

761 Scotland Road  
Orange, New Jersey  
November 24, 1942

Dearest William,

DEC 19 REC'D

L-223 P 1/5

Hello butch. Hello darling. This is going to be a report on the activities of Philinda in Washington. She was very active, to put it mildly. In fact she jumped around like a rabbit from cabbage patch to cabbage patch, going from one government bureau to another, getting lost in the incredibly intricate mazes of administrative buildings, getting and surrendering identification badges in mass-production fashion, seeing people till her brain was numb and her tongue (that's not how you spell it, but to save my neck I can't remember how you really do,) was the only part of her that could still wiggle. This unusual activity makes it practically impossible for me to remember all the people I did see and exactly what I did do, so parts must be omitted.

It suffices to say that I arrived Monday afternoon and went straight to the Wardman Park, where my pop had reserved a room, thoughtfully. I called up Mr. Jester asoon as I had unpacked my small suitcase. Mr. Jester claimed to be glad to hear that I had arrived, and invited me to dinner with him and Mrs. J. for that night. Monday was too far spent for action of a business nature. So, at six o'clock I sallied forth dressed in my best and bought 18 red and white carnations to take to Mrs. Jester as a peace offering, and walked a few blocks up Connecticut Avenue to their apartment house, which is an enormous pile complete with drug store and built-in post office sub-station. They have a nice apartment somewhere about five degrees north or south of the building's equator, luckily only a few miles from the building's main port of entry. I think they copped it by finding out ahead of time when some of their friends were going to leave Washington, because apartment-hunting isn't the simple matter it once was in Washington. Mr. Jester hadn't arrived yet, so Mrs. J. and I had a nice long talk about Lagos, and after he arrived, some more nice long talk about Lagos over some martinis. We had a lovely time and liked each other very much. Then we went down to the building's restaurant, which was several degrees longitude away, and indulged in three tenderloin steaks and a good deal of innocent merriment. Afterwards, a return voyage to their apartment and the perusal of their photograph album. Mr. Jester had brought home the Lagos post report, which I read like a novel, fascinated. He had also arranged four interviews for me for the next day, Tuesday. Mrs. Jester said "poor girl, what a cheerful prospect! I hope you aren't sending her in to see Mr. Ehrhard". Naturally I asked why not, and who was he. Upon learning, and being informed that while Mr. Ehrhard has a rather gruff and perhaps (to the young and impressionable) terrifying manner, a heart of purest gold beats under neath the abovementioned manner, well, upon learning that, I quailed but resolved to walk straight ahead into the lion's den. And the following morning that's just what I did. First I saw Mr. Macatee, assistant chief of personnel, who enumerated the various reasons why the State department hadn't quite approved of hiring me. Apparently the main one was that you have been out there a year and they wouldn't like to hire me and send me over there and then have me



L-223 P  $\frac{2}{5}$ 

leave within a year if you did. There wasn't much answer to that one, because I kept thinking silently that you might get malaria and simply have to leave. But I did commit myself as far as to say that you liked Lagos pretty well, and that Mr. and Mrs. Jester seemed to think it was a good place to be once you got used to its little oddities. They certainly did seem to like it a lot. Well, Mr. Macatee told me to come back in an hour or so and talk to Mr. Ehrhard about the matter. So in an hour or two I walked boldly into the lion's den, without a single visible tremor, and cheerfully said GOOD morning, Mr. Ehrhard! He said HURRUMPH, but I saw at a glance that it was a case that could be worked into shape with the proper technique, and set to. Mr. Ehrhard and I got to talking, and he asked me how in heavens name I had managed to get a passport, three or four visas, and a way to get to Africa. I modestly replied that I didn't really know other than by persistence, but that I privately felt that God was on my side. Mr. Ehrhard laughed, and said hurrumph again, and said well they could use my abilities to advantage in the State Department. However, he added, the main difficulty in persuading some mysterious group of executives which he called "them" to hire me was that it was a well-known fact that I was going there to get married to a man who had been in Lagos a year all ready. "They" didn't want to waste all the money it would cost to get me over there if I didn't stay there. So at that point I did some hasty mental acrobatics and decided to offer to pay my own way if they would get me the priority to travel by air. Mr. Ehrhard said that changed things enormously, and that he could probably swing it on that basis. And, said he gruffly, he was for the idea. Then he said (and here came the moment of moments in my visit to Washington) that Krieg was a fine young man, one of the best they had! Wheeee!!! He kindly told me that I was to tell you that he congratulated both of us. Instead of reminding him that Emily Post says never to congratulate ladies because it sounds as though you thought it was wonderful the way the young lady had managed to hook her fiance in spite of everything, well, instead of reminding Mr. Ehrhard of that point in etiquette I said that I agreed wholeheartedly with him about your merits. He told me to come back the next day for the answer to the matter of employment, and away I went having bearded the lion in his den. In fact I thought the lion was a darling. Hurrumph! Then I went around to be interviewed by several other people who all sounded quite interested, among them your old friend Watsy. He took me to see several other people, one of whom had known you in Lagos. This other man and Watsy asked me what in heck W.L.Krieg had that the local yokels didn't and whatever made me want to go all the way to Africa just to see W.L.K.. They conceded that you were as good a man as another, but they claimed to suspect that I'd never seen you of a Sunday morning deep in the bitter heart of a hangover, and that if I had I wouldn't be so innocently enthusiastic. At that remark, they winked at each other. I haughtily replied that I had too seen you on a Sunday morning with a hangover, but they said that must have been after you had fixed yourself up. There the defense rested its case, not at all amused. I didn't tell them that I'd rather see you with a hangover, unfixed-up, than a regiment of Clark Gables in Flight-lieutenants uniforms.

I'll skip all the other interviews, as being too long and complicated to relate. I liked the State Department's offer best because they were willing to say they would hire me the very next day, whereas the other bureaus and agencies wanted to have me wait a week or some such time for a reply. I didn't think I could wait



L-223 p 3/5

that long for an answer, because the Steamship Agency had informed me that the Portuguese boat would sail on November 28th, which wouldn't have given me much time to prepare for the trip in case I hadn't gotten a job or didn't like the terms. Anyway, I felt that the State Dep't. was a bird in hand which was worth two in the bush.

So, the next day I did some more interviewing and finally went around to see Mr. Ehrhard again. He was out, so I waited in the antechamber. When he came in and saw me he shouted "Your'e in, Miss Jones!", an action which I thought was rather sweet, but which seemed to scandalize his secretary. He told me that "they" would pay me \$1800 a year but wouldn't pay my way over. So I acted as if there were nothing in the world I wanted to do more than pay my own fare, and added that movement in the direction of securing priority for air travel was indicated. He told me to see Miss Macdonald and Mr. Mackenna, the former about priority and the latter about a Special Passport. There I left him, and at the door as he ushered me out he asked me in a booming voice to cable him when we were married, ha ha ha!

Thereupon I plunged into the business at hand, and found to my horror that it would take about two weeks to get a new passport and the necessary visas, and anywhere from three to six weeks to get priority. Miss Macdonald, a gloomy and pessimistic soul (whom I afterwards asked Mr. Jester to work on with all his talents) said that she had never asked for priority for a woman to Africa, although they had never had any trouble getting women priority for air travel to England. So there I was faced with a wait that might turn out to be as long or longer than the time necessary for a trip by Portuguese ship. I figured that the expense would be about even, since I would have to pay out about six or seven hundred for passage by boat and plane, and spend large sums waiting around in Lisbon and other places. Whereas I can park at home this way, and on my friends if I have to wait in Miami long. One thing Miss Macdonald said rather cheered me: that there isn't so much wait for Africa as there is for South America. Strangely enough, I hadn't noticed it while I was there, but when I come to think about it I believe she is right. Still, I wanted to get out there as soon as possible, so the choice was a difficult one. If I went ahead to Portugal with my ordinary passport and a letter of appointment from the State Department, I could start right away and perhaps get there sooner with a fair amount of luck in making connections. The letter, I thought, would perhaps help me to get on a plane once in Portuguese Africa. As to your question in the cable concerning my chances of getting on a Plane in Lisbon on the strength of the letter: I feel sure it wouldn't do much good. PAA would say it wasn't at all the same thing as a priority, and even if the people at the Consulate General tried like mad, it would mean a delay when the only reason I would be doing it would be to avoid delays. Mr. Jester advised me to continue things with the State Dep't. But in order to get the last word from you, and also to inform you that I had gotten the job, I tried unsuccessfully to tell you my dilemma in twenty five words, and sent you that cable. Meanwhile I applied for the new Special Passport thinking that if you told me the old way was best I could cancel the new passport and the arrangements for priority. Gosh, this is complicated! Well, now I have good reason to believe I am the only man, woman, child, or dumb animal with one and a half passports to Africa. Also I feel very proud of myself, and have been gloating madly for a week. Of course it was really all Mr. Jester's



L-223 p 4

work. But I'm proud of my little self because I went through all that other passport business with a brave, happy smile, and then all the frantic circles connected with arranging for transportation the other way, and after that all the harrowing interviews in Washington (my feet took it on the chin all the way through), and came out on top all ready to go two times, much to the amazement of every one from Mr. Ehrhard down to my own dotting mamma. It was a great fight, boys, and the best man won. Now it's nice just to sit back and relax a while during this period when the State Department is doing all the spade work connected with passports, visas, priority, what have you. The only trouble is that I loathe, absolutely loathe all this waiting around idly when I want to be on my way to you. Well, I can see some more of my family and have more time to do all the buying there is to be done (Mrs. Jester scared me on that score by making all sorts of suggestions about things that are absolutely unobtainable and which I hadn't even thought about.) Also, I can practice up on my typing, which I privately hope nobody thinks I do extremely well. I didn't encourage them at all on that angle of my qualifications, so they went into it with their eyes open. When I want to write something important I can make it fairly presentable with a GREAT deal of care, allow me to assure you, Mr. Krieg. You probably don't believe me, you brute! Well, I don't blame you much. But you will believe me when I tell you that I used to type the weekly pouch lists (tremblingly) while I was in Lisbon, and that the Department never said they couldn't read it. So there, brute!

Heavens, what a long letter. I just write and write, don't I, angelpie? Anyway, things once more have taken on a rather roseate hue, and it may turn out that I'll see you one of these days. My new dignity as a Furrin Service clerk is weighing on me somewhat, but the compensation is that I have never earned that much before (I would have been there in a couple of months if I had continued with P.A.A., however, because they give nice quick raises). It will be the joy of my life to return to Miami and my doubting friends there equipped with a lovely new Special Passport and rarin' to go on a PAA plane. When. See above. I hate this waiting around. I love you, William.

In two years or so you'll be able to see the funniest movie, aptly titled "IMarried a Witch!" Veronica Lake makes a very decorative witch, and the movie made me laugh uproariously for two consecutive hours. I wished you had been there to laugh with me, it was Thorne Smith at his impossible best. When little Veronica drank her own home-brewed love potion by mistake and fell in love with her intended victim I was ready to die happy, but when she proudly announced that she had finally succeeded in lighting a fire with matches instead of by incantation, I just about did die. One of the best lines was when she was confessing to her husband that she was a witch, and that her father had been a sorcerer for ages and ages. "You remember the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, don't you? - Well, my father was one of the gang that did it!" I'll see it a second time any chance we may get, my love.

Other than that, a complete blank is registered. Oh no. Watsy told me that while you were in Accra you came down with something that resembled malaria. Was it that you didn't like Accra, or was it



L-223 p 5  
5

such real malaria that you couldn't tell me about it? As soon as he saw that you hadn't told me anything about it, Watsy poh-pohed my anxiety and wouldn't say anything more than that it just looked like malaria. What's the score, darling? Pray don't be secretive.

My lamb, I love you. Don't you dare go around catching bugs and then failing to report them to me. If it was just a simple matter of a slight allergy on your part when in close contact with Accra, you are forgiven. If not, censure of the strongest kind is called for. Watsy said you were practically cured when he found you forlorn and weary there in Accra, and bought you a drink. -I hope so.

Speaking of drinks, my ex-landlord from Miami, Mr. Johnston, has found himself a sanitorium where he plans to try to get over the nasty little habit of drinking like a thirsty fish. He says he is afraid he's getting into the DT's stage. He's a very odd person, forever lecturing on the evils of drink with a constantly-replenished whiskey glass in his hand. According to him he would have made John D. Rockefeller look silly if he hadn't sipped his first drink, and then gone on from there. But he certainly did go on from there, so there's no way of telling.

Apparently this is one of those days when I can't stop writing you a letter. Well, if that's the case, allow me to inform you that you are my darling, that I'm terribly proud of you and glad that I managed with enormous difficulties to capture you with my canny wiles. Please be kind and love me back, very much. If you don't I promise to snuck away with head bowed and find myself some first class consolation. Yes, it's a nasty threat! But frankly, the thought hasn't appealed to me because I'm so ghastly persistent and I decided a year and three months ago that I loved you and was quite indifferent to consolation, even when it was first class, with a snappy uniform, or (conveniently) classified 4-F and possessed of a gold-mine defense job. I think I can safely assume you love me, however. If not you've stuck your neck out pretty far, and in writing at that. Darling William, I'm being flippant to a degree. You hardly ever are flippant, are you? So much the better, because one flippant person to a family is quite enough. If you don't like it at all, you may beat me after we're married, if the laws of Nigeria permit it. Good-night sweet. I love you deeply and at this point rather ferociously, due to an acute case of frustration.

Thilinda