

The Studio,

December 8th, 1937.

Dear Maudie -

I'll try to answer all your questions in my next. I never seem to get a moment any more.

It will be just about Xmas when you get this and I wonder where you'll be - Your letter was nice and long but you utterly failed to tell me anything about yourself or your plans! What did you want the hundred pounds for? Have you taken a studio? What prospect have you of earning some money if you have a studio etc? I would like to know a little about what is happening to you, dear.

Everything here as usual - it is very difficult to keep warm and costs like everything! I'll be glad when summer comes I am quite comfortable now that I have got accustomed to the wide, open spaces - at first I was dreadfully depressed - I could hardly stand it at all! Now I am happier. The dogs are quite happy - I know you will love little Henna - I had a long letter from Mrs. La Motte this morning - admonishing me not to give Nonnie to anyone and to take good care of her - Nonnie is a pet name for Henna. How they love the dogs! And how the dogs love them! They will go mad when they see them again - I'm so glad for they were quite miserable after they left and now they will have faith that people do return. For you know first they lost you and then they lost the La Mottes!

Don't you love my dear pretty La Motte's? They are too lovely and fragile for anything - I hope you saw them in house clothes - they look so pretty without their hats - they show off so well - and they are just as lovely as they look! I hope you didn't miss them - They wrote me they would be at the Ambassador and then today in their letter say the Beverly Wilshire - so I don't know what to think! I believe they have Mrs. Millard's address!

Desmond's play was on two weeks ago - Sunday night It was very good - a little long but excellent - I should think he would sell it. I have lately got acquainted with Mary Hinton - do you know her? She is Elizabeth Montague's cousin - and is on the stage - but is one of the moving spirits behind a very good new Sunday night club - I want to know her more so I can broach the subject of my plays - I am working on a new one - I don't know whether to call it "Without Prejudice" or "and So They were Married." which do you like?

Etienne came home today but I haven't seen him yet -
Robin has been very ill with a very bad chill for two
weeks - I went over the other day and her house was like
an icebox - she was in a dreadful state - hardly able to
notice anyone. I got the servants to build up big fires and
I came over here and got my electric fire and went back and
heated up her rooms - and staid and chatted with her for tea
and dinner - she was a different person when I left. I think
she was slowly freezing to death and didn't know it! The doctor
was delighted with the improvement and took all the credit.
She is almost herself again today and I think will be up in
a day or so - Funny, how so few people know how to make themselves
comfortable!

Darling, I am so humiliated that you have not written
to Robin - I can't think why you haven't - You could spend
money cabling when you wanted it - the least you could have
done was to write to her immediately! It was a wonderful thing
for her to do - She gets nothing out of it - not even interest!
Has just done it to help us - and after all you are not a close
friend of her's! I am so ashamed - whenever I see Robin she
asks if I have heard from you - I told her I had and that you
were writing to her! Really dear, you have let me down very badly
by not writing to her. If you haven't by now don't let one
hour elapse before you do - But surely you have! I just can't
bear the thought that you haven't!

You know, Maud - if you are not really doing something
that will lead somewhere possibly, don't you think it might be
as well for you to take part of the money and come home? And then
it would leave me free to go to Mama - I really feel I should.
I have tried to manage things here as well as I could see to
do, but it is sure not to be the way you would have done it if
you had been here - no two people ever do things the same way
and I would rather you were here to look after things yourself -
and then any mistakes that are made are yours - I have had
almost unsurmountable problems and I have tried to solve them
to the best of my ability but I am not a business person and it
all worries me very very much. You know there has been no money
coming in at all from any source except what I could make come
in in different directions, and at no time was there sufficient
to cover the outgoings - and it has been two and a half years
since you left - and the place is still yours. As for keeping
minute accounts such as you like to do - it is an utter impossibility
for me to do so - I haven't got that kind of a mind - and you
certainly knew it!

I am having difficulties with Josepha - she has

got into the hands of a cheap lawyer and he thinks he sees a chance to make some money. ^{is} threatening to sue me for her fancied grievance. I paid her full wages for every day she worked for me and have receipts in full - so do not think she can do very much but make it unpleasant and force me to spend money defending myself. It isn't very pleasant. I am not worrying about it however and I do not want you to do so - it will most likely be all settled by the time you get this -

This isn't very pleasant to write this for Xmas to you, but you want to know how everything is - and this is some of it. I have tried not to tell you things that would worry you when you were so far away - for I always feel that by the time you get the letter everything is alright again. and that in any case you can't help any - it has been to try and save you worry that I have not told you things uselessly and because I love you and want you to be as happy as possible in this miserable time we are going through with. But, dear - it has been pretty awful for me much of the time. Just now, except for Josepha, I am having a more peaceful time and am very thankful for it, and am trying to get down to some of my own work - I feel that life must have something more in it for me than worrying over this property and its problems - and I must try and find it somehow - After all, dear - you have lived and had great things come to you - but as yet I have had nothing - and I want to live! Don't think I am complaining - I am not - I am very happy to think I can help you to have your chance in any way that it can come to you and I am not unhappy now - but I feel that my life is going to change - I don't know why but somehow I feel more optimistic than I have for a number of years -

The agent telephoned me the other day to know if you would sell - I said you would consider it if you got a good enough offer and he said ^{he} would hear more from him later - also the people next door may extend their lease - ^{we} hope so unless we get a sale on -

I haven't much news - I am going with Miss Cochrane tomorrow to Mrs. Hugh Reid Griffith's (Founder of the American Woman's club) to a tea for Gwen Lally to hear her discuss a new ice pagent she is putting on - Robin says she is an awful person really - did you know it? I thought she looked it! But she is clever in pagent work.

We are having very cold weather - unusual for this time of the year.

Well, I must get this closed and posted or the boat will go without it - Darling - I hate to write things that aren't happy to you - I want you ^{to} be happy

and if I had the power to confer happiness - I would give it to you in heaping measure - Let us hope that this next year will bring you all the happiness you can use - It 's a new year and full of great possibilities ! When the New Year's bells ring out think of that, dear, - look forward happily and anticipate every good thing for yourself - it is the only way to attract good things.

Give Pitter my very best wishes for a very prosperous New Year - full of good health and prosperity - I am so sorry she has been so ill , but glad she is taking care of herself. I learned something new about antique china that I bet she doesn't know. Ask her if she ever heard of pottys being made to match the dinner service and why? I bet you don't know either! Robin stumbled onto in in the castle of a dear friend and very old family - I'll tell you if neither of you know - I laughed!

Do you know how many newspapers it takes to make a baby? English of course!" A Sportsman"and" a "Lady " , a number of "Times" and no"Observer."

That will do for tonight won't it -But I know another one - Don't tell these to Pitter - she would be shocked!

Two lady cats were sitting on the fence one evening - Along came a beautiful black persian boy cat. Said the first lady cat - "Isn't he beautiful though!" Answered the second lady cat - "Very". First Lady Cat - "Oh, he is handsome - I wouldn't mind a night out with him." Said the second lady cat - "I wouldn't if I were you - he talks of nothing but his operation."

Now I think I'll say goodnight and get this in the post - it is ten oclock and the post box is a long way away - I'll have to send this ordinary post - as I haven't any stamps but one.

Goodnight, dearest - and know I love you and will always do all I can in every way for you -

Im - Yema :
(ALDRYCH)

West "ing,

August 6th, 1907.

Darling Maudie -

I can't tell you how relieved I am to have Mama's cable - I am so glad that you will be able to leave before Mrs. Millard comes home - It surely is an answer to prayer - I am so happy about it and I was so worried -

I still am having a very hard time to manage from day to day, but am managing somehow - Blaskett is suing me which isn't too good for my peace of mind - If you were here I would pack up and go abroad and let him whistle. I told him if he only would wait I would be able to pay him, but that if he bothers me I shall file a petition in bankruptcy - and I will too as soon as I get the other little things taken care of so no one else will suffer. He seems to be very badly advised by his lawyers to sue at the drop of the hat.

Mrs. Millard will not be sailing for a week or so more - she seems fairly cheerful now - and very busy -

I haven't much news except money difficulties which will soon pass by.

Oh, yes - I wrote Lester several months ago and explained just a little about this property and explained why I had remained over here so long - and that if I could have some help with it I could either sell it advantageously or be able to alter it so it could be made to give us all a good living and explained to him that I have a half interest in it. Now you must bear that in mind when talking to him or to Mama possibly, as I want to be sure that he will let us have what we want - and he will do it for me but might not be so willing to do it for you - you can understand that can't you? And I don't think you have any doubts of how well I will stand by you - If you have then I wash my hands completely of you. I am perfectly willing to pool all our hopes and all our fears. So far it has been mostly fears.

Well, dearest - I am so tired and still so worried how I am going to manage - but it is so dazzelingly wonderful to think it is nearly over - Darling Mother, how happy she must be - not only for the money and what it can do to make her happy, but she loves Lester dearly - he is the nearest to a son she has had - and in the years that were past she was a grand aunt! She wrote me a while ago that she was more anxious to be started to London for your sake than her own.

She loves you as if you were her daughter,

and I know and appreciate how loving and sweet you have been to her - and I won't feel a moments worry or anxiety about the trip when she is in your care. I do hope Lester and Teddy will come over with you and Mama - wouldn't it be fun to all be at West Wing together! Happy days are coming now for all of us and won't we appreciate them now!

You'll find some changes - lots of the linen has worn out - couldn't be helped in two years and some of the carpets need renewing and the general wear and tear of two years, but on the whole I think it looks pretty nice - and we are lucky to have it here at all! Don't count on your Indian tree - Josepha saw the end of most of that! But there are better dishes in the shoppes than we have ever had! I am going to try to manage to keep the two servants on until you get here for they are such nice girls and accustomed to everything here and so quiet and peaceful and the house is well ordered - It would be a pity now that things are so soon to be better to let them go and then have the fag of trying to get good ones again -and they are not expensive - I pay them each a pound a week.

Well, dearest, goodnight and sleep well these days -
happy days are here -

Love,

Mama