

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO. 42



AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Lagos, Nigeria; November 13, 1942

Dearest,

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I have let this go until the last moment in the hope of receiving a letter from you, but I'm afraid that something has happened to them on the way. Probably ran afoul of the Army in some way or other. If you write any more letters from the States, send them via the Department. I have just received two letters from Newark dated October 27th; your last was written October 13th, and I am sure you must have written to me in the meantime.

We haven't received any answer from the Department yet regarding the possibility of appointing you as a clerk in this office. We did, however, get some very bad news this morning in the form of a telegram stating that a certain Andrew Lynch is being appointed Consul here, and that one of the Vice Consuls here should proceed to Accra permanently. So poor Mac will be leaving us in the near future, much to his and my intense regret. We have been a very ~~368~~ pair. He is practical and makes up for my lack of common sense in household affairs, and he has been a good man in his work. We have all these groceries and liquor which we bought together and will have to split up, and we have just increased the pay of the house boys to a degree which will be rather difficult for me to meet alone. Our living expenses have been greatly reduced by living together, and we have never had any serious argument or disagreement all the time he has been here. I hate terribly to see him go, and an additional cause of regret is that I had planned to have him be our best man when we were married. Of course, things like this are to be expected in the Service, but they are hard and unpleasant when they happen just the same. I shall miss him very much indeed. Now it is more important than ever for you to arrive as soon as possible. If you get here before Lynch, we should be able to get the exclusive use of the apartment over the Consulate, or at least of a flat somewhere. I will feel the lack of your company much more now, because while Mac is here, although I miss you all the time, I don't have so much opportunity to brood about it.

All this leads up to the eternal fact that I love you very much. It may not be news, but it certainly has become one of the eternal verities. Sometimes the sense of pain at separation is so acute that I catch my breath and feel as if I would be unable to breathe unless I could reach out and touch you or hold you in my arms. Darling, it will be a wonderful day when you arrive.

I am worrying at the moment about the revalidation of your passport. As soon as I heard the news of the North African show, I

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began to wonder whether this would affect your departure. I could only hope that between the time when you sent the telegram and the time I received it, you had been in to see the passport agent in New York and received your revalidation. Since this will probably not arrive until the end of November, I hope that you will already be on the way, and I am sending a copy to Lisbon in case you miss it in the States.

I had a delightful letter from your father yesterday. For some strange reason or other, it made me love you more, or perhaps I should say it made me feel closer to you than I had. He told me lots of interesting things, about how you had never been spanked as a child because you always wanted to do the right thing as soon as it was explained to you. Although he didn't say so, I guess there is a double moral: 1. He is sure that you are doing the right thing in coming out to me, since you would not do so if it weren't right; and 2. I won't need to spank you. As a matter of fact, I always did think you were a model woman and a perfect wife; that may have had something to do with my falling in love with you, who knows? I don't recall any times when I thought you ought to be disciplined, and besides I don't believe in such things anyway. I fear I shall be a too indulgent husband, and shall probably get the reputation of being hen-pecked. I want to say right now in advance that I would consider it a pleasure to be pecked by you, and I hope it happens soon and often. I love you too much and have too weak a will to want to try to prevent you from doing anything you want, including buying hats - once in a while. I will spend the rest of my life being grateful to you for the great gift you are bestowing upon me, and nothing I can do to make you happy would be too much. I have already written a reply, which turned out to be quite a long effort. I had intended to write to you yesterday, and to write a letter home today, but instead I spent all my time writing to your Pappa.

There have ~~no~~ been no new developments in the travel situation from this end since I wrote last week. Due to the military operations in progress, no transport is available by land plane at the moment, but the situation should come back to normal before you arrive anywhere in this vicinity. Mr. and Mrs. Price of Lagos came out on the ship we tried to get you on. They said there were five vacant luxurious passenger accommodations; they got on the boat because Price has priority as a Nigerian police officer. They made the trip from New York to Takoradi in 10 or 12 days. I was pretty mad when I heard that, because I felt that the young man at the War Shipping Administration could have put you on if he had really wanted to stretch a point. He could have put you down as the wife of the American Vice Consul in Lagos, and I'll bet no one would ever have questioned it. It certainly is a shame to waste good shipping space when there are so many people who want to go. The mere fact that passports have been issued indicated that the State Department thinks the travel is in the national interest, otherwise they wouldn't issue them. It was a poor show all around.

Much, much love, my dearest darling, and safe passage.

