

March 12th - 39

Dear Maud,

I have just had your letter of February 28th - and will try to get an answer off so it will catch Wednesday's boat. I have been ill and not up to any letter writing. I began a letter to you on the twentieth of last month - I'll put it in if I don't tell you all that's in it in this letter. I can't get to feeling very strong for some reason, or ambitious, but will be alright soon.

I am sorry poor little Vally was so ill but hope he is alright now - he is such a dear little thing - If you sell and go away do have him go to sleep because it would be kinder to him. He is too old to adjust himself to a new home - and he is accustomed to such a big garden and a free life and he would be unhappy and probably stray if he were in a small place. Sammy is in the North for the moment until I get to feeling up to settling in a place for myself. A school friend of mine who has a lovely big garden in Fresno and has part of it fenced in for her seven months old cocker spaniel is keeping him for me. She is mad about him and is just as silly as we are about our pets. She says he sleeps on her bed - At first they tried making him sleep downstairs with their puppy but he wouldn't let them sleep for two nights and so on the third night they let him come upstairs and he took possession of her bed. She says he never stirs for fear of being ousted. I am going up there in a couple of weeks I think - Maurine and her husband are driving up and are going to take me. Maurine is very sweet - she is expecting the stork about the end of May or June - They are very happy about it and are hoping it will be a boy, but will be quite happy if it is just as healthy and good as their little girl is. Her husband is going to college and will be able to take a professorship in about eighteen months time - It will be a better life for them. They seem very happy.

I haven't much news for I have not been out much, but it is so lovely here - the sunshine is so lovely and it is so easy to keep warm. I wish you were out here away from all the difficulties there - life seems so much less complicated in this country -

Now about your brother's foils - the one you are nursing and grieving over because it is rusty is not your brother's at all! Now don't you see what a silly thing sentiment is? You have grieved over that one and treasured it - and it is just an old one that the Fay Compton School left there when they had that play for the blind school! Your brother's foils are carefully packed in one of the brown trunks in storage. I tried to be very careful of your treasures - and as to the things that were not yet sent to storage - you remember I did all the removing in one day and then the next day had the second cable from Nella - and so didn't gather up any more to send along with the other things in storage. Regarding the trunks and basket that went to Paris - That was a mistake of the shipping company and they agreed that they would stand all expense connected with the mistake. It was not my mistake at all. They agreed when I went down to see them

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with Mr. Mc Andrews that they would stand the expense ,that it was their error.

Regarding the window cords in the ballroom. The ones that were broken were broken before the ball and as I could not afford to have them replaced I had the blocks nailed it - they answered my purpose. And when the ball was on they took out all the windows and had steps down from all the windows -and when they put the windows back they put them back exactly as they were - blocks and all.

The Ascot water heater and the stove in the pantry were only taken for one year - ask to see the contracts - and ask the man who signed it up to come out and talk to you about it. He knew I had let the house only for a short period and it was agreed I was only renting them. Not buying them.

With regard to any coal bill anyone said I incurred in your name It isn't true. And I never told any one that you were away or had any connection with anything I ever ordered. So don't pay any such bill.

About Blaskett - You know that was settled in court. He cannot make you liable unless you write to him which you never should do - You must leave such things to your lawyers. The same applies to Josepha - you must not try to write anything to anybody. I finally learned that! I should think something could be done to make that girl behave herself and stop worrying you.

I am writing to Mr. Keith - I had two letters from him, but they were not given to me at once - I will send you a copy. I had a very peculiar letter from Mr. Stevens, a copy of which I am enclosing to you - I am afraid you weren't very wise in speaking to him, If you gave him an impression that I hadn't been reliable - that is the way his letter sounded to me. It would only react on you, you know. In my reply to him, as you will see, I thought that would enable you to see, as you said you hoped to, if you can dispose of W.W. and be able to take care of the overdraft. Robin wrote me quite a horrid little note which I got a couple of days ago - I wish I could afford to take care of this overdraft for you but at this time I cannot . I hope to have my own affairs straightened out within the next six months, but at the moment must be very very careful.

My mother's sister came a couple of days ago from the East - she is the one next to Mama (Not Auntie Grace.) It makes me sad to think they are all here and my own darling Mother is gone! I will never become reconciled to the fact that I let all those years slip away and my Mother with them.

I am so glad you have some broadcasting to do - and I hope you will get some more. Can you arrange a series of talks that would be interesting to carry on indefinitely? The radios here have very good programs and a lot of nonsense -I don't like so much advertising -

I like the English programs better. However, I think there is money in it here. Have you thought of some sort of play or something to give continuously over the radio as they do over here - ending each time on suspense. Possibly reading a story over the radio? Or could you not give a series of interesting talks about Hollywood - Hollywood as it really is- Hollywood boulevard - the Bowl - The drive-in-out door theatres - all the thousand and one things that make up hollywood - Also the pretty homes - perhaps I could help you a little with that

I wish you would send me a few of the clippings of the articles that appear in the Sketch about the man and his dog - It was Pountney or something like that - and his scotch dog Rodney. They were amusing little articles and appeared about once a week. His dog was stolen from him in Hyde Park just about the time I came away - and I have often wondered whether he got him back or not. Do telephone the newspaper and ask them if he did - and see if you can get some of the back copies if he is not longer writing them. There might be some rolled up in that top room upstairs where they were some odds and ends stored - Tell Mrs. Bristow I mean the room Mrs. Callicott had. If there are any about the Coronation or the Windsors I would like to have them sometime when stamp money is more free - Also I left my pet ~~hat~~ *hat* - I am so cross - I don't know how I happened to do it - It is a little blue sailor with loops of alice blue and dark blue ribbon - and a little veil - If it looks well on you take it and wear it - but if it doesn't, if anyone should be coming this way that you could ask to bring it I would like it. Also I think I left some Princess Pilar drawings up in one of the empty dresser drawers either in those vacant rooms or up in Pitter's suite. I can't seem to remember what I did with them. I had had them pinned on the wall in the hallway in my studio section.

I made an unfortunate discovery when I opened my trunk at last after coming back down here. I remember now of doing it when I thought I was packing up everything for good and that we were both returning to California. I packed your little brown leather trinket case in my trunk. I did not want to send it to storage but thought I would give it to you when I met you out here. I have sealed it up with sealing wax and will deposit it with a bank or with anyone you would like me to leave it with. Who did you leave your books and furniture and bits with? I could leave it with them if you like? It costs four dollars a year to leave it in the bank, but I would prefer to do that than to keep it with me. I will send it if I get a good opportunity - but if I send it through the post you will probably have duty to pay so that's no good. They would probably charge you as much duty as the things are worth. I could have kicked myself when I found it. It was in my big trunk and not in my small trunk with my immediate needs in it.

The lawn mower should be sharpened by now - but I presume you have already had that done - the police usually help toward it - Write to the agency whose name is on the mower and they will tell you where to send it. If you could make some arrangement with Sargeant Lakerhurst to mow the lawns I think that would be the best arrangement possible - You might be able to do so if he has retired. If you need to get a gardner - I gave the gardners I had the rent of the cottage and ten shillings a week - and half their insurance - but I stamped their cards myself! I advertised in the paper and got heaps of answer - I advertised for a gardner handy man, three days a week for rent of small lodge and small wage.

No you didn't send that power of attorney for the Bebbs matter you have got that mixed up - You made one out before you left and then sent a second one from California that was properly made out and acknowledged. I don't think Bebbs did me in any more than he would have you - not as much probably!

Telephone

I don't like to sound cross with you, Maudy, when I know what a devilish time you are having - but you must not say that I used your power of attorney unwisely or unfairly - that is not right - I only used it when necessary and for your interests - I only used it for gas and electric contracts where necessary because the contracts were in your name. And the overdraft of Robins - that was done to enable me to send you money and to meet the expenses of the property and thereby save it for you (Though I am beginning to think it would have been better to have let it go then.) That was done with your knowledge and consent. What I did I did with the best ability I had and I had only one object and that to help you - There was no other use whatsoever made of your power of attorney. And none of the money received on the overdraft was used for me or my expenses.

It seems so good to be out of all that nightmare of worry - it seems so endless - I don't see why you ever went back to it. It hypnotized me when I was there - I thought that house all important but now that I am away from it I realize that if we had both of us washed it out years ago we would be much better off today - I can't understand how ~~xxxxxxx~~ when you were once away from it even for a few months how you ever wanted to go back to it! I do hope you can sell it for something this spring - no matter how little - Don't get your ideas up any, dear - just get down to bed rock - There is so much war talk here that I wonder if there are any buyers in London.

The La Mottes are still in Paris - or were the last letter I had from them. I am glad Mrs. Bristow is taking such nice care of you. I think she is one of the kindest and nicest women I know - Her little girls are nice too aren't they - remember me to all of them. Someday when I get things straightened out here I want to do something very nice for her to let her know I do appreciate her. Do you see Betty - how is she getting on? Remember me to Sargeant Lukerhust and his wife - and all who ask for me - I intend to write to Frida, the Langs, and Dora and Mike and several others, but haven't been up to it before.

About the let for the ball - I don't know how much you got for it - I did tell young Mr. Montague of Jacksons that I was going to give him a fiver if he pulled it off - that for himself, apart from the firm's commission - but that's up to you to do what you please. The rent must all be paid before the ball - I had a half down on signing of the agreement, I think - and the balance about two weeks before. The agreement is either in your file which I left you or Dr. Nathan had a copy in his office - ~~with~~ Lady Boyne and and Lady Dartmouth's party. They take out insurance to cover all liability that night - they take all responsibility - you do nothing. They had the gas company put in stoves in the old kitchen if they want to cook much or just a large one in the skullery - Lock up our own kitchen they do not use that or the room at the foot of the stairs. Mrs. Bristow knows how we did the last time. They bring in any furniture they want. It is better that way for then they are not responsible for yours - Mrs *Phillips* preferred to do it that way and so moved all your furniture upstairs out of the way.

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They have the basement premises, except our kitchen premises and the maid's rooms - the ground floor, except the pantry and stair room next - I put the statue against the basement and upstairs door - and then the mirror from the ballroom in front of that - so it shut off the pantry and all beyond. The men who are there working move those things about - it is done at the tenants responsibility - and you touch nothing - and do nothing other than hand it over reasonably clean. The top floor is not included - So you take refuge up there that night. If they are thoroughly nice people they will invite you - if not well - my opinion is that the Priors are climbers - they are rather piloted about by a grey haired lady - whom it might be well for you to cultivate - I don't know? If they want other pianos than yours they take yours away and put in what they want and then return yours - I think they will want better ones than the ones that are there and I would not let them use the Stienway the other time - we just left it in the Music room. You stand no expense for anything - The gas and electric is read when their workmen come onto the premises and again when they have finished clearing - also the telephone is read the same way. For their workmen use it a lot, and you can't be watching. Do not let them touch your present meters - if they want more light power there is a lead in at the corner of the meter room and they can put in an addition meter for out of door lighting - there is sufficient for anything in the house. They must sign anything required extra with the electric or gas company.

You will find it is hard on the garden - but you must not stand around and fuss at them - it is just part of it and will not do any good for you to worry too much about it - just makes you and your house unpopular and hampers them without doing any good - of course they must not do permanent damage to the garden such as cutting or breaking limbs of trees and etc - but the flowerbed outside the ballroom will be a wreck so expect that and don't worry - it recovers very quickly - in a couple of weeks time. If you are pleasant to the caterer's head man they will be careful - I never speak to the workmen at all unless to say goodmorning.

The contract I had with Lady Dartmouth is very good and includes everything very well - I wish you could get another one - it all helps. I got a hundred and fifty pounds from Mrs. Phillips and paid no commission as she came directly to me - I got two hundred from Lady Dartmouth - or rather 180 I think it was. Out of that I got a hundred and fifty clear - they were several had to have commissions and it made so little when all split up, that there was danger it might go elsewhere, that I said I would be quite satisfied if I got ~~150~~ 150 net to me and they could arrange the commissions above that - It is better to pay good commissions and get the lots if you can. I'll try and tell you more about it in my next but this is enough to go on with - but be sure to get your money beforehand - half at least should be paid on signing the contract. Mrs. Phillips paid it all when she signed up! The ball might not take place unless paid for before and you will be holding that date for them so it must be paid when signed, or they might change their minds and then where would you be.

They used the Music room for a sitting out room - your bedroom for the lady's dressing room - coat racks and ~~axmlix~~ maid in the little sitting room and extra tables and mirrors about your room for titixating. The dining room for the men's cloak and the cloakroom for them - the door there into your suite locked - The landing room for a dressing room for some ballet artists and also the oak room - then the last time the oak room was used for the Princess Royal.

Perhaps you could sell W.W. to the Priors - I had just a faint idea it might be popular - they have a house at Hampstead - but it is a little Jewish and passee out there now (I don't know whether the Priors care Jewish or not, but I don't think so.

They put a platform out the music room window (next the ball room)-(it is down by the seed house I think) and built a connecting platform to the first window of the ballroom and took out all the windows. Lady Dartmouth and Lady Boyne received in the Music room and then the guests passed on out the window to the ballroom - it was a nice arrangement and relieved the congestion in the hallway. Mr. Montague saw the arrangement. Mr. Jones, Ralph Pay has the pictures taken that night. Well - good luck to you I think I have told you nearly everything I can think of now - I'm very tired so will close - am staying out here in Hollywood with a friend until I go North - but I keep to Thomas Cook and Sons. You gave Mr. Stegens my address in care of Miss Eenny - I do not like that - If I had wanted him to have such an address I would have given it to him. It is a nuisance for her to bother forwarding my letters and it is silly to send them there and they are not trouble to Thomas Cook - it is their business - and much more apt to catch up with me, as I keep them posted.

Are Robin and Etienne nice to you? Do you see them at all? I worry about you, but it is no use to do so until I can do something to help you, is it? I have hopes that I will be in a better position shortly and you know if I can I will always help you - so keep a stiff upper lip and don't get blue no matter how dark it looks - Are you trying at all to really study C.S. and do you go to Mr. Doorley or anyone else? I do think one must really study though - get an understanding - not just expect the material benefits - but try to get the spiritual benefits first and then the other things will naturally straighten out - I do wish you could really grasp it. It is such a comfort. I know how hard it is to rid one's thoughts of material prejudices and etc - but one must or else leave it alone. You can't get the help and get anything out of C.S. unless you put something into it.

Well there I go again preaching at you - and I determined I never would gain - you will just have to work out your own salvation no one else can do it for you. I wish my ship would sail into ~~harbour~~ harbour and then I'd get you out of pawn so you could live a reasonable life, and not so much worry.

Well goodnight, dear - and take care of yourself - ^{as} your leg healed alright and is your back strange now - One of my friend's husband is a very fine doctor - we discussed your injury and he said your back would get strong and alright again, but that it takes time. I think you are wonderfully brave - much braver than I ever could be. - I don't really see how you go through everything so finely - but keep your courage up and don't go down in the depths - it is all going to work out alright - I feel convinced of that now - but can't say much more at this time.

My love to you,

Mrs Binstons daughter is using my library card & had a notice that Ark No 67208 - Piccadilly Inn (or Tim)

*you could sign
- return my
- card for herself
- to get her
- it
- returned it
- perhaps it will be better*