

FEB 16 REC'D

Orange, New Jersey
Dec. 31, 1941L-101
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My dear darling,

Your cable, dated the twenty-first, arrived on the twenty-eighth. You know it already angelpuss, but all I want for Christmas or for New Years or Easter or my birthday is you, so thank you very much for the lovely present! It was such a relief to hear from you again! I saw a movie or read a story once, I've forgotten which, in which one of the characters was a photographer who went about the world making rare and unusual pictures in jungles, underwater, in the lions' mouths, on top of wasps' nests, etc., and had an excellent system worked up for keeping the precious ~~xxxxx~~ plates safe after they had been exposed. He just sat down with them on the return journey and worried and worried like mad, just worried himself into the traditional blue funk. They always got home safely when he did that. So I've tried the same system with you, and so far it has worked very well, if I say so myself as shouldn't. So you realize, my good man, as you go about your business, that you are HORRIBLY IMPORTANT to me? If not it's high time I set myself to the task of writing you a really revealing love-letter. You, my darling, are all there is in this world, and as far as I know, the next, of the slightest importance to me. Therefore, you see, you have a sacred duty to preserve yourself and keep on loving me as madly as possible for the following fifty years or so, without which you will be ruining not only your own life but mine into the bargain! Now that may sound like an exaggeration, but that's about the situation nonetheless. I started loving you some time in August in Lisbon, and since then I've been continuing the policy with a great deal of spontaneous persistence, and if I don't get to live with you within a year or so I shall probably wither away like a balloon with a small leak. It seems to me that in some other letter I mentioned that I missed you and wished very much that you were around to encourage and love me. It still goes, as of December thirty-first, and I predict that '42 will see a continuance of the identical same thing if not more so. Likewise '43, but heaven help us if we have to wait that long, because if so I shall probably resort to the occult arts and call in a genii or an elf to get you over here.

I've been meaning to ask you a silly question for some time, and always (so far) have forgotten to when it came to letter-writing time. How tall are you? I can't remember to save me, and all those things about you are so dreadfully important! You know, I wish I had two or three other pictures of you, for I have looked at the ones I have so long and so often that they have come to mean very little to me, and now the best picture I have of you is a mental one, taken one morning when you came down to the file room during that hectic last week in Lisbon. You were opening the door (after rattling it in a way you had that made me turn green and purple inside, with anticipatory tingles) and had the most beautifully dejected look on your face! You looked at me and flashed this woebegone expression that absolutely felled dead at a stroke any meager beginnings of nobility and self-sacrifice I might have harbored. I guess you'll have to practice that one before the mirror fifteen minutes a day just to keep in trim, because I insist on seeing it again as soon as we get together.

Your sweet sister decided to stay in Newark over New Year's, thus foiling me of the opportunity of seeing her Tuesday (yesterday). I was very ~~xxx~~ sorry, because she has approximately the same effect on my soul that you do. The same old green-and-purple-with-tingles, only naturally to a somewhat lesser degree.

One thing that I never seem to be able to remember is that I am addressing the nearest thing to a stone wall. I do wish (as long as you can't be

here with me) that you were in Lagos and could write back for a change. My goodness how the letters must have piled up by this time! Miles and miles of them must be awaiting you even now. What makes me boil and fume is that even if you hadn't left till the first of December or so, you could be in Lagos now had you taken the boat to the United States and gone there by plane! Also, entirely beside the point of course, I could have seen you. Ah well, what must be must be, etc., but it doesn't say I have to like it.

My pal Rufus Lindsley and I are planning to spend a lonely female New Year's Eve together, because her gentleman friend has to go back to Fort Bragg (being a soldier) and mine is almost in Lagos, maybe. She's a terribly nice girl, one of the kind that seems too good to live, except that she goes off every once in a while and does something mildly BAD! If you find two worthy but lonely Foreign Service men you might destine one for Janie and the other for Rufus, because I should like both of them around if possible, and I always say if you want things done, you might as well figure on doing them yourself rather than letting nature take her course. All right, I know the Foreign Service men (lonely but worthy) might have a little something to say about it all, but not very much!

You should see the way mother's canary hops about madly when I start to type! He's scared to death, poor dear, of the infernal racket. His name's Napoleon, not that it's very relevant.

That cable mystified me for a whole day; on the date line was the strange name SANSORIGINE which I took to be the town from where you sent it. Well, I'd never heard of such a place, and neither had the Western Union, nor the Orange Free Public Library's Reference Department, nor Rand McNally the map people, nor the Encyclopedia Britanica. Was it a Spanish name, thought I? No, it wouldn't have an "e" on the end. It wouldn't be a Portuguese one either, for then it would be Sao Sorigine. It might be an Italian one, but if so why? All of which merely goes to prove that twelve years, thousands of dollars, and untold effort were wasted on my French education, because it never occurred to me till the RCA company told me so, that it was really two words in French, not very cryptic ones at that. Sans Origine. What a stoop I am! Still, I should very much have liked to know where you are by this late date.

In any case, my sweet, I love you and think about you all the time. I hope that by New Year's of next year we will be together.

Goodnight, angelpuss.

Phyllinda

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