentally.

One of the things that you must never forget in later years is that I am awfully affectionate, and have to be loved all the time or I sink to the bottom of my cage and don't sing anymore. You'll get plenty of love in return, my boy, and the best care I can give you, and while I don't sing so well, I can chirp expertly. And you know that I think you are absolutely wonderful, the most intelligent, gentle, sweet-dispositioned, well-mannered, superior and incredible thing that ever appeared on earth. Funnily enough, I really do. It's always a remarkable thing to me that no other hussey has grabbed you off, chloroformed you, and wrapped you up for herself. But then, people sometimes live in the midst of the bubonic plague and never get so much as a head cold. In any case, don't ever think you could find someone who would love you more than I do, the very thought is preposterous. All this I have said before, but you must be thoroughly impressed with each of the facts.

Daddy called up from New York to ask how I was, and told me that Janie had called Helen (my step-mother) and politely said she had been very glad to meet me, and would like to have my address so as to arrange another meeting. Apparently she got my note. I don't like to hound the poor girl, but I am afraid I shall because she is so very nice and...., well, I said

that before too. Jones broke down and called up, which of course I wish he hadn't, especially considering the state of his finances. He is job-hunting, and seems to have gotten several nibbles here and there, but not in New York, I hope. Pop had him out to dinner several times with his mother, who came up from Jacksonville when she found out the trouble. She, being a sensible woman, says settle your own problems, and keeps him company. L-89 p2r

That's one of the nicer sides of marriage-company. I'll try very hard to keep you good company, my darling, so you won't ever get lonely as your sister thought you were before. I am awfully lonely for you myself, and have been ever since you left the boat. I am sad when I remember the times in Lisbon when you were so near, and we were not together, and sad when I lie awake and think of the contentment of being next to you. Darling, lets try to make the time as short as humanly possible! It will have to be plenty long, in any case, but I am going to try to speed it up as much as possible, and I hope you will too. As I told Jones, there is not the slightest possibility of my changing my mind, and as I remarked to father, the only thing that would change my plans would be your changing yours. In my case, this is one of the times when separation increases love and faithfulness. In short, I love you really and permanently, so time can go right on flying and doing its worse, without any effect. Except that the horrid thing creeps rather than flies, and I said I would love it because of you.

I am all alone by the fire. God, I hope you are safe in Lagos now, or rather when you get this. Your first cable nearly put me into a coma, and I shall probably never be able to think of the State Department without a shudder. Good old, fatherly State Department. I wish I could do it instead of you, because you are so nice and I love you so. Oh well, there's no point in fearing the worst, although one does, but take good care of yourself so you can be

wearing that sunhelmet to meet me, or at least so I can show you around New York. Remember to take lots of quinine because life would be nil if you weren't around loving me, and just to preserve you for humanity, which will soon learn, as I did, that you are the Lost Tribe of Isreal, the Nth Man, and the personification of Eldorado all rolled up very neatly in one. Or if none of those reasons appeal to you, take care of yourself just because I'm your woman and I want you badly. Maybe you had better just do it for the last reason, because you might just possibly become a trifle conceited if you did it for the others. Oh yes, I know you probably leave the toothpaste cap off or commit murders now and then, but all that is so unimportant.

My darling, I'll have to mortgage my life to pay the postage on this letter, but it's so nice to be with you, even mentally. I hope you don't mind loquacious ladies. Please be horribly loquacious yourself, so that I can indulge in that sort of thing untrammelled, and so that I can hear from you, touch what you have touched, and get off by myself with the letters and cry merrily.

I adore you, I love you, I like you, I'm all yours, and now I'm going to bed to read the three of them over just once, or maybe twice more. Me

L-90p2v