

MAR 26 Rec'd

222 Phoenetia Ave.
Coral Gables, Fla.
Sunday, March 1, 1942

Dear William Laurence Krieg,

L-123 P1

Last night I went to the house of a girl friend of mine to get her to come over here for a minor party. When I came back there was a note in my box, which proved upon inspection to be letter number five from William Laurence Krieg. Greatly to the surprise of my bewildered girl friend I burst into my usual pointless tears. It was she who pointed out that the letter did not come in an envelope, and further that there was penciled writing on the back, I was too busy reading it to notice anything. How stupendous of you to find Mr. Bledsoe: I went around to his house this morning bright and early (most unusual for me on Sundays), and attempted futilely (something's wrong with that spelling but what difference will it make in a hundred years,) to get some information from him. Unfortunately the darling helpful soul is one of those vague people whose answer to everything is "Oh, he's fine" or, "oh, it's quite a nice place". The poor man was probably so overwhelmed by your ob'dnt servant's exuberant attitude that the words were knocked clear out of his head, and I must admit I was looking for a play-by-play description of every single thing you said and every last motion you made. But oh my dear how nice to see some one who had actually seen you only a week before! The irony of fate is that people who don't realize that you are God and love and spring and joy and genius and quietness should be privileged to see you while I, who know all this am forced to envy their very ignorance. Darling Saint William, what a ghastly set-up!

Letter number five is my favorite letter. But to tell you the truth, which I think we have both been avoiding, I don't think I have much more than one chance in a million of getting to Lagos. As you point out, we have been enormously lucky all the way through. So many times I wanted to tell you I loved you in Lisbon, and each time I thought better of it before I did anything about it. How narrowly we missed not saying anything at all. That night you finally worked up enough courage to do so, I had definitely made up my mind I never would, I was so sure you would be kind and sympathetic and completely negative. How terrible to love some one who is just kind to you! I think that the fact that I thought about the possibility of your taking that attitude for such a long time has made me ever so much more sympathetic to Jimmie, and recently to James Page. We have been lucky so far, but I'm afraid ~~xxxx~~ we are up against a stone wall now, as much as I hate to face the fact. Tell me frankly what you think, my dear love, because we might as well get used to it if we must. I'll wait as long as is necessary, but I hate the waiting with all my soul, and if it weren't for the draft board I should go so far as to beg you to come to me right now. Things being as they are, that is out of the question. When Mr. Bledsoe said that you seemed lonely there I thought to myself that loneliness has nothing to do with where you are, or what is your company, but is a result of your own state of mind. For I am lonely even in crowds, my dear, all the time. I hope it is a consolation to you when you get to feeling lonely, to know that here in Florida, in the busy season, with lots of nice friends, a good job with interesting and amusing co-workers, while I am busy all the time and usually enjoying myself in a half-hearted way, I am lonely too.

2

L-123p2

it's so nice to think about getting things for our home, and of course I should love to do it if I could through Burdine's, although I don't quite see how I could through any of the New York stores. But I simply couldn't do it at all if there is very little hope of my going over there, unless it were just for you. Think how sad it would be to buy things for a house I wouldn't see: something like preparing your own funeral. Please omit flowers, etc. That would be quite beyond my capacities, Angelpuss. So tell me what makes you so comparatively optimistic about the matter, or is it just evading the issue and dreaming?

So you wrote to your father. That must have been very difficult. For some reason it is hard to be communicative to one's relatives. Last week I became communicative with your sister, and had to send the letter off quickly before I repented of my confidences and tore up the whole thing. I had been wanting to tell her ever since the second time I saw her that I loved her not only because she was your sister but also because she was such a lovable person all on her own. Since sending the letter, of course, I have been thinking how undignified it must sound to say that you love a person on such a short acquaintance. But such is the case. Poor Janie, all I do is overwhelm her in one way or another.

You're quite right, we will be happy together no matter where we are. And we are wasting perhaps years of happiness. It makes me want to scream, and assassinate people. I suppose it doesn't affect you in quite so violent a way, for you are a calm person, and a saint and my darling.

Naturally I like the fountain, and equally naturally couldn't understand Julie's attitude at all. When you are really deeply in love nothing on heaven or earth or in your mind can control your actions, so I say boo to Julie because she wasn't really in love. This is the first time I've been in love and I think it's a wonderful feeling in spite of everything.

I rather haven't done anything about the references.

Again I lose all reticence and beg you to write to me as often as possible, since you are the breath of my life and I begin to stifle towards the end of a period without letters. I hope you got the photographs I sent you. Maybe I will live till I get the ones you are sending me, but it's doubtful at this point.

It probably doesn't interest you much, but James Page proposed to me last Sunday in a burst of heroism. I thought I had been most frank about my position, too, so I tried not to be too killingly kind and understanding, following out the theory I had learned in Lisbon. It gave me a funny feeling, as if I were floating about in the air ~~about~~ ten feet above ground, watching two other people. What a messy world it is, with everybody hanging on to the wrong people like so many links of sausage. There ought to be a super-human grocerman to cut the sausages off where they should be cut and link them again in the right places. I'm getting metaphysical, so I'll stop right there.

I am five feet four inches tall. This is beginning to sound like the kind of information requested in letters to a marriage bureau. Brown hair, brown eyes, beautiful shape, ten thousand dollars savings, and part interest in a flourishing beer factory. Interested in establishing relations (intention: matrimony) with suitable Foreign Service officer, preferably one named W. L. Krieg, must be respectable, under seventy. All

L-123 p3

reasonable offers promptly attended to. Write to this bureau, and to the name of "Beautiful Baby". Usually then you get married to one of the more promising prospects, live happily ever afterwards for three months, whereupon your loving spouse cuts you into fifty five peices for the insurance. Well, my answer to that is that I only have a thousand dollars worth of insurance, which ought to discourage you if you were planning to be a hatchet murderer.

What amazing thoughts I'm having! I'm just sitting here and giggling like mad. In the words of the anonymous poet, it must have been something I et. Or wasn't he a poet?

Re the matter of my name after the divorce. As I understand it, to resume your maiden name legally, it is necessary to petition a court of law. By the time this business is over I shall be (no, one says will be as I recall it) so tired of laws and lawsuits and lawyers that I shall have (you see I've given up the shall-will struggle) no strength left for another such worry. So if you don't mind too awfully I'll continue to be Philinda Jones until the real thing comes along.

My dear, I love you. I love you I love you I love you I love you I love you I adore you I love you. I could go on like that forever, but I'd go broke at fifty cents a half ounce. Imagine measuring love by the half ounce in the first place! It will take all eternity for you to find out how very deeply I love you, and even then you'll just be guessing at the magnitude of the thing. Sometimes it makes me want to cry, sometimes to go out and write a poem, sometimes to be a dictator, sometimes to be a witless little hausfrau, and on dangerously frequent occasions, to rush down to the western union and send you a cable telling you all about it at something like a dollar a word, including the address. That's the sort of thing I have to be on the alert against at all times. If I could just touch you and see you for a minute or two! Once in a while I imagine that you will walk in my door some day, and it will really be you, and we will sit down on the chairs I covered in red last month, then talk for a few minutes. I imagine that you are thirsty, and I go and get you a glass of wine from the kitchen, thinking as I go in the kitchen door that this time when I come out again with the bottle and the glasses ~~that~~ you will still be sitting there. Only you won't be, because I'm just dreaming, and you are eight thousand miles away and can't come to my door. So I go and get a box of Kleenex, which is much better than a handkerchief on those occasions. Tomorrow I have to pass an examination, and instead of studying I am telling I want you, which is something you already know. I wish I knew the schedules of the planes to Havana and Maseu as well as I know that I shall never be happy till I am in your arms and biting your left ear, not to mention such irrelevant things as putting my hand underneath your vest to feel how your skin is warm under your shirt, and taking in the details of how your eyes turn up at the corners, and trying desperately but unsuccessfully to kiss you without bumping noses, and thinking that after this one's over there's always time for another one. My Spanish professor confessed to me the other day that he didn't believe there was such a thing as love, but Little Audrey just laughed and laughed, because she knew... But I knew how he felt, for before you came along I used to think secretly and frustratingly the very same thing.

Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne once remarked that he was weary of days and hours, blown buds of barren flowers, desires and dreams and powers, and everything but sleep. Substitute the word "you" for the word "sleep", and you have my sentiments exactly. As they say on the postcards, having wonderful time, wish you were here. Only I'm not having a wonderful time at all, and I wish a little too desperately that you were here, or I were there.

Philinda