

Mr. Mail

Lisbon, Portugal
November 9, 1941
Sunday, 12:30 PM)

My darling,

Quite a lot of things have been happening since my letter of November 7th. I suspect that you will get all these letters at the same time anyway, since no Clippers have left here for a week now. My first letter, which was written the Sunday after you left, just missed the last one, I'm afraid, and so the whole shooting match is still piled up in the Lisbon post office. This is a little discouraging, as I hoped you would find a letter or two waiting for you when you got home, but I guess we will have to get used to all sorts of delays with the mail. Always remember that I love you; letters or no letters. That is my constant thought and obsession, and I must admit that the suspense in waiting to hear from you is pretty terrible. I know you can't send off a letter until your ship comes in, but I am impatient just the same.

And the worst of it is that I don't know how long it will be before they catch me, because it looks as if I was going to get under way at last. Yesterday the Legation received the following wire from London: "TRIPLE PRIORITY YOUR OCTOBER 7. AUTHORITIES REPORT NO AIR SERVICE FOR KRIEG AVAILABLE STOP WILL PROVIDE SEA TRANSPORT FROM HERE BUT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR KRIEG PROCEED ENGLAND BY AIR IMMEDIATELY STOP KRIEG SHOULD CONTACT BRITISH AIR ATTACHE WHO HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED ARRANGE IMMEDIATE HIGHEST PRIORITY STOP THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN TELEGRAPHED TO DEPARTMENT WITH REQUEST THAT WE, ALSO KRIEG, BE IMMEDIATELY ADVISED IF DEPARTMENT APPROVES WINANT AMERICAN AMBASSADOR". This morning the Legation received a wire from the Department stating that I should proceed as suggested by London. And so I expect, at long last, to leave Lisbon and all its memories, good and bad, tomorrow, Monday, or the following day at the latest. I do not know whether I will head south with a convoy or what, but at any rate it ought to be an interesting experience. Yesterday I had my trunk brought up to my room and this afternoon I am going to start packing up essentials in suitcases and leaving the rest in the trunk. I fear I am going to be terribly short of everything, although I haven't heard yet whether or not they will permit me to carry some excess baggage. I am so delighted now that I bought the sun helmet. It will be beautifully in the way during the whole trip, I am sure, and I might even have to abandon it somewhere. All the problems connected with leaving depress me no end, although I am glad to be going. I wish very much that, by some freak of fate, you might be going along. I think that would make a lot of difference. Perhaps out of two inefficient people we might be able to make one efficient one. But ~~anyway~~ anyway, I love you and I want to be with you, and to hell with efficiency.

Friday evening, just before I went to dinner, I was surprised and pleased to receive a call from Flip. He came down and watched while I ate and had some wine and coffee with me. Afterwards we went into the bar and drank some Macieira

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and talked. It was much like old times. Jimmy had told him about us, and he was anxious to hear the rest of the story. I told him, since he already knew most of it, and he was very sympathetic. Of course he hopes and expects that you will forget about me when you get back in the States, and I answered that I couldn't honestly say I agreed, although perhaps I ought to. He was very good all the way around, and I was glad to have a chat with him.

I'm afraid some rumors are beginning to trickle around town about us. It seems that quite a lot of people knew that you and Jimmy didn't leave together, and that has naturally aroused a lot of curiosity. Yesterday at the Legation your old friend (?) Mr. Zuber asked if I knew why you went on the ship and Jimmy on the Clipper. I replied that I thought Jimmy had been anxious to get home to look for a job and get everything prepared for you. I broke away from him as soon as I could, but he was like a leech. I doubt if he believed my little fabrication. Then I had lunch yesterday with Bill Doyle, the courier. He mentioned that he had been out with Alice Wedemeyer the night before, and then shortly afterwards said he'd been hearing stories about the Joneses, and did I know anything. I asked him what stories, and he said that he had heard that you had been running around with some other man. I said I doubted that very much indeed, although I did not think that you had been very happy in the last days. Although I was embarrassed as the devil, I couldn't help smiling at the humor of the situation: Bill had just picked the wrong person to ask. He was quite insistent about it, and asked if it was Cordell. I said I was positive that it wasn't, and we left the subject there. All in all, I guess it's a good thing we're both out of town. The old saying, "Murder will out" has certainly proved to be true again. I can't imagine how Alice got hold of the idea, but I suppose she, or somebody else, just took the fact that you didn't leave together and spun it up into a story. What annoys me most is to have to dissimulate my love all the time. I love you, and I'm not ashamed of it. I'm not only not ashamed of my love, but I'm very proud of you - the finest, loveliest, and all around best girl I have ever known. I must admit that Flip ~~through~~ threw a bit of a scare in me, though. It seems so natural that you should drop me when you get back home, and that you should go back to the old life. It is a tremendous sacrifice which you are making if you decide to come along with me. I know that if I could see you for only five minutes, you would dispel all my fears. But sometimes, now, it seems too wonderful to be true. It doesn't seem possible that you, YOU, could conceivably love me enough to do what you will have to do before I can make you mine - legally, at least - for I consider that you are mine now. We have taken each other, and our love is so great that we do not need any witnesses. I feel just as responsible for you as if we were really legally married, and therefore, my darling, I want you to be sure to tell me if there is anything I can do. And, dearest, if anything should happen to ~~you~~ me on this trip, you will know that I was thinking always of you. Not that I think there is any danger, as I am sure the Embassy would not have proposed anything dangerous. But you are, and always will be, in my mind. I shall love you always, no matter what.

I don't seem to think of much else to say, right now. I am too full of you. I want to say all the crazy things you can say to a loved person when you are together, but which look so silly on paper. I'm setting my compass and steering my life by you. I hope it will not be too long until I hear from you, but I'm afraid it will be some time yet. How long it seems to wait! You can disregard what I said in Friday's letter about sending mail here. I feel sure I will be on my way immediately. I will wire you as and when I can. I love you, my darling, and I want you and I miss you very much. When I read your poem, I feel sure you will not change your mind. We were struck by lightning and fused together. I believe that we will succeed, and that ~~we will be very happy~~ we will be very happy. Do you still think so too?

Always yours,