

April 10, 1940

Dear people,

It's cold, it's freezing practically, but I have insulated myself in the kitchen with the oven going full blast. This state of affairs, duplicated in 2 million Parisian homes, is the result of a loi-décret<sup>1</sup> turning off all heat April 1<sup>st</sup>, and (not yet in force) all hot water for four consecutive days a week for the duration. Everyone is taking hot baths madly.

All of which is just beating around the bush. The News is that James has at last got himself into the Embassy, which has been his goal for as long as I've known him (not saying much!) and long before that antediluvian date. He only has his foot in the door, but at least it's a much better job than his present one 1) because it has excellent prospects, in that once one is in an Embassy one has to get leprosy or go voluntarily before one is thrown out (we hope on good authority, i.e. the embassy staff.) 2) because it pays  $\frac{1}{3}$  more than the U[nited] P[ress], and in dollars (thus we gain when the franc goes down). 3) because reasonable hours are maintained. We are jubilant, enfin.<sup>2</sup> It will be lovely to have a day and a half off every single week, when we have had only two and a half days off in seven months.

James has been angling for this fish for a long time, I repeat, equipped with hooks in the form of letters from all sorts of people from Cordell Hull<sup>3</sup> down. He's gone in and asked about once a month regularly, and until now there have been no bites. Virtue is rewarded. The lovely thing doesn't start till May 1<sup>st</sup>, so we are going to have a little holiday of one week between jobs to recuperate from the old one & get used to normal hours again. Going to bed at 3 and arising at noon is an insidious habit. We may even take a minor trip somewhere, if we have any francs lying around, but that's sort of improbable. We would love to see some sunshine, tho. In any case it will be just lovely to loll around and cuss in each others company for a change. A whole week. Whee!

My my. How lovely. How wonderful.

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<sup>1</sup> **Loi-décret**: (Décret-loi) in French legal terms, an executive order concerning a matter about which the legislature has previously authorized the executive branch to issue orders. (See <https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/D%C3%A9cret-loi>, in French; accessed 2015-09-27)

<sup>2</sup> **Enfin**: French 'finally'

<sup>3</sup> "**Cordell Hull** (October 2, 1871 – July 23, 1955) was an American politician from the U.S. state of Tennessee. He is best known as the longest serving Secretary of State, holding the position for 11 years (1933–1944) in the administration of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt during much of World War II." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cordell\\_Hull](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cordell_Hull), accessed 2015-09-27)

I'm reading Of Time and the River<sup>4</sup>, which is mostly silly, and there is a lot of it to be silly. I'll read Wind Sand & Stars<sup>5</sup> when it comes out of the impossible-to-get-hold-of class at the Libe. There is a new vegetable on the markets (there have been three all winter) so I guess Spring is technically here. I am giving English lecons<sup>6</sup> to a French gal Tuesday & Thursdays to occupy my mind & for the stupendous sum of 30 francs a week. She's unemployed because of the guerre<sup>7</sup>.

I'm so sorry Doña<sup>8</sup> is unhappy. Gosh, it's awful. I hope she gets through that stage soon. Give her my love & sympathy.

Love to all,

Me

(over)

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<sup>4</sup> "***Of Time and the River*** (subtitled *A Legend of Man's Hunger in his Youth*) is a 1935 novel by American novelist Thomas Wolfe." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Of\\_Time\\_and\\_the\\_River](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Of_Time_and_the_River), accessed 2015-09-27)

<sup>5</sup> "***Wind, Sand and Stars*** (French title: *Terre des hommes*) is a memoir by the French aristocrat aviator-writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind,\\_Sand\\_and\\_Stars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind,_Sand_and_Stars), accessed 2015-09-27)

<sup>6</sup> **Lecons** no doubt **leçons**, French 'lessons'

<sup>7</sup> **Guerre** French 'war'

<sup>8</sup> **Doña**: wife of Philinda's brother John; she was pregnant at the time.

Just learned that in addition to salary we get a rent allowance of (maximum) 900 dollars a year available whenever we rent a place at the price (just about the tops in Paris, by the way) Now we only get the minimum, 21,000 francs per year. Our rent in this place is 500 per month, 6000 francs a year, so you see we are filthy rich. Ho hum, prosperity.

Love,

Me

April 10, 1940

Dear people,

It's cold, it's freezing practically, but I have insulated myself in the kitchen with the oven going full blast. This state of affairs, duplicated in 2 million pension homes, is the result of a loi-décret turning off all heat April 1st, and (not yet in force) all hot water for four consecutive days a week for the duration. Everyone is taking hot baths madly.

All of which is just beating around the bush. The News is that James has at last got himself into the Embassy, which has been his goal for as long as I've known him (not saying much!) and long before that antediluvian date. He only has his foot in the door, but at least it's a much better job than his present one because it has excellent prospects, in that once one is in an Embassy one has to get leprosy or go voluntarily before one is thrown out (we hope on good authority, i.e. the Embassy staff.)

2) because it pays  $\frac{1}{3}$  more than the U.P., and in dollars (thus we gain when the franc goes down). 3) because reasonable hours are maintained. We are jubilant, entire. It will be lovely to have a day and a half off every single week, when we have had only two and a half <sup>days</sup> off in seven months.

James has been angling for this fish for a long time, I repeat, equipped with hooks in the form of letters from all sorts of people from Cordell Hull down. He's gone in and asked about once a month regularly and until now there have been no bites. Virtue is rewarded. The lovely thing doesn't start till May 1st, so we are going to have a little holiday of one week between jobs to reacquaint us from the old one & get used to normal hours again. Going to bed at 3 and arising at noon is an insidious habit. We may even take a minor trip somewhere, if we have any francs lying around, but that's sort of improbable.

We would love to see some ~~something~~, <sup>the</sup>. In any <sup>13</sup> case  
it will! It would be just lovely to loll around and fuss  
in each others company for a change. A what weird  
Whoo!

My my. How lovely. How wonderful.

I'm reading Of Time and the River, which is  
mostly silly, and there is a lot of it to be silly. I'll  
read Wind Sound & Stars when it comes out of  
the impossible to get hold of class at the like.

There is a new vegetable on the markets (there have  
been there all winter) so I guess Spring is technically  
here. I am giving English lessons to a French  
gal Tuesday & Thursdays to occupy my mind &  
for the ~~sum~~ <sup>sum</sup> of 30 francs a week.  
she's unemployed because of the quare.

I'm so sorry Doña is unhappy. Gosh, it's  
awful. I hope she gets through that stage soon.  
Give her my love & sympathy.

Love to all,  
Me

(over)

the world to see some...  
I will be very...  
each...  
Just learned that in addition!

To salary we get a rent allowance  
of (maximum) \$600 dollars a year  
available whenever we rent a  
place at that price (just about  
the top in Paris, by the way)

we only get the minimum, \$2,000  
per year. Our rent in this  
place is \$500 per month, \$6,000 a year.

So you see we are rich.  
No sum prosperity.

It is a very nice place & I  
hope to see you there.

Love to all  
M