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AIR MAIL

AMERICAN CONSULATE
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Dear Folks,

It has been so long since I wrote a letter to anyone that this sheet of paper was all dusty. Since my last letter I have received Daddy's of August 21st and Sarah's of August 25th. You have doubtless received the A.P.O address, which I sent in a recent letter. Philinda thinks her letters from home come more rapidly that way. There seems to be considerable delay in the Department in clearing person^{al} mail, possibly due to the necessity of censorship or the limitations on the volume of air mail they can send or both. In any case, let's try the A.P.O. and see how it works out. I understand this area has now been declared a non-combat zone, so I don't imagine the censorship will be so strict.

Philinda has busily been writing volumes of letters since my last one, and she has made copies of them for your interest and information. You will find them much more revealing about life in Lagos than mine ever were; she has quite a talent for writing, and once wrote a short sketch of a person she met in France which is so good I would like to send it in to the New Yorker magazine. At the moment, however, it is languishing in the desk upstairs, as we have never gotten around to reviewing it.

Philinda has been doing a marvelous job with the redcoration of the flat upstairs. The place hardly could be recognized for the drab room it was when Philinda arrived. We have a new bridge lamp, which I had bought before Philinda came but never used because I had no shade. It isn't very pretty, bearing a considerable resemblance to a gallows, as the native who made it was unable to follow the sketch I gave him, but Philinda got an attractive shade made out of local cloth. This cloth is a coarse, white cotten cloth with a rough weave which is woven by the natives in the North. It is usually called "Kano cloth". After she had that, she decided that the davenport and two matching chairs, which had been in constant service for over five years, needed recovering, since the upholstery was both stained and faded. We finally got an authorization from the Department to spent \$50 on this job, and set to work to buy the cloth and get a tailor to do the work.

When the job was about half done, Philinda decided the ~~si~~ cushions on the old wicker chairs ought to be covered with Kano cloth too, and that has now been done. To top it off, we brought upstairs a nice dark green rug which was in the office and brought down our old brown one. The effect of this lovely white furniture with green bindings and the green rug are mar-

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velous. It not only makes the place look respectable; it is genuinely attractive and even rather ritzy looking. Of course, few of the men we invite here ever notice the change, but the ladies do, and besides, it is more pleasant for us and a source of great pride and joy to Philinda. In addition to the things I have mentioned, she has done lots of other smaller things to tone up the apartment. I now have a house I can be proud to live in for the first time since I left home. I am terribly proud of Philinda's work in this connection. She is literally good at everything she turns her mind and hand to. She is a good cook, a fine interior decorator, an intelligent assistant in the office, and a fine companion to live with.

From this you will see that I am very happy, and that we are more in love all the time. If it weren't for the possibility of a transfer to some place where she couldn't go, I would feel positively smug. That is a cloud which always hangs over us, but we don't think much about it, since, after all, there is nothing we can do one way or the other. Much as I would like to come home and show off my beautiful and accomplished bride to the admiring public of Newark, I would prefer to go from here direct to my new post, as I think there would be less danger of her not being able to come along.

I may have mentioned before that our shipment of whiskey and rum arrived about a month ago. We got ten cases of Scotch and five of rye and two of rum. The price was very moderate; the Scotch was about \$14 a case and the rye about \$11. Even so, the bill has taken the wind out of my bank account, especially since I have just paid my income tax for the last two quarters of 1943. The fact that I had already paid the entire 1942 tax was a big help in this connection. Thank you very much for Mr. Stirgwalt's letter on income tax changes. I found it very helpful in preparing our returns. Back to supplies again, we have 20 cartons of beer (Pabst Blue Ribbon) in the process of being unloaded from a ship. We can hardly wait until it gets here, as we have had virtually no beer for months. I am keeping my fingers crossed until it is actually in the house, as with breakage and pilferage there are frequently considerable losses. There is also the customs to be persuaded that we shouldn't pay duty on this. They have been very accommodating recently, so I hope there will be no trouble.

I will send you some snapshots of Philinda and me taken at the beach. They will either be in this envelope or a separate one mailed at the same time. Isn't she pretty?

We are going out tonight to play monopoly with the local head of the Shell Co. and our friends the Rasmussons. As two big business^{men} they ought to trim me, but we will see. I must stop now and get dressed, as we want to call on a sick friend. I forgot to say that Bill Bruns left for Accra Monday to take over while McSweeney is in the States. Mac got to go home on a sort of special mission; he has been assigned to Cairo and is very pleased.

Love to all,

William

9/30 Mrs. R. won both games!

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