

IN REPLY REFER TO

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Lagos, Nigeria

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My darling,

I have spent half of the hour I intended to use in writing this letter in looking over some of your old letters more comfort and inspiration. I found them, as I always do, in the limited contact we are allowed to have with each other. The written word is a pretty poor substitute for what we want, but it is certainly better than nothing. It is already 6:40, and Mac is upstairs playing mournful music on his accordian, which fits is beautifully with my mood of quiet melancholy. You are my only thought and my only desire, my dearest love. Sometimes I miss you violently, as when I was writing you a few weeks ago; at other times, the longing is quieter, but always it hurts. Every day I find myself making plans about what we will do when you come here or I go home. It's fun, in a way, but so poor compared to the reality. Every night when I come home from a party, I wonder whether you would have enjoyed it. I think about how you could improve the cooking if you were here, of the fun we would have meeting each other's friends if we were home; of how proud I would be to walk down the street with you, and know that all the world was envying me. These are glorious dreams, darling; we must and will make them come true.

Well, our Consul General, Mr. Shantz, has arrived. Due to his high rank, he didn't have much trouble in getting on a plane to come here from England, and after arriving in Bathurst, he spent considerable time in each important place along the way, looking over the situation and familiarizing himself with the district. He spent some time with Andy in Accra, but I haven't had a chance to ask him what they talked about or what if any decision was made regarding the division of functions between the two offices. He came on Monday morning, and Mr. Jester got the time of the plane arrival wrong and didn't leave the office in time. Consequently, there was no one on hand to meet him, and he must have felt a little surprised and a trifle at sea. However, that was the only hitch. The same evening, Mr. Jester had all the members of what he likes to call "our official family" at his house for dinner. Mr. Shantz was probably tired, and was rather quiet throughout the evening. That was the only time I have talked with him at all, for up to the present he has been spending most of his time making official calls in company with Mr. Jester, and when he was not doing that, he was reading over the files to see what we have been doing here. I therefore haven't formed any very clear idea of his personality yet, and have no idea what he will be like to work with. One thing is clear, though; he is going to leave much more responsibility to me and McSweeney than Mr.

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Jester has. He doesn't expect to bother with the routine of the office at all. Mac is going to take over the accounts, much to his disgust, and I will do some of the routine commodity reports and other things of that nature. It will be a welcome change; no doesn't like to be an office boy all the time. I will tell you more about Shantz as I get to know him better.

The mail service has been terrible recently. The last batch to arrive was May 21st, and there is an ugly rumor around that air mail has been suspended. PAA doesn't know anything about it, and I hope it isn't true. We do not know what the situation will be ~~before~~ when the change-over of the Clipper service is effected, as it will be in a short while. In a little while, we will only be having two or so a month here, if that, and we aren't quite sure how the air mail will work. Theoretically, it ought to work out all right, but who knows? Could you possibly make arrangements to have your letters to me forwarded by company mail? The boys here get their mail pretty regularly, and there would be no trouble about my getting it at this end. I mean, of course, only ~~is~~ the eventuality that air mail is suspended. Maybe your boss would close one eye if you just addressed a letter to me, PAA Lagos. As I have said before, I know all the boys here and they would be glad to receive anything for me.

Now there is another possibility coming along. There is a fellow from Newark, Ohio, with PAA as a pilot, Bud Francis by name. Bud has just gone home on leave, and I urged him to see you at the airport if possible. Bud said that he would be glad to bring back any small items I needed from home, and so if you haven't got rid of the fountain pen et. al. yet, just pass them to Bud and I will be sure to get them. His leave will only last a month, so he says. I was simply green with envy when he left. He was going just the places I want most to go: Miami and Newark, Ohio. I certainly would have liked to step into his uniform and passport for a few days. It was excruciating. He may even get home in time for Janie's wedding. My last letter went on the same plane with Bud. It is a shame it has to go all the way to Washington and New York before it gets to you, but I hope my letters make fair time. This one will not be so fast, since I am not sure when the next plane will be leaving. The boys are of two minds on the subject. And before I get off the subject, if you ever meet anyone coming to Accra instead of Lagos, you can give him my mail in another envelop addressed to W. Stratton Anderson, Jr., *American Consul*, American Consulate, Accra. Andy will forward anything for me. I am sure Nielsen, ~~and~~ the Consular Agent in Freetown would also do the same, although I don't know him as well as I know Andy. So don't lose any chances to let your love-sick and lonesome man in Lagos know that you still love him (and I sure hope you still do!)

If everything goes according to plan, you ought to get your unpleasantness over with this month, and then it will be time to apply for a passport. Very soon now I will have to furnish you with a letter to the Passport Agent in Miami, who you can see in the first place. He will then refer your case to Washington, and I will give you another letter for Mrs. Shipley. Mr. Jester will be leaving here at the end of this month, and I will give him a letter for you. If he stays in Miami at all, you must do everything possible to make a good impression on him, and then he can go and see Mrs. Shipley when he

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goes to Washington. I hope that may pull you through all right as far as the passport goes. The transportation will be another problem yet again, and I'm afraid there isn't much I can do about that except to put up the money. And, as everybody knows, money doesn't count for much in this priority-ridden world. Perhaps when the new schedule goes into effect, things will loosen up a bit. I sure hope so. Anyway, you are on the spot, ready to leave at a moment's notice if anything develops.

Thursday, June 11th

Darling, your fine letter of May 25th via Captain Bledsoe arrived today and he is coming here for drinks this evening and will take this one back with him. The Security Police took it away from him when he arrived in Lagos, and I spent about an hour on the phone chasing it around among the different censors. I finally caught it, and the Sergeant in charge said he was taking it to the civilian censors. He did, they stamped it without opening, and then he very kindly brought it to the Consulate. I'm afraid he will be annoyed if he catches this one, but I can't resist the temptation to send it, because it should make much better time than by diplomatic pouch.

It is so good to hear from you, especially after such a long time of waiting. The plane came in last night, but had nothing but diplomatic, army and company mail on board. It is very discouraging. However, I know you have promised to love me forever and to wait as long as may be necessary, in spite of all the people who try to persuade you that it isn't possible. Those are my sentiments exactly, only there aren't any girls here and consequently no one ever tries to disillusion me. They just smile sweetly, and I know they think I am in for a rude awakening when one day I get a letter announcing that you have finally decided that a man in Miami is worth two in Lagos. I'm not really worried, although the thought of all the temptations you are exposed to isn't comforting. But I have complete and absolute faith in you and our dream. I know you believe in it too, and I am sure that neither of us will ever be untrue to it. Every month that passes means one month less to wait, although it's poor satisfaction since we don't know how many more there are going to be.

I was just thinking how our case must look to others. It must seem very strange that you should fall in love with me under the circumstances, and that after knowing me for only three months you should go through all you are going through. On paper it just doesn't seem possible. But it's ~~true~~ just the same. I couldn't explain to anyone how I feel towards you, nor would I want to. I want very much to be able to tell you, though. I want to be able to say "I adore you, my own" fifty times a day, each time sandwiched in between a couple of "I love you"'s. I do say it frequently now, and if you were only here where I could close your lovely eyes with kisses, I would say it much oftener. After all, your picture never replies. It never ~~ax~~ returns my kiss. It's a sad place when your not here. There's a very great gap in my life, waiting for you to fill it.

And now, dearest, I'm off to pick up the laconic Capt. Bledsoe, who could only say, when I asked about you, "Oh, she's fine and healthy!"

I love you right down to the last grasp, right down to the bottom. Yours William