



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL
Lagos, Nigeria
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Dearest People,

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In spite of the very best intentions in the world the press of all sorts and kinds of business has made it absolutely impossible from the standpoint of time, to write to you lovely people. On the Boat I had time, but since the very first hour I got off the old hulk I've been on the move every minute. First it was the preparations for the wedding, and the meeting of everyone, and the necessary official calls. Then it was a slightly breifish honeymoon of twenty-four hours at Tarqua Bay, afterwards it has been work, work, work all day, till just time enough to dress for the party of the evening. Believe it or not, in two weeks we have been together we have spent exactly three nights home alone, on which occasions we were too dead tired to do anything more than eat dinner and fall asleep. This is the third in that short series of evenings at home alone.

First of all I want to say that I like Lagos very much. The Europeans here lead a good life, contrary to everything everyone has ever said. It is my opinion that all the unfavorable comment either comes from 1) the transients, who have only nasty hotels to stay in and see none of the pleasant social life, or, 2) the permanent residents who are very glad to let it be known at home that Lagos is a pest-hole and most unhealthy, because in that way they can insure abundant leave for themselves. They will often admit that this is exactly why Lagos has such a poor reputation, but they always add: "You'd better spread the same story and stick by the rest of us!" Also, for men married and unmarried, the lack of women is something that eventually becomes somewhat of a problem. It's not too ghastly hot for me right now, because you know I like and am used to hot weather.

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Lagos itself is, of course, not a center of civilization exactly, but I haven't noticed any particular lack of the comforts of life, and the appearance of the town is not too bad. Around the harbor it is almost picturesque, and in the European part of town the streets and houses resemble the outlying portions of Coral Gables, with the same wide lawns, flowering shrubs, palm-lined beaches, wide-open houses. Our own particular domicile is over the Consulate, and therefore extremely convenient for work. With the car, we have

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no transportation problem. Our apartment is as big as they all are out here, with plenty of room to move about in and cool breezes from the harbor two blocks away. Luckily for me I came into a fully prepared household, and our four servants are fairly well trained. For future reference, they are Thompson the steward, Willie the Small Boy, Josiah the cook, and his mate who as far as I know is nameless. I am teaching Josiah the subtleties of cuisine, and he already knew the good solid type of cooking. Thompson is a rather good Head Boy, thank goodness for me. I have some trouble making myself understood in Bush English, generally just plodding ahead in the King's variety and hoping for the best. I feel very self conscious trying to say "You go one time pass chop", which freely translated means "Hurry up and serve dinner". But I guess I'll get used to it.

The wedding was held in the American Baptist Church on Broad Street, Dr. Adair officiating. I was scared to death, but William insisted that he wouldn't feel properly married unless it was in a church with all the accompaniments. Anita Price (the girl who works with me in the office) made most of the arrangements, such as flowers and music, and Mr Shantz the Consul General acted as poppa and gave me away. Afterwards we trooped over to Mr. Shantz's house (beautiful, with a gorgeous tropical garden, where the guests converged over punnh and congratulations) and Bill and I stood there shaking hands and feeling triumphant for two hours. Then we came home, changed for dinner, and went back to Mr. Shantz's house. One always changes for dinner here, principally perhaps because long dresses help combat mosquitos and hide mosquito boots. I forgot to mention that before the weddin I stayed with a girl named Sybil Vincent, British, who is a great friend of Bill and especially of Mac (McSweeney). She was a friend in need. Anita was my bridesmaid and Mac was best man, having flown down from Accra for the occasion.

Since then, as I said, we have been leading a hectic social life which will entail leading more of a hectic social life in order to pay back all our social debts. Last night we had dinner at the home of the acting Governor of the colony and his wife, very nice, folksy people. We have been to so darned many affairs that it is impossible to name them all. On the two Sundays I have been here we have gone to Tarqua Bay, to Mr. Shantz's cottage that he inherited from Mr. Jester. It's not at all far from Lagos, but the change is complete. There is wonderful surf bathing, and we always use surf boards to great advantage.

My work is quite as it was in Lisbon, except that it is more comprehensive. I am having a great struggle to put the files in order again. They are a complete mess. Anita says she is sure I'll soon run out of energy trying to straighten them, but adds that it's wonderful while it lasts. I am trying to earn my eighteen hundred per annum, so England can be PROUD of me! Likewise William, who says he is anyway.