

Without Prejudice.' !!! !

March 23rd, 1939.

Dear Maud,

Well, how are the war clouds over there now? I know what a tension there must be in London these days, from the Crisis last September. I hope you have got yourself a gas mask. If not telephone to the Marylebone Town hall and they will see that you have one - they are supplied free. And I thought the big silver safe would make a good refuge room if need be. Just past paper over the outlet over the door and wet blankets over the door - and the little outer portion could be a safety entrance, with wet blankets over the window and door. I do pray that it will never be necessary to use it. Of course war will have to come eventually - I think this latest move of Hitler's proves that much. It is dreadful isn't it - and I suppose this isn't too good for selling West Wing - It was what I foresaw last autumn - I wish you were safely away from there.

It is so nice here - we are having rather cloudy weather the last few days but not cold - I think it is trying to rain - I have a very pleasant room with a little balcony - It is on the sunny side and is about half way up the hill - You know this hotel climbs right up the side of the hill. It's quite a pleasant sized room and is nicely furnished with oriental rugs and pretty furniture - It was furnished by a tenant of the hotel with her own things, but she has gone away for a year travelling and the management did not wish to put a stranger in here so I am lucky and have the room. I have a small bathroom, with a shower bath instead of a tub. The food is excellent, with a longish menu to choose from - I haven't grown tired of it as I usually do in a hotel. I can go down to the dining room or have it served in my room just as I wish - so it is quite comfortable - and I have an electric kettle in my room and can make a cup of tea whenever I like. And there is a garden here so I don't feel shut in. I am feeling very much better, but I have had a hard time this winter - much harder than anyone else has realized, for I have tried to keep my bad feelings to myself as much as possible - I don't want folks here to think an invalid has come home to be taken care of - but I do really feel heaps better now and look better - I have put on some weight again - you know I went down twenty pounds. I am working on a play and have an idea for another one as this one is just about finished. I hope I hit the nail on the head this time. I work all day and then go for a walk in the afternoon late. I really keep myself tied down to hours for that is the only way to get anything accomplished. Miss Kenney is a darling - if I were her own she could not do more for me than she is doing - and it seems so good to be here with her. She still works quite strenuously - is off at her office all day and home about six in the evening - She stays home on Saturdays and Sundays

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They have just completed a new addition to the hotel - the second one she has built in five years - it's a charming place - rather unsophisticated for a hotel in Hollywood and that is the secret of it's success. I don't see much change in Miss Kenney - she is just the same as I have always known her - she has put on a little weight which is becoming to her.

Maurine is expecting an addition to her family in May or June and is very happy about that - I think I may go up with them next week to Fresno, as they are driving up, and my friend Helen, who has Sammy, is urging me to come up and make her a visit, says sSammy wants to see his mummy.

I had another letter from Mr. Stevens at the bank - I just can't do anything about it now - I'll send you a copy of his letter - I wrote him, as I told you, that I expected the matter would be taken care of this next quarter - He seems to think if the hundred were paid now and reduce the overdraft to 500 that it would be alright. I presume it would be no use to suggest to Robin that she pay the hundred now and thus prevent the overdraft being called in. Be very careful how you move in the matter - I just can't do anything now and it is useless to bombard me. I'm very sorry, but there it is. I can't do what I can't do can I?

I am writing "without prejudice" on this for one never knows with letters how they sometimes find themselves in the wrong hands - and if you should be ill and Robin or Etienne should be over there - Well, I just learned since I have been here of an awful example of that right in my own family so I'm playing safe - even if I write a love letter I put that at the beginning! And that's what I call this new play you know!

I am not going to take the slightest responsibility with regard to that overdraft. It was made under your power of attorney and will have to stand that way. You know of course, if I find a little later that I can help you I will do so, but I am not binding myself in any way at the moment because I just can't. You must be very careful too - for if you put the onnus of that overdraft on me do you see where it might lead to - ~~xxxxxxx~~ I'll put an extra little piece of paper in with this letter and perhaps you can figure out what I mean - I am so afraid to put in a letter all the things I would tell you with regard to it for fear that it might go astray - I am not worried for my own sake, but for yours. I want to protect you in every way possible, but you must not make it difficult for me to do so - Weigh everything you do or say over and over again before you do it - look at it from all sides and where it may lead to.

I had an Irish Sweep ticket but it did not come in!  
Bad luck!

WITHOUT PREJUDICE. -

*Don't assume you are one thing - she wishes to cut me free of all responsibility in every direction!*

I do not wish you to give Miss Kenney's or this address to anyone there. Now please observe that! Not to anyone - no matter how they insist. Thomas Cook is my permanent address. It is quite sufficient for anyone. I get the letters at once for they forward them wherever I am. I have purposely not given you my address before for I thought you might unthinkingly give my address to someone there. You know you gave Miss Kenney's address to Mr. Stevens. That wasn't right of you and doesn't help matters at all. I am determined not to have my peace of mind disturbed at this time and if they bombard me much more I am going to hand it all over to Miss Kenney to attend to. I suppose this sounds hard and unkind to you, but it isn't meant to be. I have been ill both physically and mentally - and now the only way to get myself straightened out and get on my own feet again is to have a peaceful time to write and see what I can do. I know I have got talent and I am going to see if I can't make it produce dividends - I feel I must prove to myself that I can take care of myself without the help of anyone else, matrimonially or otherwise. This I must do first. There are certain things I want to do myself, on my own. I want to feel independent. This is for my own self respect.

Please try to understand all I am trying to explain - If I could talk with you I would tell you much more, but letters are so often misunderstood.

I do hope something will work out for West Wing, but do try to get something else started - Oh, how I wish I had dropped it all years ago and had started on some line independently - then today it would be a different story. I suppose it is useless to even suggest that you write on your book - Of course you will say all your papers and etc are in storage - That isn't much of an excuse - it is only an excuse after all - For if you didn't have a scrap of anything you could write a very interesting story of your life - too much accurate facts are boring, but just a charming story of your life as you could tell it would be interesting. Not too chocolate box either - That style went out with Mary Pickford's curls.

Well, I must close this and get it posted - I do hope it finds you happy and with some good fortune - I think of you and worry about you, and hope that all is well. If I had won the Irish Sweep I was just going to sail over there and collect it and sail in unannounced on you - wouldn't you have been surprised!

Well, goodnight and take care of yourself and try not to worry too much - think each day that you can go through that day alright and the next day isn't here yet.

Love,  
*Kenna*

P.S. I don't think you need to fear Robin taking West Wing for I don't think she wants it or she would have done so long ago - there is a big financial call there you know if she does.

*P.S. If you see any dear Raymond - tell him I am party to a copy of the plus on Monday*