

Lagos, Nigeria; October 29, 1942

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Darling Philinda,

Well, it's a whole year now that we have been loving each other with what seems to me to be absolutely unparalleled fervor and devotion, and in only two days it will have been a year since we took one long last look at each other, and had one long last kiss, and you sailed away. Soon, I hope, you will be sailing back, and we will never have to look for the last time and kiss for the last time. Time may come, as you say in your letter of October 13th, when we can afford to be very smug about it all and talk lightly to our children or grandchildren about how we waited and worked in order to be together, but for a long time it's going to be a very serious matter, and it is going to take a lot of prying to get us apart again.

When your letter came explaining that you had been advised that only small freighters went to Bolama and that you were considering coming via San Antonio, Angola and Leopoldville, I checked up with John Burlison about transportation between San Antonio and Matadi. He confirmed what he had said before, namely, that it is pretty tough to get from one to the other. When he arrived in San Antonio, he was informed that there were boats to Matadi, but at very irregular intervals. They said, "You may have to wait a week or a month." As he described the hotel there as the worst hole he had ever seen, I did not think it would be advisable for you to go there. Eventually, they telephoned or wired the Consul in Leopoldville, and he arranged for a taxi to go down from Matadi to pick them up, and they had a nasty ten hour ride in a car up to Matadi, including some delay at the frontier, although all had visas in order. Cap Roberts tells me that, although it is true that only little ships go to Bolama, he thinks there are some good ones which go to Bissau, which, as I said in a previous letter, is connected by fairly frequent service with Bolama. Just after you left Lisbon, there was some talk of my coming to Lagos via Bolama, and I was informed that the Portuguese vessel "Guinee", which is a fair sized boat, was leaving for Portuguese Guinea on November 18th. The plan fell through because at that time PAA was not operating between Bolama and Fisherman's Lake, and there was no other contact with British territory.

I guess the best thing to do is to go to Lisbon and see what the situation is. Parry in his letter seemed to think it was quite possible to get from Lisbon to Bolama or Bissau, although he gave no specific details. Then, too, Boynton has promised to write the boys in Lisbon to do everything possible to put you on a

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Clipper if humanly possible. Jesse has been most helpful and kind throughout the whole affair. At the time you wrote, you had received my letter saying that he had written to suggest to his boss that he offer you a job with the Atlantic Division here in Lagos, but you had not received the one giving the name of the man to go to see. Naturally I am most anxious to find out what, if anything, came of it. You mentioned several times that if you only had a job here, it might be much easier. The local office has gone everything possible on this score; only the head office can actually close the deal.

I have been trying to get in touch with a man I know slightly who was in Bolama to find out what the shipping situation there is like, but he is out of town. Just a few minutes ago I ~~learned~~ learned that a Britisher has recently arrived from there, and I am going to contact him as soon as possible. If I can do it tomorrow morning, I may be able to get the results in this letter.

As far as transportation between Leopoldville and Lagos is concerned, there is frequent service direct to Lagos by British Airways. Although the planes are full and space hard to get, it could be arranged without too great difficulty. I ~~know~~ know the man who controls priority, and he may be able to help. I could send money to you there easily through the Consulate or pay the fare here, but I think it might be better to send you some more right now so that you will have it with you wherever you are. A glance at the old check book indicates that \$500 could be pared off without infringing any laws regarding the overdrawing of accounts. I am using you as a hedge against inflation; by the time you get here, I will have nothing left to lose; but I know you will use it carefully. It's just my old Scotch-Welsh soul squeaking slightly.

Don't miss this point: When you leave the U.S., you should have only a very small amount of cash in U.S. currency. A recent treasury order makes it illegal to bring more than \$50.00 into the country per person, and that means that U.S. currency will have ~~pr~~ practically no value at all abroad. Travelers checks can be imported without restriction, so their value in the Lisbon bucket shops will be much higher, so take practically all your money in bank drafts or travelers checks. I should think the latter preferable. I am still wondering what I am going to do with my \$600 in cash, but not worrying about it.

Mac and I have been going out quite a lot recently. Last night we had dinner with the son of the Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa. I wished you were there, since he spoke very little english and we no French. He is an African, you know, and his father, as governor of the Chad territory swung the whole works to de Gaulle in the summer of 1940, so the lad has quite a background. Also present was a Mr. Azikiwe, the editor and owner of the largest local paper, also an African. He studied for several years in the U.S. and is perhaps the most prominent agitator for native rights in Nigeria. I found him a very intelligent man, although I don't know how practical he is. He has certainly made a success of the newspapers. If I don't have time to write more tomorrow, I love you terrifically. And it's permanent.

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Here is a last minute postscript on the results of my interview this morning with a British official who has recently arrived here from Lisbon via Bolama. He came all the way by air, and says of course that is the best way to come. He confirms that living conditions in Bissau for a single woman would not be satisfactory. The wretched hotel there is run by a Syrian and you are likely to have people hammering on your door at night etc. He says he would not have his wife stay there alone, and I think that is a pretty good criterion. He also says the transportation between Bissau and Bolama isn't much good now. The launch which ran every day before the war now only runs once a week, so if you arrived in Bissau, you might have some difficulty in getting to Bolama. We could request the assistance of the British Consul, and I would do so if necessary, but not otherwise, as it would be an imposition.

My informant also suggested that you miss Santo Antonio do Zaire at all costs. If you must go to Angola, he suggests that you go to Loanda and hire a car to take you to Matadi. He seems to be quite sure that you would be able to get a car, and we now have a Consulate at Loanda. I know Mr. Day slightly, and I know he would be glad to help. My friend said you could travel from Loanda to Matadi in about 10 hours, which seems pretty short to me, as it is a good distance, and he says he considers it perfectly safe, although rather expensive. There is a very good hotel at Matadi and train service to Leopoldville. Once in Leo, you would be all right. On the whole, although very out of the way, he considers this probably the most ~~important~~ desirable route of all, unless you can manage to get on a plane at Lisbon for Bolama and Fisherman's Lake direct, which isn't likely.

To sum up, there are various means of communication, and you are not likely to get stuck anyplace. The best thing to do is to go to Lisbon, as you have planned, and talk to the shipping people and to Pan American there to see what the situation is. If they can get you to Bolama, that is best. Next best is Loanda, ~~u/~~ Sometimes the Portuguese vessels put in at Freetown for control; they will not sell a ticket for Freetown, of course, but since you have a transit visa for Sierra Leone, you ~~can~~ could go ~~there~~ ashore there, although there isn't much space on the planes which operate weekly between Freetown and Accra and the housing situation is terrible. It would be best to send a note on shore if possible to Christian K. Nielsen, American Consular Agent, inquiring whether there was any possibility of reasonably soon transportation to Lagos and a place to stay in the meantime, and follow his advice. It is impossible to give you any advice on this in advance, as I can't tell what the situation will be when you arrive. The point is, the means exist, and it is simply a question of waiting. I hope the enclosed check will help to cover waiting expenses.

Darling, it is boiling hot today and extremely humid. I am going to stop now before turning into a grease ball. I do love you very much indeed, dearest, and I can hardly wait till you get here. But take good care of yourself; you're the only thing I have in the world.

Your