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*Correct letter: signature, Capt. Zwart*Lagos, Nigeria
March 1, 1942

L-724p1

My darling,

You seem more wonderful to me with every day that passes, only life you, I don't want too many days to pass or you will become too perfect to live ~~to~~ fade away to the realm of celestial beings. I have your photo propped up on the table beside me, and I can hardly believe that you could be as beautiful and as desirable as the picture, except that memory corroborates it. Dearest one, I won't argue about who misses the other the most; we both have particular reasons for needing each other, and we are drawn together like air to a vacuum, but I do miss you and need you and want you so very much. I feel quite certain that, once we are together, I will lose some if not all of my fear of the strange places and strange people of this world. So long as we are permitted to be together, I have no other desire. My head is spinning for love of you; I can't write about it any more.

Your letter of February 18th arrived yesterday, and as you can imagine from the above, I was tickled to death to get your two photos. I have to admit that I like the one the photographer took better than the Photomaton; man still has something over the machine. I can see, of course, that ~~made~~ you pose a bit, but the main reason I prefer it is because you have your hair down over the back of your neck. I have always preferred this way to the more business-like coiffure, possibly because it makes the back of your neck seem so long. Anyway, I like both of them because they're you, and it's about time you reminded me of how lovely you really are, young lady. Don't the "Advice to the Lovelorn" columns say anything about that? You will note that your letter made very good time - only ten days. Maybe now that you are connected with Pan-Am you will be able to find out when the planes with mail are leaving. I think I am going to be able to send most of my letters through with Ferry pilots now. The young man - pardon me; gentleman - who took it said that he would call on you in person, and I hope you will let me know whether he did or not. Now that I have your picture, all I will have to do is show it to them and they will probably all want to call on you. It's a good thing I'm not of a jealous nature - or at least not very - so I'm not going to let myself worry about your finding another man you like better. You said in your letter that I was still free to back out if I wanted to. Well, I'm giving you fair warning that I don't intend to back out and I don't want you to either. I want you and me to become us, and the quicker the better.

I have been thinking over the \$940 or so fare on the plane over here, and I have decided that since after this war, money will not

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be worth much anyway, so we might just as well spend it now and worry about the children's education when there are some children. I have just received a letter from the bank at home, and it appears that there is approximately \$4500 in the bank, exclusively of savings bonds. I think we might just as well use that - or such part of it as is necessary - to get togetherwith. Besides your fare, you will have to ship your trunks by boat, and that will cost something, and you will have to buy a lot of things for our house, like dishes, sheets, silver, and so on, so I imagine we had better count on an expenditure of about \$2000 altogether. That, obviously, doesn't count the money which you have borrowed to live on during this period, and which you rightly want to repay as soon as possible. I suppose that will be another \$1000 roughly, so you see that we will be able to swing it all right and still have something to put into savings bonds. That will mean a moderate amount of economy after we are married, but you always seemed like a very careful person with the shekels, regardless of what some other people may think. So don't worry about the money. I have been wondering if you would like some now? I realize that you would probably hate to ask me now, but it is still a long time until your birthday. On second thought, I won't wait for you to ask; I'll send something on account right now. Enclosed find.....

Honey, I didn't get any letter between that of January 19th and February 18th. I don't believe for a moment that you went a whole month without writing, especially when you were just complaining that I didn't write enough. Except for your statement that you are attending a class at Pan-Am, I don't know what it is all about. I suppose other letters will come in later and tell me. Wouldn't ~~it~~ it be wonderful if you could wangle a free passage for yourself out of this job? Although I don't believe they are sending any ladies at all to Africa. But don't, in Heaven's name, let them ship you off to Latin America somewhere, unless that would bring you closer here. At least, that would be one way of getting a passport out of Ma Shipley, and maybe it would be easier to prevail on some nice Consul in South America to validate it for Africa without prior reference to the Department. If you can arrange to have some one carry mail over here for you, or possibly have it sent with the company's mail, that might save lots of time. We have several planes a week through here in all directions, but only a few of them carry mail.

My only onliest darling, I love you so much. I am sorry that I haven't written more often, and I will really try very hard to write at least once a week. Not to excuse myself, but you have no idea how much we have to do here now, and what a small force we have to do it with. For example, I fully intended to write you ~~in a letter~~ yesterday afternoon (Saturday), right after your sweet letter arrived. I came down and found there was a telegram to be sent in cipher. I enciphered it. Half way through, Mr. Jester blithely brought in another and longer one. I finished it at 6:45, and just had time to go upstairs, bathe, and go out to a boring dinner. So far today, I have decoded two telegrams, both of them fortunately brief. I never stop work in the evening until six or later, and you will recall that our day started at 8:00 a.m. instead of nine, as at Lisbon. There frequently just isn't time for days on end for letters, and I owe the family and everyone else a letter by this time. Da capo (for first sentence only).

Speaking of letters, I got a very interesting one from Elsbeth

Smith, written before she got my letter about us. It seems that she has fallen in love with a man 51 years old, who is married and who has a daughter about her age. His wife is an invalid, and they have decided to wait for her to die, since he can't get a divorce with any decency. Now isn't that a pretty pickle? I think it is a pure case of sex starvation. Beth was just a girl who needed a man very badly, and none others offering, she has picked up with this elderly gentleman. I don't blame either one of them, but it seems to bad for a girl of thirty to get tied up with a man as old as that. Poor Beth wants nothing more than a home and babies, but I'm afraid she isn't any closer to them than she was before. Nevertheless, I hope she will have the maximum of happiness from this strange liaison.

Mentioning babies reminds me that you wrote in one letter that you thought I wasn't very enthusiastic about the idea of having kids. I guess you thought that because, on that final fatal Friday, you said that you hoped that we wouldn't have any children for the first year, and I said, No, indeed, and maybe not for two or three. Well, I didn't mean for you to think that I wasn't interested at all. Far from it. Do you know that, unless we do something about it, the noble name of Krieg is going to die out? at any rate, as far as my family is concerned. And furthermore, a person as lovely as you in every way owes the world something children to carry on the beauty. We will overlook the possibility that the children might look like me. That is one risk we will have to face with courage and fortitude. I would think two children about the maximum that one could handle in the Foreign Service. What do you think?

Darling, it wasn't until I had mailed the last letter and was getting ready to put yours of January 19th back into the drawer that I found your lovely little poem which starts, "A thrill of exaltation fills the soul ...". It is amazing that a person like you can be both beautiful and intelligent and write poetry, too. And such poetry! Just reading it thrills me to the core and ties me to you by yet another bond. You know, sweetheart, that I still carry your other poem with me always, in the pocket over my heart? It is getting a wee bit yellow already, but I can still read, "THIS IS THE CULMINATION AND THE TRIUMPH". Those words have entered into my innermost being. They are blazed into my soul. They are the words that told me that you really loved me. When I read that I knew that it was no passing fancy, no fickle whim. When I realized the import of them, my mind shook and staggered. It was a horizon too far, too remote to realize. The wonder of this miracle has never and will never become commonplace to me. I have never been so sure of anything else in my life as that I love you and that we will eventually and must eventually find our only happiness with each other. Do you want to hear it again? I love you.

I was very surprised and pleased to find that you are related to the Crawfords in Newark. They are a very well-known and respected family. Old Col Crawford made a sizable pile purchasing Belgian horses in Europe and selling them in Ohio. Bert, the present head of the family, has kept the money together and has been County Commissioner for several terms. Young Bert is a good friend of Janie's; they went around in the same crowd. The present generations are as tight as the paper on the wall; that is the most I have ever heard said against them. Bert Jr. is in the army now. I believe he is an engineer (Purdue grad.) by profession. How closely are you related to them?