

Orange, New Jersey  
Dec. 24, 1941

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Dear Darling William,

Last night I was having supper at my pop's house. He had been home about an hour, when he said quietly, oh by the way your mother called this afternoon and said you had a letter from Bill. My pet, I stared at him for a moment and then burst into tears, screaming WHY didn't you tell me sooner!

Poppa laughed and laughed. It was, to put it mildly, nice to hear from you again, because I love you very much. I was glad to hear that they treated you well in London, although it was only your due of course and the poor dears were only doing what every sensible person would.

Janie called Helen a few days ago and asked to see me, so I considered it all right to do so since she had kindly evinced the desire first. I went around to her apartment, which was the usual delightfull madhouse, with ten or twelve people all screaming at once, no room to step on the floor, a mother and brother visiting, some extraneous girl friends, a Christmas tree, a dinner table set for five. I had a wonderful time. At eleven thirty some one of Janie's many admirers came to call and immediately began proposing to Janie while the rest of us shouted and played records happily. They were planning to start out at six in the morning to go to Newark for Christmas, so the ironing board was out preparatory to ironing some clothes for the event, and what meager room was left went to the several suitcases which were intermitently packed. There was one girl there who was celebrating getting a good job at Altman's, and who therefore had brought along a bottle of whiskey. We were just about to drink it when someone came along to see the apartment, which they want to sublet. The poor people mustn't have got a very good impression. Janie and I made a date for the thirtieth, and she told me she was thinking of marrying the other admirer I had met, Norman the Soldier. She doesn't allow that to make much difference with the other youths apparently, which amazed me and the other girls. My goodness, she is a fine girl! I can't imagine what her roommates are going to do without her, for she is the one who always does the cleaning up and guiding-of-little-footsteps and odd jobs! No wonder all those gentlemen fall for her, and in addition to everything she has the Krieg beauty. But I wish she wouldn't get too serious about Norman the Soldier, for in the first place, though he is a very nice boy and we got along together very well, I am not sure he is anything beyond nice. And anyway, as I explained to her, I have it all planned that she is going to marry the second best man in the Foreign Service so she can be near us (nothing like running other peoples lives for them!) However, Janie is a bright girl just overflowing with good sense, so I don't imagine she is too dreadfully serious about poor Lovelorn Norman. I asked one of the girls from Newark if she had known you, and she said she had, and horrified me by leering ~~the~~ "yes, Bill was quite a lad and never caught cold on parties." I nearly died at the thought of your cuddling up to the local babes, and decided then and there that I hated the woman, whose name was Ginny something. Did I ever tell you that I am of a jealous temperament? Now you know the worst, except that you can't see how green I turn at the thought above mentioned. I am glad I don't have the addresses of the local babes, because if I did I would probably send them big boxes of arsenic chocolates, the repulsive things.

Darling, I got to thinking about how maybe you would think I was seeing too much of Jones and might get the idea that I didn't know my own mind. Well, I do. I know that as far as I'm concerned there is exactly one (1) man in the world worthy of loving, and he is you. My life would be absolute zero if I couldn't marry you, and I already feel married to you mentally. However, I feel pretty bad about Jones and like the boy in spite of his manifold faults. So that's the score, and don't get any ideas if you were planning to. I love you, the world revolves neatly around you, you are always in my thoughts.

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As I mentioned in my last letter, it would be so wonderful if you were around to make this process happier! You can't imagine how I want you to be here loving me in person, my sweet, and how much I want to see you and touch you to find out if you're real. At times I get the impress on that it is all a fine feathered dream I'm following. We ask that you relieve us on this point at your earliest convenience.

I'm going to be out at my brother's to-morro<sup>o</sup>. The baby is adorable, and her parents strive unsuccessfully to appear indifernet to her charms all the while naturally convinced that she is the world's best infant. She is, so far, but of course in three or four years there will appear the really best baby. (As I remember you didn't favor the idea of infants, but my fine feathed William you'll just have to get used to it.) There now, ther's some more of my worst side, this time the determined side that creeps up at times just when people have become convinced that I'm a weak-willed sissy. I'm sorry however, if the thought of infants chills you to the bone. Anyway, I anticipate an amusing Christmas, the best possible under the circumstances. Janie and I were wishing that we could have sent you a present or two, but things are far too uncertain for that sort of thing. In any case, you sent me that nice letter, which was my best present, and when you arrive in Lagos you will find eight or nine of the same from me. I love you, or did I tell you?

It seems a shame to ask you to catch cold, but I hope you've thought of a new way of keeping warm. Maybe I should send you some warm underwear.

See last sentence of paragraph-before-last, which goes for the next hundred years or so.

yours completely,

Philinda