

Dearest William,

*Rec'd Dec. 20 '41*      L-93 p1r      November 30, '41

Here I am back in Orange and back on your typewriter- which I prefer naturally enough, to other and better typewriters. My father and the rest have been as nice and sweet and understanding as ever, and pop has solved one problem very neatly: realizing that I have an undercurrent of regret when I have to go to him for money, he suggested the natural course of using my own money to support myself and to pay for the divorce to which he no longer has any objection. I have approximately a thousand dollars worth of Pacific Tel. and Tel. stock which has conveniently risen since I bought it, and which will do the trick admirably. When I last wrote to you I had quite forgotten that I was as much a woman of property as I now appear to be and was sort of unhappy about the matter of money. He says now is the time to use that stuff for a useful purpose, so I concur happily and proudly. Also realizing that it would be very embarrassing to me to have to ask Janie for the addresses of people who knew you, he plans instead to write to Dartmouth. For the same reason that I mentioned before, that it would take too long to ask your opinion and concurrence, I am allowing him to go through with the idea without consulting you previously, still certain that he will find nothing but encomiums of praise.

Last night Janie and her roommates invited me to a party they gave in order to dispose of a surplus of rum. It was a nice party, ending with everyone on the floor playing poker with their shoes off. As usual, Little Philinda made a fool of herself. Thank goodness everyone was sufficiently mellow to be able to take it with the proper attitude. The horrid truth is that I get watching Janie, she does something the way you would, and I start acting up. It must look silly, but my lachrimose glands have never become accustomed to the thought of you, and just looking at Janie too long has the nasty effect of making me weep for no particular reason. So the initiate I suppose it must look like a pose, but as Heaven is my witness, I do the same d---d thing about once a day regularly. There was some kind of soldier at the party also, who saw me through the half-open door of their bedroom acting as if I was working up to a new Johnstown Flood. He came in very kindly, said that he knew the situation more or less, and announced sadly that there was something about the Kriegs male and female that was absolutely devastating, because he had been in love with Janie for years. We comforted each other as best we could, and talked over the virtues of the Kriegs, and legion is their name. After a while we put Janie in the middle and cuddled her enthusiastically. It's nice to know someone else in the same bateau as oneself. Janie gave me a large picture of you which she had been keeping in the bathroom chest to blossom unseen. By the same token, I am looking around for something in the picture line to send to you.

Jimmie has gone to Washington on a job lead. It looks now as if he might be able to get a job with the office of the Co-ordinator of Information, a consummation devoutly to be wished as it is a job after his own heart. Also I am glad he is out of town while I am here. He wrote me a very nice letter, including a joke, more or less, that appealed to me: It appears that a temporary bachelor came in to a restaurant one day and asked the waitress to bring him some slightly cool coffee, a tablecloth with a spot or two on it, and to sit down at table with him after having rumped up her hair a trifle. Ah, that's better, said he. I've been so homesick, and the lumps in the oatmeal remind me of my wife. Jones added politely that there were never any lumps in my oatmeal, a gross exaggeration.

I have asked Helen if she would mind cooking an extra bite for Janie some evening next week, and she has allowed as how she wouldn't, so I shall probably be seeing that excellent girl some time soon. She is even darlinger and more human every time I see her, and kindly tells me that she is glad it all happened and treats me like a sister. Me, I treat her like the lovely sister of the most incredible thing that ever happened. She is very nice to her lovesick soldier, but I hope that you will ~~xxxx~~ never be quite as nice to someone you don't really love. It's not always the kindest thing, and it would make me very JEALOUS, to put it squarely. The ghastly

green-eyed monster (to coin a phrase) would undoubtedly creep in, and I would crawl silently into my shell (to mix a metaphor) and be stupidly meek and resigned about it all. So don't be nice and friendly with the people that fall for your wiles, please. Except me. I should like to run Janie's life and have her be in love with and marry a Foreign Service gentleman, so that she might occasionally be near us. She showed me your mother's picture. In a short time I shall love Janie as much as I do you, although naturally in a different way, because she is a sweet good girl.

Perhaps you haven't noticed the enormous change in tone in my letters to you. It's entirely possible, for there hasn't been much of a change. I made up my mind a week or so ago that I would be firm, self-controlled, energetic, ruthless in my Purpose, and try not to show you the full extent of my love for you. All pretty much in vain, quoi. I am a weak-willed dope. I spoil you. I coddle you, I cheat at solitaire when it comes to the point of sitting down and writing a light, frolicsome bit of independent master of my fate-captain of my soul letter. I guess it's hopeless, and I'll just have to go on making you into a conceited, unworthy man, all the time trusting to fate and your character that you won't begin to be bored, and sure of your conquest.

My dear friend Rufus is coming in a short time, so I had better get ready to receive.

With all the abovementioned obstreperous love,

me

L-93 p1v