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Dear Family,

If you would care to have the delightful experience of making your "foyer" in a leaky submarine, come to Nigeria in June! We have been going through solid water at a depth of approximately twenty feet for the past three days. The water is leaking down from the ceilings, coming in at a right angle, penetrating tight cracks in solid spurs, digging enormous craters in the garden, forging canyons under roof drains, forming charming little lily pools on the path and in the adjacent alley. It is doing things that in all reasonableness are impossible. Occasionally it lets up to the level of a cloudburst, sometimes even ceases, relatively speaking; i.e., it is only raining a good, hearty American rain. We look out the windows in wonder, but we can only see about twenty feet away. In a phrase, it's just like the movies— you know, Hedy Lamarr in a sarong, a rickety tropical building in the outposts of Empire, a morose, five-o'clock-shadowed white man gazing hopelessly out at the traditional furious tropical rain beating relentlessly down. Well, we have it to offer Hollywood, and I claim we can beat them at their own game, for the reason that no sane moviegoer would believe this rain of ours. Mr. Lynch, Bill Bruns and I stood and watched it in amazement a few moments ago. It's been keeping it up for three days.

William and I rather like it, although on the days when it is just ordinarily gloomy, it has the tendency to get on your nerves a trifle. But such a rain as we have been having is wonderful and Homeric—epical. It is good in another way: it makes the world cool and clean. Closer to homely things, it allows me to wear my light-weight summer wool suit (purchased the December-before-last at Mr. Kliens Emporium), as well as the delightful marabou evening jacket that looks like foam on the top of beer and cost me all of \$16 bucks in an enchanted moment at Altman's.

We have written to the Rest House at Jos, and they returned the disheartening information that there are no reservations available until the middle of August. So I have written again to the Arnalls to find out if

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they can take us in for two weeks beginning the fourteenth of July, when we are scheduled to arrive at Jos. We are to leave our car in the hands of Bill Bruns, who is quite careless. A second hand car fetches at least two hundred pounds- even an old one. A 1940 of '39 model brings in three or four hundred. We will undoubtedly make a profit on the original price of our car when we leave, since it is 1942 and very nice looking. The original price (including freight charges) being some 1200 dollars. A nice thing, a consoling thought.

Old Aliu Yaya the garden-er is out already, indefatigably working away. That Hausa man is a complete contrast to our other Hausa man- Adamu Katagu. . . .

However, even Aliu has extra expenses. Last year he bought an expensive wife, and had to ask William for an advance of five pounds. To prove that his new wife was worth the price, he brought her in after the ceremony to salute the Consular staff. William says he thinks Aliu was not cheated. When there is work to be done, Aliu always runs to it smiling a sweet smile above his grey beard. He wears his hair completely shaven. Now his cranium is gleaming from the rain. He is industrially digging up the garden and putting it back again, cutting the grass furiously with his machete (pronounced locally "matchett", as in Hatchet.), stopping only to wring the rain out of his bedraggled shorts.

We got in a Harper's Bazaar for Mrs. Zarpas the wife of the local omnibus king, and we have been reading it avidly, seeping ourselves in its gorgeously effete pages. We will soon have to put it back carefully in its wrapper and send it over to their house. We feel strongly about our right to read it, because Mrs. Zarpas' house is air-conditioned, and too many privileges spoil people. They are British-naturalized Greeks. She is famous for having bought a fine outfit of expensive clothes in New York last year, which was sunk in mid-Atlantic.

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Thursday night's army party at the camp was a great success, and all the people who had reluctantly gone as a sort of USO duty, came away delighted with the music (good American Swing on an excellent pick-up), the boys (nice-mannered home town boys) and the food (a regal buffet supper, complete with ham, cheese delights, free drinks, turkey sandwiches) the dancing (every thing done well, from jitter-bug to smooth) the decorations (flags and what they termed "Javanese lanterns", the latter looking suspiciously pre-Pearl Harbor). A Japanese flag was hastily removed in the nick of time, lost among a sea of waving flags hanging from the ceiling. In the center hung a Christmas bell, left over, apparently. There was cutting-in, most unheard of in these parts, reminding me nostalgically of home. I can modestly claim to have been the Belle of the Ball, dressed in my black sequins with the little sequin-and net skull cap, and the only American girl there. I was whirled happily from boy to boy, and my old bones began to dance by their rheumatic old selves. Two swains proffered me viands, beat off the throngs, amused me with tales, while William looked on (the prescribed role of husbands) ~~with~~ with an expression that was part smug and part glum. I came away with a triumphant gleam in my rejuvenated eyes, and vain as could be for the next two days.

On Friday evening we dined with Dick Poland at the BOAC mess, and talked literature. MacMillan and Bruns ate with us. The former has inherited an ice cream mix and a freezer from Leopoldville, coupled with a delicious fudge syrup. He gave some of his concoction to me and William. A real fudge sundae! The luscious condiment melted in our mouths and trickled down our bemused palates.

Saturday night we took a party to the club after dinner, and some interesting extraneous persons trailed along with us- a BEW man who doesn't seem to have missed anything, from Afganistan to Oman, from Patagonia to the Bering Sea.

Sunday we went in the Governor's launch with Mr. Wilson, to the MEW beach house. They don't do things as well as we do at our beach house. No curry, no showers. But they have latex mattresses that are very comfortable.

I have finally joined the Library (quite an expensive proposition), and Monday and Tuesday nights I read Huxley's Antic Hay. Found it very good, since in any case I like anything the man writes. I am now deep in his Point Counter Point. I read it in Paris three years ago, and find to my surprise that I remember it extremely well. My favorites are still Limbo and good old Brave New World, always as delightfully amusing as the first time you read it.

Farewell for the present, my dears.

LPK