

IN REPLY REFER TO

FILE NO. 44



AMERICAN CONSULAR SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Lagos, Nigeria; November 27, 1942

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Lovely Philinda,

Your recent telegram, although cryptic, sounds very good indeed. I gather that you have been appointed something here, although as far as the Department is concerned, they still have said nothing about it. However, we got a letter from Jester saying that as a result of Mr. Shantz' telegram, the Personnel Division was reconsidering your case. This is grand news, if true, and I really feel now not only that you will eventually get here, but within a reasonable time at that.

I hope my telegram was sufficiently clear. I worked over it a long time to get the most sense into the fewest words without being confusing. As I explained in letter 43, with the increased service between Lisbon and Fish Lake, in conjunction with the fact that they will only be carrying passengers on that line, in comparison with the large amount of urgent war express carried on the flights from the United States, I felt you would have a reasonably good chance of getting air transportation from Lisbon even without priority. Now that you have the Department's letter of appointment, I think you ought to have a better chance. However, only those on the spot are able to decide or say for sure, so I have wired Jester in code and free by Army radio to investigate the situation and advise you as to what to do. This should all be ancient history by this time. I am eagerly waiting to find out whether you will go to Lisbon or not, and, as a consequence, where you will read this letter.

On the other hand, if air transport from Lisbon is not likely to be available, it would be better to wait in the States for two months or so for air transport to be arranged. If you have to come from Lisbon down here by ship, goodness only knows how long it would take; probably much more than two months, considering having to wait for connections in various places. Oh darling, I am so happy that things have worked out this way, and I do hope that everything can be worked out without a hitch and that we will soon be together. Maybe we won't quite make it for Christmas, but it won't be too long thereafter. As you know, the Army is now in full control of PAA-Africa; tickets are abolished, and travel is free, but only for persons whose transportation is for the furtherance of the war effort. It is most important that you have a letter from the Department showing your appointment, and, if possible, requesting the Officer Commanding, Air Transport Command, Accra, to transport you from Fisherman's Lake to Lagos. Otherwise you will be delayed there until you can wire to Lagos and we can wire Accra to request transport. It is a rather cumbersome system, and

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it sometimes takes some time to get things worked out. It will be much easier if you can get it all worked out in Washington before you leave.

I am anxious to hear about your trip to Washington and to find out if you came in contact with any of our old friends like Hervé L'Heureux. My sister Janie is in Washington, but I have no idea where. She has only written to me once since she got married, and Daddy has mentioned that she has moved a couple of times at least since then. I told him to tell her that I was very hurt. I am especially annoyed that she apparently hasn't done anything about your engagement ring, that I asked her to see to 'way last March. I thought that now that she doesn't have to write letters to Norman every day she might have a little time for me. I know my family has suffered too because of my preoccupation with letters to you, but they will have to endure that too until we are married and can talk instead of writing. It has been a long, hard wait, hasn't it, love? I think we have earned enough merit now to deserve each other, and I really feel now that we won't have to wait much longer. I feel much closer to you now than I have for a long while, and I think that's a very good sign.

Yesterday was Thanksgiving, and Pan American gave a party for all the Americans at the British Airways mess. We all contributed whiskey and gin for the cocktails, and I think even the missionaries had a good time, even though they didn't drink anything but ginger ale - except for one good lady, who picked up a good, strong whiskey-soda and was half through it before she realized it wasn't ginger ale. It was terribly hot, however, as the room was too well closed in for black out purposes. We had real American turkey, which is much tastier than Nigerian turkey, and all the trimming, including some very nice South African wine which I am sure you will like. I left early to take some of the other guests home, and so avoided the hangover some of the boys had this morning. The Atlantic Division have absolutely nothing to do now. Their service has been suspended temporarily, but probably for some time. Jesse is coming home soon, and I will ask him to get in touch with you if possible. He will be able to give you a lot of information regarding transportation problems in this part of the world.

Mr. Shantz has gone up-country on a two week trip, thus postponing Mac's departure until about December 7th. Every little bit helps, and gives the Department just so much longer to decide that he ought to stay here; there is no chance of that, though, I'm afraid. They're more likely to send him to a worse place than Accra. My whole ideas are based on your arrival; otherwise, they would be sending me out to some God-awful place, too. Perhaps we will get to make some trips from time to time to other parts of Africa. I really don't care where I go as long as you are with me. That is absolutely all that matters. If I knew we could find a place to live in Freetown, Bathurst or any other hole, I would go there gladly. As it is, I am hoping to stay in Lagos, where I know we can live and think we will be extremely happy.

All kinds of love,
 Love
 William