

DEC - 8 Rec'd

761 Scotland Road
Orange, New Jersey
November 12, 1942L-217
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Dear William,

Letter number 40 arrived this morning, to my glee. What a complicated situation! Apparently one cannot be sure of any route unless one has tried it. In the same mail came a letter from Mr. Jester announcing that the State Department would be pleased to see me for a personal interview regarding a job. Yesterday your cable came saying that five hundred dollars had been sent and that Jester was to be consulted re the matter of a Shantz recommendation. So I have written to Mr. Jester saying I would be down there in Washington soon quick like a bunny rabbit. Only not, of course, in those words. I had previously written to him to thank him for what was apparently fruitless efforts to land me a job, adding 1) that I wanted a job whether or not it entailed transportation, because I definitely didn't want to be idle, and that I still hoped that there would be a job when I got there, and 2) that I wanted if possible to see him before I left, to thank him for his noble if unsuccessful attempts. So now I shall be going down there 1) to see about the job, and 2) to see Mr. Jester, for the heck of it. I am a firm believer in being pessimistic until the thing happens, so I don't want to rouse false hope in my own boozum regarding air transportation.

Well, as indicated in my cable of a week ago, the Portuguese came through with a bang. Or at least the American Consulate General, Lisbon (in the person of Mr. "Cazicheck" Parry) did. From your recent letter, I was afraid for a day or two that Parry had already left Lisbon, and that my cable to him asking that he influence the International Police in my favor would fall on an empty desk. But in less than three weeks my visa came through, much to the surprise of the ugly-tempered young lady bureaucrat in the Port. Consulate, who asked me in wonderment if I were a friend of the Great in Lisbon, because she had hardly ever seen a visa come through so soon. I told her humbly that I was not a friend of the Great, but that God was on my side. Also, let it here be noted, I did not remove "o meu chapau", as was ~~xxxx~~ advised by the annoying sign in the Port. Consulate. I entered coiffed, stayed coiffed, and left coiffed. But left with a bright and shiny new visa. As for the renewal of my passport, the State Departments Passport Agency in New York seemed to take it with ~~a~~ surprise that I should worry about its renewal at all. They said I should come back in a week or two when it was not so near to thirty days before I might sail - if you see what I mean! Well, I did and left, preparing to come back in two weeks.

So I thought I'd start
writing via Pouch. ↗

Something romantickal and funny happened: about two letters-to-you before this I decided that the mail room at Dinner Key might no longer be a good way of sending letters to you. Only I addressed them improperly, with only one envelope, to the State Department. The one envelope was still PAA, however, so that when the State Department in righteous protest sent them back to the only return address they saw, it

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(which was box somethingorother, Miami, Fla.) the poor letter arrived on the desk of a lady named Anna May Simmons, accompanied by a notice from the State Department that the proper way of sending mail to American Foreign Service men was quite different from the one which I had employed. Now Miss Simmons is a secretary to some man in the Accounting Department of PAA there in Miami, and I never heard of her, nor she of me. However, sensing that something serious was involved, this Miss Simmons read the instructions donated by the State Dep't., and saw at a glance what should be done. Wasting no time, she opened the letter, read enough (or perhaps, who knows?- maybe morethan enough,) to learn that it had been written by one who signed herself "PHilinda", and who resided at 761 Scotland Road, Orange, New Jersey. Generous as can be, this Miss Simmons realized that the cause of remance would be furthered if she sent the letter back to the State Department with the proper addresses, the proper envelopes, and the proper stamps. Then she wrote me a letter, putting on the envelope just this:

Philinda
761 Scotland Road
Orange, New Jersey

Because I had not mentioned any other name. She was quite palsy walsy in her letter to me (although in a nice, motherly way) and quietly wished me good-luck at the end of the letter. She said it would be advisable, in future, to put a return address on the envelope. Of course I immediately wrote back thanking her, and inclosing fifteen cents in stamps, and the details of why I had used a PAA envelope. I thought it was sweet of her, and I hope you eventually got the letter.

To turn to vulgar financial matters, the five hundred dollars will be invested in travelers checks. I understand perfectly the restrictions on exporting and importing dollars in bills, having carefully explained it to people in English, Spanish, and French while in Miami. In addition, my father has just announced that he would contribute the sum of aproximately seven hundred dollars by way of a wedding present, with which I shall purchase clothes, household goods and (perhaps) foodstuffs. Unfortunately the more I think the more I think of that simply must be bought, and the more I shop around the more I realize that prices are high and going higher. Howsomer, I too have Scotch blood in me, and it revolts my soul to pay out. Except for clothes, I am sorry to say; which in all fairness I must say I enjoy buying enormously. When I first started to work I was under the impression that the thought of three or four days of hard working being necessary for the purchase of one dress would give me the fear of the Lord, and leave me with a lasting feeling that gold was hard to get and hard to hold. Well, in a way it did. In a way it didn't faze me. I thought "haha!" this is my money, tralala, and I am going out to spend it as soon as I'm off work. So I used to save a portion for the rent, and a portion for food, then go out and look for a bonnet, thinking happily that no one could hold it against me because it was my own money. Naturally, retribution was swift. Came two or three weeks before payday, and there was only a little, a very little left! Several days or a week of hamburgers and a glass of milk is too much for the best of women, so I repented, and realized that I had been right in the first place, if only partially: Working may not make you realize the importance of being frugal but it does make

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make you realize that you can't buy everything on onetwentyfive a month. Well, all this has been a digression. I shall buy what I think we need at the lowest possible prices, and try to have as much left over as possible, when I arrive in Lagos. I have consulted the minions of Mr. Howard Fyfe, and they have advised me as to what to do about shipping things. Meanwhile, I have plenty of money.

I was worried, but Very worried, when I heard of the African Offensive. But hopefully, I thought that the State Department wouldn't have been so free with their passports if they hadn't thought everything was going to be relatively all right. Now that everything is public, and they are still considering the possibility of sending me to Lagos as an employee of the Gov't., I am reassured as allheck. After all, Africa is a big continent, and what happens in the north may not have repercussions in the central and southern parts. For myself I don't give a darn, because I have been in nasty situations before, where the only effect they had on me was a slight loss of weight (usually appreciated by me) and the necessity of writing reassuring letters to my family. But the State Dep't doesn't always regard the situations in the same easy light that I do, so I was afraid that they might rescind and say I couldn't go. Which, not to be dramatic, would have slightly annoyed me. In fact, it would have just about killed me.

On the home front, all is quiet. My whole life being wrapt up in getting to Africa, I wouldn't really notice if anything were going wrong or not. According to my family, there is a shortage of farm labor (they are fascinated by pigs, chickens, and the other accoutrements of farms). My absolutely incredibly wonderful niece Philinda Duane Campbell (concerning whom, as you may have noticed, I am absolutely unbiassed) is getting more beautiful and adorable every time I see her. Sometimes I wonder if I am not just a trifle, just a soupcou influenced in my high opinion of her by the family ties that bind her to me, but all those foolish doubts come to a deserved end when I am with her, administering orange juice and Pabulum and the other "gourmandises" of childhood, or changing her clothes, or putting her to bed of an evening. She actually is the Wonder Child, and I have photographs to prove it. Tens, hundreds, thousands of them! because her father (my brother, who I never suspected of having so many hidden talents as a father) is an extremely ardent amateur photographer, and has photographic records of every twenty-fifth second of his daughter's life, from the time she appeared two and a half years ago weighing just three pounds two or three ounces (unfortunately very premature) to the present, when she is fully and amply equipped for life with startling ly blondhair, all sorts of moods, a tendency to moisten her diapers, a good appetite, a canny vocabulary which understands exactly where the cookies are kept and doesn't quite catch the meaning of words such as "Time for Bed, Philinda", or "Mustn't play with the fife, Darling". A more remarkable niece no woman ever had.

I keep digressing. The facts are that I love you and want you, that distance and time have had no effect on my love for you, that I was right as rain when I told you in Lisbon about 13 months ago that I knew I loved you sincerely and truly and always, no matter how much time intervened, would keep on loving you. I'd tell more, but the advice to the lovelorn columns say it's bad to.

Philinda