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L-206 p7/4

Dearest Williamlove,

Letter 35 came to-day, pleasing my letter-hungry soul. I love you. Be thankful I am telling you about it, instead of making you grope around in the dark wondering whether or not I do. Because how could you ever tell I loved you unless I told you? The fact that I brooded over that same love in its initial stages, kept it safe and warm and isolated from harm for several months, was unwilling to part with it even though I knew it was (or thought it was) doomed and pointless, risked and hurt and went slightly mad about it, waited and was patient and thought about other things (when I'm not at all the type) to protect it, worked like mad and trampled all over my stupidly retiring and introvert-ish soul to see it a successful and fulfilled love- all that would hardly give you an inkling, would it, darling? So boom, tra-la tra -la! I find it necessary to confess, my dear Mr. Krieg, that I love and admire you most deeply!

What a remarkable thing it all is, Williamwilliam. Some day when we are old and boringly repetitive we can amuse ourselves by making our grandchildren sit patiently and listen attentively while we tell them how grandpoppa and grandmamma went through an elegantly romantic sort of hellonearth so that finally they could be, as the polite phrase puts it, united at last. How staunch and true both grandmother and grandfather were (omitting, of course, the parts where grandmother got desperate and went off to lonely spots in order to do some unromantic and ignoble howling,) how delightfully incredible it all seemed to anyone with an ounce of common sense! Shall we tell them about all the homely philosophers who reminded us how much simpler it would be to go off and forget it all and marry Joe Black from next door? Or Josephine Black the beautiful War-worker who was so conveniently near at hand? Well, why not? Because fundamentally I'd be very proud of ourselves, were it not for the inner conviction that even if I had had any marked desires to go off and forget it all, I couldn't have done so, not to save my fair white neck I couldn't have! I don't believe in heroism, for that very reason. One merely finds oneself in a situation, and whether one likes it or not, one reacts. But maybe to impress our grandchildren we can gang up on them and have a neat, watertight story full of heroism all ready for them by the time they have attained years enough to be able to appreciate our great worth. Suppose Nathan Hale had come out with some remark like "O.K., shoot- I got myself in this mess and now there's no way out, so what's the percentage in worrying about it?"; whereas my only regret is that... etc." is so much prettier, and what could he lose? So angelpie, let's be heros!

Anyway, who wants to be an old stickinthemud. Nobody ever got bacon for breakfast that way. Not even us. Just contemplate the horrible situation we would be in if we hadn't been big and bold enough to come right out with the fact that we loved each other (well, finally!) and then big and bold enough to do something about it! Frankly,

L-206 p 2/4

the thought of being without the picture of you in my mind absolutely terrifies me. Because without that thought, my dear little mind would be a complete blank, a snowy waste. That comes of over-specialization. But honestly William my love, since we have started out in life so fine and so brave with pennants flying in the breeze, do let's continue! We both have a mild tendency toward staying back, being conservative, thinking we are licked before we start, trying out the frankfurters on the dog before we risk getting ptomaine ourselves- haven't we? I don't imagine we'll ever lose the tendency completely, but for heavens sake let's try like heck to forget our dear little inhibitions and follow up our impulses as much as possible. Just so it doesn't carry us as far as putting ice down people's backs at parties, it's usually a good thing.

What do you suppose started me out on that train of thought? I don't know, but I do know that I've thought about it a lot myself. Every time I have to go and talk to someone in order to ask them a favor I go through something which resembles growing pains, to a certain extent. The horror of it all, I say to myself, here I am about to barge in on somebody's sacred privacy with some nitwit scheme I've cooked up! Me! Gosh! Whereas if I were without inhibitions I would saunter calmly up to the antechamber thinking how glad the personage would be to see a bright young face instead of the gray and somber visages which surround him. Oh well, some fine day I'll be able to do just that, some day I'll have completely rid myself of every last inhibition and each final qualm.

I can't seem to get over this philosophical mood. So I'll have to get down to relating some facts: the story thus far is that my unfortunate conviction that Finch would do nothing for me was just as true and sound as it could be. I went up to his cubby hole near the Battery in New York, found him very pleasant and sweet but completely negative as regards passage to Africa. At the time I didn't know anything about the Norwegian vessel, but he didn't say anything about those either, merely saying that he knew of no other way of getting to Africa. So a resounding boo to Mr. Finch. I then went to the New York office of the War Shipping Administration to have one final fling with them. A very pleasant and companionable gent talked with me (for half an hour, only fancy!) and told me I had no chance of getting on an American boat. Whatever gave you the impression that it was easy to get on them? Well, to get back to the story, I then went around to the Belgian Embassy, confirmed my suspicion that it was possible to get from Santo Antonio do Zaire, or Sezaire (whichever name you prefer goes, apparently) by boat to Matadi in the Belgian Congo, and ~~from~~ thence to Leopoldville. A pleasant old gentleman told me all about his twenty happy years in the Belgian Congo, and said that Leopoldville was a perfectly fine place for a young woman to stay and wait for transportation, although he still liked it better the way it used to be in the days when man-eating Jabberwocks roamed the streets. I got my Belgian visa in twenty minutes without even mentioning when and where my great-aunt Mathilda was born, much to my surprise. Then I tackled the Portuguese Consulate, who indicated irritably that they might consider cabling over for authorization after I had indicated that I had transportation out of Portugal, visas to the countries I intended visiting after Portugal and its colonies, and something like a million in cash and diamonds the size of hens eggs dripping

L-206 p3/4

out of all my pockets. And plenty of time, of course. Well, I went down to the Steamship Agency, James Elwell and Co., where I knew I had a firm friend in the person of a young man who handles that sort of thing. He said the thing to do was for him to wire to the Portuguese office of the company and see if reservations out of Lisbon could be had, although he knew that the standard answer is "wait till you get here". But from this kind young man's experience, that is the only way you can get Portuguese visas from this side. You see the thing is that the famous International Police in Lisbon goes around to the Steamship Company and asks if a certain menina Philinda Jones has seen about reservations out of Lisbon, and after inquiring into their files, the company's agent replies "yes, she has." So in theory they grant the visa. But, says the young man from James Elwell, we have a sailing around October 20th, and then not one again till the end of November, which makes a long wait in between, so if you find you can get a sailing earlier on the lines of our competitors, please don't let that deter you from going sooner, because we can always cancel the reservations you made (or asked for) in order to get the Portuguese visa. I thought it was very nice of him to help me out. Well, in any case I am waiting till I get a letter he said he was going to write saying that he had requested space out of Lisbon for me, and then I am going to the Portuguese Consulate armed with that. Then I shall wait and wait and wait like mad for something to turn up in the way of a Portuguese visa. When I get the visa I shall buy my ticket and go. Nothing shall stop me. I don't give a d--n if it is the hardest trip I've ever taken or ever will take, because I want to get there and nothing on God's green and pleasant earth can stop me. After I left James Elwell's I sent you a cable saying that I was going to apply for a Portuguese visa and come via Leopoldville and Angola. Wait, I forgot to say that the reason I didn't even attempt the route you suggested in letter number 34, the one via Bolama, is that the young man at James Elwell's said that only small freighters with no accommodations for lady passengers stopped there. If I meet up with any such situations on the way, I'll just take them in my stride, but I'd just as soon avoid them if I can do so ahead of time. And also I forgot to say that before enquiring in New York about the Angola-Leopoldville route, I wrote to Mr. Jester and asked him if it were possible, and he wrote back saying it was. A few days later he wrote me an air-mail special delivery letter saying that he might just possibly be able to swing a job for me at the Consulate in Lagos, which might just possibly carry with it some sort of official priority. He said he would tell me more as he heard more, and asked for my qualifications for a job. They are meager, if you discount my mighty brain. But anyway I wrote back post haste and told him all. I don't expect much from it, but I do think it was very lovely of him to go to all the trouble and annoyance of seeing about it. In any case, as soon as that Portuguese visa comes through, I am as good as on my way. Whereupon I shall be anywhere from a week to a month in Lisbon, then two weeks or so on my way from there, then who knows how long in Leopoldville. I was wondering to-day after I read your letter number 35, whether or not you could somehow manage to pay my passage from Leopoldville to Lagos ahead of time, with those six hundred dollars you spoke of? Or transfer them to the Banque National ~~xxx~~ du Congo Belge, or whatever it's called? Not knowing how long I will be on my way, I don't know how much money I shall be forced to spend in just living. I should like to have plenty with me, to flash in the faces of reluctant officials here and there, and to pay hotel bills. Before I go, I suppose I shall have to surrender and ask you for some more, although I don't

L-206 p 4/4

like the idea. However, you can be as sure as you would be of yourself, that I shall not squander any money you give me, but on the contrary save as much as possible of it to spend on a home for Krieg and Philinda, and for the initial days of their marriage. Nonetheless, I should feel infinitely better were I to start this trip off with a good supply of cash, even if I later found I could save the whole amount. I think the passage from Baltimore to Leopoldville ought to cost something like seven or eight hundred dollars, and there are many things which I should buy and send over ahead or after me.

My goodness, I'm voluble to-night. It's been a long time since I've written you such a long letter. The idea of finally going over there, of eventually seeing you, is a rather intoxicating one and I'm grievously afraid it has gone to my head. But sweet, it isn't as though you didn't know I loved you and wanted you all this infinite time, is it? William, if ever I get a chance to tell you all the corny and lovely things I've wanted to tell you all these months (or is it aeons?) four meager pages of type will be ridiculously insufficient to hold all I will have to say. Imagine the stupendously foolish thing it would be to try to crowd a year's deepest thoughts into a book, or an encyclopaedia? But people say "I love you" in three words. The whole proposition is impossible, it can't be done. I can't tell you how completely miserable you have made me, and how infinitely glad I am that you did.

Yes, my pet, I love you, and no handsome co-pilots are going to come between us. Hell and high water hasn't, so I don't exactly see what an addle-pated celestial truck driver could do, even were he an advertisement for Arrow collars. Anyway, as far as I am concerned you are the handsomest man that ever walked this earth. And that, strangely enough, is the absolute and unvarnished truth. I think you are absolutely wonderful, and that also is as true as is the fact that I was twenty-five last September 2nd. In another twenty five years I shall be fifty, and the mother of two or three very nice young people who will astonish their father and mother with wild tricks that we will be sure never existed when we were their age, such as falling in love with people one only knew a month or two, or maybe three. This younger generation! That's what we'll say, and be very smug about how dreadfully sensible we were about Things, when we were young.

Deary me, I'm getting sleepy. Goodnight, darling.

Philinda

P.S. On second thought it would seem better, if such a thing were possible, to transfer the money or a part of it which you have there in Lagos, to a bank in Leopoldville, because were you to buy a passage for me on one particular line it would then be impossible for me to seize what opportunities I might have to go on another line sooner. I understand there are lines other than PAA, although I don't know whether they go to Lagos. If one could only get accurate information!