

761 Scotland Road
Orange, New Jersey
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DEC 24 REC'D

Vice Consul William L. Krieg
American Consulate General
Lagos, Nigeria

Hello Joe!

Yrd no. 41 received and contents noted with microscopic care, because I had been about to consign you to that particular place where young gentlemen go who don't write to the young ladies who are perhaps overly fond of them. Now you are completely absolved and everything's rosy. Mamma had been consoling me all week by saying perhaps you hadn't written because you thought I would be gone by this time. Well, needless to say that I am still in this Northern New Jersey paradise, and I would like to state that it is probably the coldest and dimmest paradise this side of the real one. Here I am in a supposedly heated house and my fingers are stiff with cold inspite of the fact that I have on warm woolen u-----r, a pair of WOOLEN stockings (how have the mighty glamor girls fallen!), another pair of short wool socks, and two sweaters. Also I am gloomy as heck because I went to the dentist this morning and have to go again tomorrow, a prospect to dampen the gayest spirits, even if it were nice and warm and I could stop blowing on my fingers. Daily I tell mamma that if I ever complain of the heat in Nigeria she has my official permission to laugh loudly and long.

What you told me about why they didn't assign Miss Iris Johnston to Lagos differs considerably with the juicier version that Mr. Jester told me. And scares me a lot mere, too. Mr. Jester said that this Miss Johnston had worked with someone who is now in Accra, and that this person was of the opinion that Miss J. was not his Dream Girl at all, in fact that he didn't get along with her. Mr. Jester says that Mr. Shantz heard of this alleged opinion, and thought that the assignment of just any one else would be the better part of valor for the Lagos Consulate. But ye gods William, my dearest friend couldn't call me a stenographer! My severest critics could, on the other hand, say with justice that I can barely type. I can happily say that I never claimed to the Department that I was a stenographer, in fact that I denied being one when asked. So at least the Department knows the Truth. The other bridges will have to be crossed when arrived at.

I've been spending most of the time in the kitchen, to keep warm and to cook. Mamma is incapacitated by a cold and step-father Jimmy gets very hungry three times a day. Yesterday I had a perfectly lovely time with a steak (large, tender and traditionally juicy), some delightful huge mushrooms, and a batch of French fried potatoes. They were my first fried potatoes, and a doubtful quantity until the very last minute, when they emerged from the bubbling fat as good as I could want them to be. What a triumph! For some reason I had always been afraid to try F.F.P's, so you can't imagine how glad I was to see their golden splendor as they nestled cosily against the steak. It's just before lunch,

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which accounts for all this glowing prose in praise of food.

Oh joy! the postman just came bearing letter number 42, full of just the kind of talk I like to hear! I was sorry you hadn't received any of my letters either, angel-pie. Isn't it awful? Boo to the mails, oh boo to them. Likewise I was sorry to hear that you were taking Mac's departure so hard. I knew he was being sent there, because Mr. Jester said they had decided to send him instead of you. Such, as you say, is life. I have heard several people say Mac was a very nice boy, and I know I certainly thought he was that night I saw him in Miami. And nobody seems to like Accra, at least not as much as they do Lagos.

Well well darling, I'm so relieved to hear that you aren't planning to beat me when I'm bad after we're married. What a weight off my childish mind! Of course you realize that had you planned to spank me, I was planning to grow long dagger finger nails to scratch you back with, and I always have been good at amateur rough-and-tumble wrestling. Just a hint, you know. Ask my college roommate, who bears several scars to this day; but of course we had only friendly little bouts... Daddy didn't tell me he had written to you, the secretive old dear. He did it all behind my back, which was rather sweet in an odd sort of way. Poppa is one of my favorite people. Your'e another. So don't worry about being hen-pecked, also because I'm not the type to go around hen-pecking, maybe because I'm very often a mouse, and who ever heard of a mouse pecking? Unless the mouse can turn, like the worm does. How zoological I'm growing! And thank you for saying I may occasionally go wild and Buy a Hat. I hereby promise the Hat will never cost more than \$4.98, or maybe \$5.98. Anyway, probably in the Better World of the future milliners will have reformed and call things \$5.00 or \$6.00 instead of beating around the bush with odd pennies the way they now love to do in this day of world delirium.

In a way I should like to go by ship, just so I could walk into the War Shipping Admnstn. and the Barber Line office with a proud and majestic air and demand space on their silly little boats. I heartlessly brand all those people as first class meanies.

Williampuss, I am VERY tired of waiting around. I want very much to be with you, after being such a good girl and waiting for one solid (too, too solid) year and one month and three days. You are a darling and I'm sure you will make a perfectly charming husband when you aren't too absorbed in the Vice Consular Attitude, and when you remember that I dearly love being kissed. Also kissing. A warning and a threat! As soon as I see you, no matter how many witnesses are present, I firmly intend to kiss you so hard that it will take hours to rub off the lipstick from your face, and more hours to wash the handkerchief, and still more hours to stop you from blushing. Off on a different track, do you still get very red and feverish every now and then, the way you once did while we were walking around Lisbon? It worried me dreadfully at the time, but as I remember you didn't seem anxious to talk about it. Not talking won't help it, and it certainly scared me more than I was willing to admit then, circumstances being as they were. I love you, my dear darling love, and I want you to be ghastly healthy, and I wanted you to be then, even though it was

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sort of silly on my part to want you to be ghastly healthy for some other woman. That was a nice walk we took that day, wasn't it, angelpie? All over Lisbon, and up the hills, and finally down to the place where all the cafes are. But not as nice as the walk we took alone, down to the harbor. That was an enchanted walk, because I think I skimmed over the surface of the sidewalks instead of actually walking. How did you ever dare think you could marry any one but me? My silly young friend, of course you couldn't! I wouldn't have allowed any such monstrous calamity.

The little picture of you which you gave me Oct. 31, 1941, has a lovely new frame of pretend gold and a fine new background of bright red. It's my Christmas present to it.

I have just called my pop to ask him about the letter he wrote to you. Pop says it was written at ten o'clock in his office after a hard days work, and that he wasn't proud of it. I consoled him by saying that you had called it "delightful", but he says you must be very tolerant. He likewise announces that your opus to him has arrived (only this morning) and that what with the press of work he hasn't had time to give it the complete attention it deserves. On a cursory glance, however, it appears to be a monumental sort of thing, he says, admirably done. I'm sure of it, chickadee.

Well, what with this and that the melancholy (dentist-inflicted) which was in me when I started this letter has completely disappeared. Sad to say, however, my fingers are still stiff. Which accounts for ALL of the typographical errors on this and the previous pages, as you must have surmised. Think of us up here in the frozen north and never write saying youre hot, darling. It's a nasty, spiteful thing to say while we are freezing to death by degrees, and while our ears are being attacked by malignant chilblains. Have you ever seen a malignant chilblain in the flesh? A horrid, ghoulish customer, malignant as can be and with a chilly leer in his eye. I hope we never get sent to Vladivostok, Murmansk, or Punto Arenas, so we will never have to fight off the armies of malignant chilblains that lurk in those regions.

People are saying that if this war lasts as long as Churchill, Roosevelt, Hitler and Mussolini say it will, the school systems will be able to drop geography from their curricula entirely. Who ever thought that the names of the Solomon Islands would be common knowledge, and that the dear little kiddies would know all about ~~Rzhev~~ (this one's hard to spell) Rzhev, Majunga, Djedeida, Aatu, Reykjavik, Whathaveyou. Not to mention those twin jewels, Bona and Guna. Sometimes I think I like Velikie Luki best, and sometimes I'm true to Lvov. The headlines all look like one big typographical error. But my minds wandering again.

Goodbye, my dear. How I wish time would speed up!

Lovingly,

Phinda