

JILL TO AL JULY 16?, 1944

My darling Al --

Loathsome girl that I am, I didn't write you yesterday, and even though I don't hear steadily from you I have not yet lost all shame about writing you regularly. Well, I have to be conscientious about something, and since I've neglected the Victory Garden shamefully with my daily trips to the beach, I must not do the same to you.

I made the trip downtown again yesterday and finally did get the eye doctor when he wasn't out to lunch and got my glasses fixed. Then I met Priscilla Berquist and Kathy de Grazia -- the latter is a charming girl, whom you simply must meet some day - - at the lake and we stayed until almost six. Kathy is forging ahead like a fox in a foxhunt these days. She pulled herself up to her knees in her buggy today, which reminds me that I should start strapping her in, and yesterday she sat up from a lying position with absolutely no help from me. She also straightens her legs out when she is in a crawling position as if she wanted to get up and walk. Do you know Mike Kelley doesn't even sit up yet, though he has teeth which she doesn't. And she is such a little lamb, her crying being absolutely restricted to when she hits her head, which she does constantly as she totters in her playpen or buggy. This morning when she woke up I tucked her in my bed pillows on the floor next to the bed. And a good thing because when I came back thirty seconds later she was lying on them, laughing delightedly at the nice thudding bounce she took.

I got a letter from Adler Saxe. She has a baby boy of recent origin. And Ruthie Kraines dropped in this morning for an hour. She is up from Texas for a while to have a baby, which was due yesterday. This is her third, lucky dog. Although being married to Sam is no great stroke of fortune, even if he is a major.

Do you think the president's announcement that he would run again was well-timed? I do. I don't think it makes an awful lot of

difference if Wallace isn't renominated. The second string looks pretty good so far.

That was the last piece of airmail paper. You should see my leg where Cooney bit me. It's just hideous. People faint when they see it and the flies buzz around me as if I were a moldering corpse. But I'm sure it isn't infected for it hurts hardly at all except when I run. Poor Cooney, and he loved me so much. But I went in the water anyway today and it was divine. I bumped into a man who once interviewed me for a job at that publishing plant in Ravenswood, remember? He remembered me and said he was a good friend of Lasswell's when I told him about the charmer I had married. Isn't it funny the people you meet in the water. They should have a filtering plant at the promontory.

Christ, it's quarter of nine on a Saturday night and I still have to make formula. But life isn't as dreary as it sounds so don't feel sorry for me. After all, who else spends their life as if it were a summer vacation, except your Jill and Kathy? But still, I think a touch enviously, you are probably out tonight drinking vino with the boys (if you are still in Rome -- if you're not please overlook this) and looking at miscellaneous bare legs.

I wish I could think of something intelligent to say, except that I love you frantically, which you know anyway. From now on until the winter solstice my head will be as empty as a pumpkin, the contents sapped dry by prolonged sunbathing. You are right about the human type that the California climate produces. Even three months of it here is sufficient to reduce me to the intellectual stature of a lizard. And to think I ever worried that you loved me for my body alone. I should be grateful, for verily it's all I have.

A huge hug to you my darling. Would that you were here to submit to all the fiendish tricks I have in store for you.

Always your

Jill

Cartoon: person with a crooked leg, captioned: "Kathy crawling"

P.S. I love you. Writ on the head of a pin by Thomas de Aquinas
De Grazia

AL TO JILL JULY 16, 1944

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BRANCH

INFORMATION AND CENSORSHIP SECTION

Unit No. 12 APO 512

Dearest Jill,

Ghastly paper, isn't it? Certainly not my brainchild. You can almost see the ghoulish, blood-dripping scientist behind the type of lettering. I always seem to write you when I am famished. It is near lunch time and I am in a frenzy of hunger. I got up bright and early this Sunday morning with the intention of writing you after breakfast, but failed because a lot of things came up to do . If I don't finish this now, I shall finish it this afternoon.

We had eggs (fresh) for breakfast this morning, the first in months and they were good just because they came from a shell and not because of their preparation. I think the cook was so happy to be dealing with the real thing that he couldn't force himself to take the frying pan from the fire.

I went to a Bastille Day party the other night at the home of some artists. The mistress of the house was French in part and had lived her life in France. She is the daughter of the famous Italian painter Severini who was also there. He is a grand old guy, as curious and pleasant as a child. All of the company was highly interesting and intelligent. I went with the Moravias, Alberto and Elsa. We ate a lot of snacks which made up a sort of supper. I felt abashed at eating a lot but I was very hungry, too hungry to consider the difficulty under which my hosts

labored to get the food together. The apartment was just a small one, tucked away on a hill in back of a large palazzo with a huge court. Apparently the place is honeycombed with artists' nests. Capogrosso was there. He is a wonderful guy, apart from being one of the best artists in Italy. His wife is a live wire, Hungarian-Italian and a lot of fun, especially after she had drunk some of the very fine wine her husband brought. Everyone came bearing gifts, except me. One brought a cake, another some cookies, Alberto some peas and a can of sardines, etc. The party lasted from a quarter to eight until eleven. It was very nice and I wish I had more time to spend like that. I can sympathize with your feeling tired. I am rather tired generally. However, the war is going very well and that buoys one up a lot. Can't you have Mom take care of the baby one morning and sleep late? Or will Kathy be very upset at seeing anyone first before her beautiful, adored mother? I don't blame her at all. Well, it shouldn't be long, darling, before I sweep you off your feet. Bless that holy day.

As always, your

Al

JILL TO AL JULY 17, 1944 V-MAIL

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with Kathy and Priscilla Berquist and a number of other characters, friends of hers. We played ball and swam in the bounding surf. She told me very hush-hush that one of the guys, apparently a civilian, was really in MI as a counterspy. I think they go around to war plants detecting sabotage.

I still think your social life is probably more interesting than mine, if no more intensive. You will probably be ruined for all time for family poker games after playing with such sharpies. I don't remember a thing about poker anymore and will have to be taught all over again. But the little I have played of it, it

seems to be a more congenial relaxed game than bridge.

Oh, that lady came today and took a great batch of candid camera shots of Kathy at work and at play. Kathy can hold her small orange juice bottle all by herself now, and it is a great convenience in the middle of the morning, when I am rather busy, to be able to hand it to her and have her manage things for herself. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THIS IS MOST REMARKABLE IN A CHILD HER AGE. She is also beginning to hang on to my fingers and with great grunting and groaning, pull herself up to her feet. Except that when she gets there, she discovers they are not very functional, still curving in slightly at the ankles in a babyish way, so she collapses to her seat. She crawls backwards with relative ease but has difficulty going forward yet. She said, "Da" today and knows all the nuances of hide-and-seek. Sometimes I play it by disappearing beneath her crib or wherever she is, and coming out shouting, "Boo." She practically doubles up laughing. Sometimes I just put a handkerchief over my face, or hers, and it works the same way. She knows about radios now -- that they make a noise by themselves -- and laughs at the box and also wants to touch it. Tonight she was fretting before dinner and I put on the Ellington record and she quieted down right away and listened carefully. THIS IS MOST REMARKABLE BEHAVIOR.

I got a letter today from my weirdest correspondent, Walter, in which he claims to have bawled out an assemblage of aviation engineers (of which he is president) in a quote, stinging speech. They were complaining about the reduction of contracts and he thought it was very inhuman, which it was if true.

And now I have to make formula, my end-of-the-day chore. I hope it rains again tomorrow so that I can stay inside and have some fun.

Take care of yourself, darling. Kathy and I love you very much and want to see you soon all in one piece. Incidentally, you were wrong about surmising, in reference to the Col.'s wife who kept bringing in men to see the baby, that they don't know the

difference. Kathy markedly prefers men to adult women and is apt to shout at utter strangers when she is sitting up in her buggy, much to my embarrassment, since sometimes they are only 55th St. luses. I saw one (she didn't fortunately) yesterday in a fist fight with a dog. A most sordid sight.

All my love to you, darling.

Jill

JILL TO AL JULY 18, 1944 V-MAIL

Al darling --

I'm so damned sleepy that of all the many tasks confronting me tonight, I think writing you requires the least effort in every way. I don't know why I should be so tired. I only went to the lake for a short afternoon visit and then took Kathy to the doctor for her second whopping cough shot. The needle hurt her this time and she cried, but only for a minute. She's asleep now, without benefit of paregoric, and I hope she doesn't wake up in the middle of the night with her arm hurting her. Last time it started to hurt right before dinner so I had to give her the drug.

I was eating dinner before, minding my own business with the radio on (loud enough to drown out the Germanic voices of the people upstairs I loathe so well) when the man who was talking suddenly launched into an exposition of the methods Heinrich Himmler uses to torture prisoners, causing me to make a quick dive for the turn-off switch and then for the bathroom. The awful thing is that one senses that these are not merely atrocity stories of a fictitious nature. More than ever I hope that the Russians get there first, as they probably will, because the Americans and British will try to be too gentle with the beasts. But I still can't understand why this radio commentator chose the dinner hour for this particular story.

I've been having a fine time scrutinizing the faces of the

Democratic bigwigs in town, as purveyed by the local newspaper. Some of the Southerners are just too good to be true, like Connally of Texas with his large hat, and that wonderful old man Josephus Daniels, wearing a string tie. And then there are the sharp urban types like Hannegan, or the monumental Irishmen like Hague and Kelley. Somebody ought to (and probably will) do a study on the relation between physical appearance and political achievement. On the whole I think the Democrats produce more photogenic specimens than the Republicans and I'm trying to be unbiased about it. Where you get the Republican prototype in such uncomely specimens as Taft, the Democrats seems to about in movie-character types like Barkley, who at least is rugged-looking. Maybe it's because there are so many Irish Democrats and, if nothing else, the Irish are a fairly good-looking people. Take it away, I'm exhausted.

I finally sent off a check for the subscription to the New Yorker so you can expect it any week now. The only thing is that the pony edition doesn't have the ads which are part of the mature version's charm. Do you want some food? I was at the Co-op today and saw a lot of stuff like tinned crab and lobster meat which might appeal to you if you can bear anything more out of a can. I wish you were home, darling. I'm sure these moments of fatigue would pass quickly if I had you around to cheer me on to the dishes and the ironing. And I feel sort of depressed because I don't do anything else but take care of Kathy and swim. If you were around you could boot my lazy tail into doing something else or at least beget another child so I'd have a good excuse for not doing anything else. But sufficient of this wailing at the wall.

I love you as always and forever --

Jill

AL TO JILL JULY 19, 1944 V-MAIL

Carissima Jill,

Why haven't I thought of calling you that before. It sounds very nice. It sounds like the sort of word I would like to say a number of times without thinking of anything else in the world, save perhaps the English equivalent. I got a long letter of yours yesterday, darling, all of four pages, plus a V-mail of a day later, the 7th and a letter from Ed telling me that he was more or less in a loafing mood and not of a mind to plunge into the army right away. I think he is wrong but am not capable of getting very excited over his mistake as I see it. At this distance he isn't very amenable to suggestion or stronger.

Your letters were very fine. I am glad you had such a nice fourth of July. I would gladly take less letters and hear about your having more nice days. I continue to look at Kathy's little pictures every day. I honestly do think she is a beautiful baby. I wouldn't worry, if I were you, about her losing your characteristics. If the power of the father means anything, she'll be a great deal more like you than like anyone else in the world. I find that every quality I admire in any woman derives directly from your own qualities, and those are qualities you have always had and not ones you've picked up from our palling around together. You'll have to excuse me if I abandon your example on minor things like eating her porridge even if she doesn't excuse me.

I must say something, mustn't I, about Walter and his financial ventures? I can't cough like you can, nor would it probably be justified. The only reason I can see against not lending him that money is that if we decide to do anything with part of it, land or something, when I get back, we would want to have a reserve, and if the money is tied up with Walter we wouldn't have such a reserve. As far as the rest is concerned, I think you're right about not letting him play around with it. He is either in an unholy rush to get your money to play with or he honestly thinks you may spend it rashly. I know that the latter is not true and

therefore think you're right.

Peck tells me that Dieter Dux, another pet of Hutchins, went into the army, escaped as a deserter somehow to Mexico, thence to Argentina and finally to Germany. I would love to meet him in Germany and have a talk on the Hundred Great Books with him.

I am going off this afternoon on a harum-scarum trip but will be back shortly. I can always think of you better under the open sky. The setting is large enough for you.

Kisses to Kathy and love from your Al

AL TO JILL JULY 20, 1944

Dearest Jill,

Foolscap isn't the most romantic of writing surfaces, but I find myself with some time on my hands while waiting for orders to cover our trip. We just snapped a couple of pictures in the garden of the house which I'll have developed within a week for sending to you. It's the nice part of the day, around six-thirty in the evening. The sun has lost its fierceness and has more the mood of a tired laborer stopping off at the saloon for a cool beer. I just had a cup of coffee with Mekan and Bona from my dwindling stock of the Nescafe Daisy sent me. It is still very good, much superior if thoughtfully prepared to the ordinary GI coffee.

I sent off to you yesterday a hat I picked up from a German prisoner some time ago near Rocca di Papa (which is near Lago Albano). It is a slouchy, peaked kind that a lot of the Germans wear when they aren't wearing the helmet. I'm sure it'll look very cute on you if some young boy doesn't snatch it from you or the FBI doesn't object. It's dirty, though, and I didn't feel like or have time for washing it. I stuffed the box with the little parachute from an English mortar parachute flare. Maybe you can hitch it to Kathy's buggy on a breezy day and it will blossom

out to amuse her.

I've got a new car issued to me and it is something extraordinary, a British light truck, bulkier than our jeeps, but more commodious and less sturdily made. It is extraordinary mostly because though many British are assigned American cars, this is the first time I've ever known an American to be assigned a British vehicle. In fact, my very first hitch-hikers, two GIs this morning, brought up that very subject. It's a lot clumsier in handling than the jeep but on the other hand it's not prey to transport-hungry soldiers as much as the jeeps are. Its left-hand drive I'm already accustomed to from one or two other cars with the same that I've driven in the past year. The model is an old one, very square like all British transport, and though the machine itself is practically unused, with only a thousand miles on it, I'm sure that the British army in its fine conservation has had it salted away for a decade. God only knows how many frustrated ambulatory subalterns have beaten themselves over these many years against the stone wall of the Royal Ordnance miserliness.

(Next morning.) (I saw Jim Clark the night before last. He is transferring from one assignment to another very interesting one. I'm sorry I can't be with him, though there is some slight possibility that we can work out something. Right now I am in the unenviable state of having too much to do. Jim and I had a number of drinks before dinner and he came out to my place to stay overnight, after which he went on his way.

The political news is big today with the news of the attempted assassination of Hitler, Roosevelt's renomination and the announcement of an extensive organization to help the soldiers' vote, thus giving me a chance to vote against Dewey and save our happy home. What a shame Hitler was missed. That would probably be the end of the war. But it can't wait much longer. It doesn't look like the sort of thing that was a sporadic lunacy. His statement that no one should take orders from groups of usurpers I thought was most significant. It is awful to think that Thursday night I came near to being at least a thousand miles

nearer to you in effect. However, it's nice to know that even some Germans of a highly respectable class (in Germany) are gunning for him.

I got a letter from Herz from England this morning. He says his assignment is a very good and responsible one. I must send him some of his belongings he left with me.

Really, the descriptions you give me of Kathy makes her seem a very remarkable and interesting child. Your lines on her conduct at parties and on trains were very good and clear. What with her latest pictures, I had a very vivid picture of her sitting on your lap and gazing interestedly at the landscape. Little does she realize how often her unknown father gazed at the same sights. Incidentally in a talk with an Italian woman the other day whose husband was killed in the war in the East, it came out that the mother talks so much of the father to the young child that when the father finally does appear there is very little trouble establishing rapport between the two. If you ever have the chance and know someone with a movie camera, you could take pictures of Kathy on either 16 mm or 35 mm and send them to me. I could have them projected here very easily any time. A great deal of admiration has also been expressed towards the buggy of Kathy. it does look pretty slick.

I've gotten around to reading all of those New Republics you sent me as well as those New Yorkers that remain to me after the depredations of my friends. I feel much better and well instructed as a result, and await the arrival of the next bundle with confidence.

I'm well ahead of the productive capacity of my peach and plum trees outside. Just now I've finished a rather green but tasty peach. I haven't tasted a banana in a long time. I suppose you still don't have any in America either. Well some day we'll have plenty of time to lie beneath a large tree and let the ripe fruit drop within reach.

I saw an Italian propoganda film last night called "Bengazi" that

was very well done, though it was already in the period when nobody used the word "Fascism" to excite the desire to fight. It was simply a nationalist film with a lot of personal, familial appeal; the dominant theme was the exaggeration of the British penchant for taking a snort of whiskey now and then. It seemed that the war was reduced to a struggle against British whiskey-drinking. I know the man who directed it. I met him with Pallos the other day. He switched sides some time ago and is eager to do more even now. He has a complex argument to prove he tried to spread anti-Fascist propaganda in his pictures. He is undoubtedly a clever and capable tough guy. He also said that proof of his anti-Fascism was the fact that he crossed the lines, and didn't like it. When I said "No one denies that an opportunist can have courage." It is of course, the courageous opportunists who are most to be feared. His is just one case of which there are many thousands in Italy and millions in Europe. That is why it is so frustrating to settle each case peacefully and justly. They all have complicated arguments and justifications, so that an honest person becomes very easily baffled. A more abrupt, ruthless categorization of these people would be in some cases slightly unjust but doubtlessly much more sanitary and efficacious.

Personally I think all of Europe is one great mess and hope that the solution will be simple and direct. Vacillating action will just add to the already existing impossible confusion. Most attempts at readjusting the past years will fail and cause untold irritation. They are in many cases of property and economics impossible of solution of an historical basis. All records that aren't destroyed are buried in a rapid succession of crimes, robberies and illegal exchanges that can never be ironed out. Why freshen up all these old wounds and start people to hating each other again and more, even though it is granted to be possible. Most people save perhaps some of the wealthy, are probably well adjusted by now to losing everything they have lost, they've gotten on without it during this worst of all periods. They can get along now in the certainly more rosier future without it. Therefore I say a simple, drastic solution is necessary for the

millions of interminable quibbles over property. We should apply the strategy of bypassing the problems of the past and let them surrender themselves during the assault on the future.

I'm being very unromantic now. Perhaps it's because I'm so sure I'll be seeing you soon and be able to do romantic things so much better. You are still the scented breeze in my stuffy life and my hope. Many kisses.

Al

THE Northern Front is fluid. Fermo and Perdaso fall to the Eighth Army on 20 June. Foligno is liberated on 16 July. Ancona with its seaport and communications is taken by the Poles in a three-day battle between 17 and 19 July. Somewhere in between Ancona and Lake Trasimeno is the Central Front, over which he intends to pass the two men and wish them well. John 's last words are "Alfred, you will not, I trust, be gone for long. Not over the lines, mind you."

Morning becomes evening and they are following first one and then another of the poor roads that parallel the Front, going beyond Lago Trasimeno, heading East. The last outpost of which they inquire say they do not know, and cannot locate on the map where the enemy might be. That is not unexpected. No two Fronts are ever the same. Soldiers may lay in swarms at one point, as thick as bedbugs, while the enemies may be separated beyond mortar fire distance at some other point, -- like here. They are on the main ridge of the Apennines, the forest is thick, the underbrush heavy. It is a hell of a place to let off two men on foot with equipment, men not trained as forest rangers either. Men who would be shot if taken, or equally well shot by friendly soldiers.

They camp for the night on a hillside, a wood and brook below. The slope resembles more the Sierra Nevadas of California than fabled rustic Italy. There is the usual little stone cabin, without windows, with a crooked door. He looks in. We can stay here, he said, but I don't want to sleep inside. We will, they said, it's better than out in the cold.

He thinks, well, let them sleep inside, I can be of help out here if any strangers happen by, and I don't like filth, and probably bugs. He is nonetheless in poor shape. The grippe that had seized him that morning had progressed into a feverish influenza. At least he would be able to breathe and thrash about outdoors.

The night passes. His flu has worsened. His comrades emerge, Gianni eaten up by insects. On their way once more. He explains now the problems as he sees them of getting past the lines here. Too, that he has found out the OSS has no agents in the area who might help. They should continue driving until they reach the coast where he has heard that OSS has a band working into both Italy and Yugoslavia.

The roads are bad. He hits a pothole and the car makes an appalling noise, then begins to thump every now and then as if to say, from here on we are going at my speed not yours.

They descend to the sea below Ancona, which is falling to the Poles. There they locate the OSS agents. They have boats operating, one that same night. They will take Gianni and Pietro by sea to enemy-held territory, and put them ashore where they would hopefully find their way through enemy territory and ultimately join up with a band of partisans. Good-bye. Good luck. *Ciao. Buon fortuna.*

Slowly, painfully, sick and dog-tired, he proceeds to Rome. The car is in a poor state, worse than himself. How he hates it! And he can find no motor pool to fix it. Junk it, he is told! He still gets it across the mountains into Rome. All in all, some 600 miles, with 8 hours sleep in all. Ergo he sleeps. He arises. He decides to put in a show at his office.

Reynor wants to see him, when, and if, he returns. "How did it go?" "O.K., I suppose. We'll see." Alfred, there is an important business coming up, and it may be the sort of thing you like.

Every bell rings in the American! He knows what is coming. They are asking us for somebody like you, says John. It is up to you. If you want to go, you can go.

He will go, no doubt. Goodbye, John, let me know. Goodbye, Steve, smiles. Goodbye, "D Section," heartfelt fare-thee-wells and see-you-agains. He doesn't fully appreciate how final is this parting from dear friends. Elsa is still in his office when he leaves, holding the line

for integrity, he is inclined to say, though she may be too shy. He has seen already so much mal-administration in his brief career that he wishes to regain the life of chaos where no apology is needed. It is easier and more outgoing, and therefore more fun.

Good-bye Clara, gentle smiles, gentle hugs, take her home in his car, leave with her whatever little is of use from his month-old residence, see her last beneath the large sign of *Il Messagero*. He owns somebody's fine shot-gun, in a barracks bag full of the kind of possessions one has gathered over time with some discrimination, and he leaves this all with the supply officer, whence it will be forever gone.

JILL TO AL JULY 20, 1944

Darling Al --

The girl across the court borrowed my typewriter so you are once more graced by the rare aesthetic values of my Spencerian hand. I'm listening to the Dem. convention now -- Helen Gallagher Douglas is speaking and the President will shortly. I thought the balloting was interesting this afternoon -- the South seems to be determined to be stiff-necked about accepting the President's re-nomination. Dad got Mom & Rosina tickets last night and I hope he can get me over (chez the Union Hall) for tomorrow's session. I'll leave Kathy with Mom in case I go and I'm very anxious to do so.

Mrs. Douglas is giving the Republicans hell (I'm listening with one ear). But as ever, our half-comic doings in the stadium are over-shadowed by the melodramatics of the enemy, with Hitler and the generals and Tojo all getting embarrassed in various fashions. Pretty startling and wonderful, isn't it all?

I can't remember what I did yesterday -- oh yes, I picked a few pathetic beans from our weed-ridden victory garden -- (which I burned in the cooking tonight) and in the evening went over to Ruth Shils whom I haven't seen in an age but who called. Ed is

coming back from England in the fall to teach, having been released from whatever his job is there. She told me Earl was back so I hied over to school this AM to see him and had an interesting chat, despite Kathy's acrobatics in my lap. He has some unflattering things to say about Puerto Rico, which you'll probably hear from him via mail.

The day was cool, actually autumnal and it felt as if I were starting school all over again walking on the breeze campus (except for the baby carriage's note of incongruity). Then I came home and, spurred on by the weather, became domestic as a beaver. I washed the upholstery and finally glued a beautiful piece of leather to your desk top which, if it holds up, will give you the executive poise of a Sewell Avery when you sit at it. Priscilla Berquist aided and abetted me in the purchasing, Kathy observed and kept falling on her head and eating your New Yorkers.

Here's the President -- I'll write more tomorrow when I get some sleep and the typewriter.

I love you more than anyone in the whole world could love anybody.

July 21. Yuppie. I'm going to the convention today. I'll write about it tonight if there is time.

PPS Encl. are a couple of stories relevant to your work I guess.

JILL TO AL JULY 22, 1944 V-MAIL

Angel --

Your little wife, otherwise known as Mother of Democrats, reporting to you with a bad case of post-Convention nerves. But the excitement of the past two days -- for between the conflict of ballots here and bullets in the Reichwehr, the most indifferent soul could hardly be untouched by it all -- is somewhat

overshadowed by mine unfettered joy in getting two V-mails from you, the 10th and the 12th. Added to all the other emotions I've been experiencing, I share in your pleased amazement to find the Peck in Rome, in your disgruntlement over the Army's assbackwards financial policies, and in your longing for home and family. The latter I feel for you a hundred-fold. And now I am once more reassured that you haven't abandoned writing me for poker-playing and other social activities (though seriously, even if you haven't had time to write me, I couldn't love you any less or doubt that you love me).

I have a horrible feeling that I'll never get around to making any sense in this letter. One day I am in the convulsions of interior decorating and cashing fire engines (which is how I spend my time when Kathy is napping under the loving eyes of the cleaning woman) and the next day I am spectator to the greatest show on earth. The multiplicity of roles is too much for a weak spirit like mine, and where shall I start? Well, after considerable inconvenience to all the DeGrazia's, mostly Dad who had to go to hell and gone and back to find this musician who had a ticket he wasn't using to the afternoon session, I finally got to the convention. I brought old Kathy up to Mom, who was a little disgruntled since she had planned to hell around yesterday with our dear Uncle Joe who was in town, and then went down to the Stadium. I got there about an hour late, after they had already nominated Truman, Bankhead and Senator O'Mahoney, whom the cop, my informant, called O'Malley so that for a long time I thought that the little man in the Sun comic strip had somehow gotten his name on the slate. Then the head of the delegation from Iowa got up and the crowd went wild, as they say. I clapped heartily but was too inhibited to shout. The demonstration for Wallace kept up for about a half hour, much to the displeasure of the convention officials who were obviously trying to steer the convention away from him. They went so far as not to direct the band to play, although when other people were nominated, appropriate music accompanied the lesser ovations they received. Well, by now you know the rest of the story -- the way the big party bosses stacked everything against

Wallace. Not that I don't think Truman isn't a pretty fair exponent of liberalism too and that he doesn't contribute to the slate. But it was clear at the convention that Wallace was a symbol of popular vs. boss rule of the party, and for that reason, his defeat is a blow to the democratic elements in the party. It was amazing the way the Illinois delegation handled his opposition. Kelly, that bastard, was set on defeating Wallace, so he engineered a boomlet for Scott Lucas. When he got up to make the nominating speech there was a near-riot. Every time he'd start to throw out the superlatives as a build-up to giving the convention Lucas's name, the galleries would yell "We Want Wallace". Finally, when he got around to nominating Lucas, there were great boos and shouts. Then a bunch of presumably City Hall boys filed on to the convention floor carrying signs bearing such illuminating slogans as "Business Back Lucas", "Labor Back Lucas", etc. etc. At that point all the Wallace signs went up and it looked as if there would be a fight until chairman Sam Jackson, who was hellbent particularly against turning aside the Wallace forces, made everybody get off the floor who weren't delegates. Kelly was booed so much that finally he said very stiff-neckedly, "I ask you to be quiet not only as chairman of my delegation but as mayor of your city." That certainly was a case of pulling his stripes. An interesting sidelight on state politics was that the downstaters, according to the Times, had originally planned the Lucas boom as a gesture of opposition to the Cook County organization, but the Mayor took over and made the nomination himself, so that the Lucas nomination ended up not only as a stop-Wallace piece of strategy but also as an assertion of the Mayor's power over the whole Illinois delegation. The big bum certainly is shrewd. And you probably know by now that if the Illinois delegation, the downstate elements of which certainly would have supported Wallace since the other farm states did, was the one which ultimately stopped him. If he had had their backing at that particular moment in the second balloting, he would have gotten the nomination.

Well, it was all very instructive and I'm glad as hell I went. I had

to leave during the nominations, which looked as if they would go on indefinitely anyway, but I heard the rest of it over the radio up north and at home. I took the opportunity during the poll of New York's 96 votes to flee homewards with Kathy.

Kathy as usual was immensely pleased to visit her grandma and granddad again. She is getting to be quite impish and will grab on to your hands when you least expect it and rise to her feet majestically. I have to strap her into her buggy now, or at least will (probably after the first time she falls out). Dad thinks she is the nuts and plays with her all the time. Poor Cooney is still at the vet's being observed for rabies, and now that I have some perspective on the matter, I'm rather glad he went, since you never know at what point a dog may pick it up and he might have just thirty seconds before he bit me, which would have rather left me up blank creek if he hadn't been taken away. The bite is healing beautifully, just because I decided to ignore aesthetic considerations and leave the bandage off (just in case you ever get an ugly puncture wound which isn't infected, you know what to do now). Well, I have to bike down to the beach now. Priscilla took the baby down ahead of me because I had so much to do around the house and then thought I'd start this long delayed (by one day anyway) letter to you. But I have to go now and meet them, for to give Kathy her lunch.

I just got back after a long day and a nice swim down there. Kathy is sitting on the living room floor, quiet for a change. her playpen is absolutely no use at all and I'm glad it isn't a boughten one but only borrowed. I have to return it pretty soon incidentally for the girl who owns it has a baby three months younger than Kathy and likes to start her kid, who is notably dull and ugly, early on those things. Anyway, the playpen is very little use because Kathy, having seen the world as far south as Flossmoor and as far north as Addison St., is hardly satisfied to be left to the confines of a 4' by 4' playpen. As a result, when I come home like this before her dinner and have a few moments left in which I'd like to write you or straighten the house, I have to put her on the floor right by me so that she can watch what I'm doing. If I leave her outside in the buggy she cries as soon

as she sees me walk away, and if I put her in the other room in the playpen, you'd think I'd stuck a needle in her. As it is, she just toppled on her face and screamed loudly, and the only way I've gotten her quiet again so I can continue this was to give her a cardboard coat hanger, which she is biting and talking to energetically. I think you would like her very much because she is so responsive and easy to amuse. You should see her play peek-a-boo (shortened to boo) with me. She really belly laughs when I pop up unexpectedly (but not too unexpectedly, for then the laugh has a note of apprehension). But from a busy mother's point of view (and of course, I don't claim to be completely in that category -- just once in a while do I like a little time for housework), she's rather a pain. But what the hell, she's bright and lively and well-adjusted, and I can hardly begrudge her the time which I'd probably put to less productive uses anyway.

Priscilla is over now for dinner, feeling despondent over the prospect of spending a Saturday night alone in her own apartment (these young bloods). At the moment she is doing the dishes (again, these young bloods) so I thought I'd snatch some more time to finish this letter. She looks amazingly like Miriam only not so delicate. It's a Swedish type I guess. I am going to Michigan tomorrow to visit some people I don't know with Klaus Ollendorff and his mother, both of whom have taken a great fancy to me and the baby. I'm so sick of Sundays at the beach I thought I'd do this for a change. It's so impossibly crowded down there. By the way, great doings are doing down there, the hand of God, the Park District and Mr. Kelly. They are filling in the rocks at the promontory, which are sorely in need of some stabilizing forces, by lifting them up, putting them on a level bed of small stones and filling in the interstices with concrete. The result should be a noble work of man and will probably be accomplished around Christmas. The water today was all cloudy from the concrete oozing into it and I will probably turn into a pillar of stone by morning, only a little less salty than Lot's wife.

How the hell was I supposed to know a lire was one cent. And

you can tell me again what is the American equivalent of size 10 1/2, or whatever your gal friend wears in shoes. But I am real happy whenever I get a request from you and will start this very Monday collecting the items for a nice package for you. I get absolutely unbearable when I start shopping for you. I tell everybody including the man who cleans up the floors of whatever shop I'm in that I'm buying for my husband.

Whom I love madly.

Jill

JILL TO AL JULY 24, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

I have just concluded a careful scrutiny of myself from various angles in the bathroom mirror (Kathy is taking her afternoon nap and so I am taking the advices of competent authorities and am devoting this time to Self-Improvement and Self-Knowledge). Anyway, I have concluded that I am almost unbearably glamorous, a fact which may either please or enrage you. My hair is down to my shoulders and blonde, my nose is red and I am clad in the best that Charles A. Stevens' budget shop has to offer. A bit fin de siècle perhaps, a type that might have looked well among the pubs and pools of the thirties but is a little out of place in this neighborhood and economic group where Life is Real and Earnest and where if you haven't developed the female equivalent of a paunch my your middle twenties, the neighbors think it is being screwed off, illicitly of course.

Which is hardly the case of course, and I don't see where you are going to find time to do all that eating you are talking about (your letter of the 13th which came this morning) beating off the assaults of your wife and invitations to games from your daughter. I don't think it will be so hard for me to get used to cooking for you when you come back. I can just have roasts and things like that that are easy to make and big, and it probably

won't be any more trouble than cooking my daily stint of pork chops. I roasted some lamb the other night and it was real easy. I think that as long as you don't have to budget, and perish forbid that we ever have to, it's pretty easy to cook large good meals. But you'll have to help carry stuff if they still don't have delivery services in the Brave New World.

What do you think about all the stuff going on in Germany? I wish to hell they'd cut each other's throats once and for all. Now I'm worried about your job in Rome. It sounds important and as if they might keep you after the armistice or whatever it is. I got a letter from Day this morning and she said Renee had said Jerry had written that he had heard you were doing such an outstanding job in Rome. But I'd just as soon have you home, and anyway, though I'm always pleased to hear things like that, I think you do well at the expense of your health and should, therefore, take it a little easier. Eat pork chops if you can get them or olives, both full of vitamin B. I eat both all the time and feel terrible anyway. I'm tired today. Yesterday was a busy day though sort of fun. As I wrote earlier, I went to Michiana Shores with Klaus Ollendorff and his mother and another refugee lady. He had borrowed a convertible, Kathy enjoyed the ride though toward the end she got hot and cranky and fell asleep. We arrived around one, I fed her, took her to the beach and then back for her nap. We were visiting some friends of theirs who had a little cottage. It's quite a colony of refugees out there. My dentist lives on that little street and he showed me the house he thought I ought to rent only it is rented now. It's nice but I'm not crazy about beach life and during the summer it's no private little retreat for the angels. The people seem OK but they are there. So I'll just wait until you get home. And in the winter it would be deserted without a man or car.

[cartoon of arrow through heart "Al --> Jill"] [next page "I love you" with two more arrows and hearts]

I don't like swimming off beaches or lying on them, but Kathy does. This was the first time she ever saw sand and she had a good time picking it up and letting it pour through her fists. But it

made me nervous because she kept eating some, although I don't suppose it would do her any harm. She behaved very nicely, taking her afternoon nap late but with few protests and then sitting in their little garden and hollering at the birds and dragonflies. She has a real "Hi" which she uses for her special objects of interests, small children and dogs. I guess it is really "Ay". She is a genius and everybody loves her and wants to adopt her and I feel like a Washingtonian with a nice apartment -- your friends keep waiting around for you to die.

I am listening to a very funny Bohemian song over the radio now. I know it is Bohemian because the announcer said so and I know it is funny because the singer keeps laughing. I wish Kathy would wake up so I could get a chocolate soda, not to infuriate you of course. We didn't get home until nine-thirty last night and while she started to nap at about 71st St., she is probably rather tired today, even as I am.

Kathy wants to stand up all the time now and while I remember your warning about seeing that her feet were strong enough first, I don't see how she could stand unless they were strong enough. She tries to grab on to everything and brace herself. Actually, she doesn't stand very well yet and collapses as soon as you let go. But I think the mere desire to stand must signify that she is quite ready for it, don't you? She knows how to go about it too. First she gets to her knees and then she straightens one leg out and rises proudly to her feet. It's simply wonderful because most babies her age can't even sit up unaided, and not only has she done that since she was five, but al can sit up anytime she wants, without being placed in that position.

I just went in to her room hopefully, but she is still asleep. It's always this way -- when I want her to sleep a long while she doesn't and when I want to go out she insists on sleeping. I don't have the heart to wake her either. I guess I'm getting to take her pretty puss so much for granted that I may fail to keep you posted on the latest developments in color, texture, etc. Well, her eyes are hazel turning to brown and her hair is about

my color, only not quite as bright. I guess you could call it a light brown. It's been growing in at quite a rapid rate the past few weeks, or so it seems to me, and she has what would make a nice head of hair for a little boy now. It's starting up one wave on the front and side. I don't think her face has changed an awful lot although Dad and the boys irritate me with comments like "She's getting so pretty", whereas I always thought she was. She has a real loud voice and is apt to frighten the children or dogs she singles out for her favors. I hope this won't have a bad psychological effect on her -- this constant succession of unrequited loves. I don't know if you noticed this in the pictures but she is built much more on adult scale than the average baby her age, which is apt to have a huge head and is rather apathetic-looking as a result, both because of the aesthetic considerations and the fact that the head interferes with their movements.

Anyway I love you. OOOXXX - Jill

JILL TO AL JULY 25, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

You dog. If you don't stop changing addresses I shall come down with a mild case of schizophrenia. I got your letter of July 16 today and was horrified to find a new address writ upon it (incidentally you never point out these changes, leaving me to dope it out like a female Charlie Chan), because I have two V-mails from yesterday I haven't mailed yet and hate the idea of opening them up and making revisions. I guess I won't, trusting to the APO that they'll eventually reach you. I really must get on the ball and send you some food and stuff. You sound so dreadfully hungry and anyway, if you have friends in the city, you would probably like some fancy tinned things to share with them. I'll see if I can get together one package of canned foods and bring just any letter to the PO, trusting the dumb gal at Woodworth's won't read it. And then I'll send chocolates and

butts in response to your genuine letter of request. Again, what American size are your friend's feet?

Kathy and I just got back from the lake, where it was kind of dull and hot. She is crawling on the living room rug now, looking very chic in a plastic red and white necklace from the dime store. I find that they are just as amusing to her as rattles, cheaper by some fifty cents and harder to lose because you just put them around the baby's neck and she plays with them there. The lake front is all torn up by the construction workers and when I finally did find a relatively secluded spot, suddenly twenty youths of about 16 summers apiece descended upon me with scythes and commenced hacking furiously at the underbrush. Then one of their number gave a signal and as one boy they all laid down and dozed off. Then an elder of the Park District staff heaved into view but they must have smelled his presence because they fell to hacking and hewing with such abandon that, with one or two exceptions of boys who didn't have enough amputated weeks at his feet, he was deceived. The boss departed and they were all ready to take up their leisure time pursuits again, which this time looked like a big crap game practically on Kathy's stomach when mercifully a Park District truck came along and took them all away. But I still think tough young boys are wonderful.

I went to the beach Saturday I guess it was, with Priscilla and Laura and we had a fine time talking about Mickey Maguire and sister, the latter being a most spectacular item in these parts. As Laura said, she had been attending a Spanish conversation class and the only thing all the people had in common to talk about was Fire Maguire, and I guess the exposition that followed of Señorita Maguire's none-too-private life was rather funny. Mickey is married to Jules Masserman now and flashes about in his car. You never related to me the circumstances under which you came to take out Fire and needless to say I'm interested.

Kathy is plastering the white woodwork with tiny handprints, so from now on I guess there will be no doubt about the fact that I

have a child in the house. it does look awfully cute in a messy way -- I guess the first time it always does. Why the hell don't you ask to be routed this fall? I think it's about time we saw each other and you saw Kathy and anyway I'd like another baby.

All my love,

Jill

JILL TO AL JULY 27, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

I've just had the titillating experience of listening to a perfectly horrible radio story in a thunderstorm. Madmen chuckling, murderous old women, all strictly from Charles Adams. I must confess it's left me slightly shaken. Fortunately it's still early in the evening. If it were dark I'd probably be a case for a radio script writer myself. As it is, I'm in one of my blacker mood, for no other reason that I can discover except that I have the curse. It's amazing how biological women are -- how much their emotions are affected at this time. And fortunately or unfortunately, depending on which side of the fence you are, it's a damn good argument against the equality of the sexes. I've even read about women who kept kleptomaniac at this time. Fortunately I don't go to such lengths, but I do get either irritable or depressed, depending on the kind of stimulation I get.

We went to the beach again today and it was a pain because I couldn't go into the inviting water. The Park District has done a horrible job of cementing up the spaces between the rocks. It's very uneven and full of little rocks to torture the barefoot wanderer. Kathy had a good time, however. She is beginning to crawl all over the place and the grass gives her plenty of freedom. She also stands up now in her bed or playpen -- the latter is an easier place for her to operate because the top bar is somewhat lower. When she was in her buggy today she saw a little dog and stood right up in her buggy and leaned over the

side to get a better view. She would have probably fallen out on her tough little head if I hadn't grabbed hold of her diaper and hauled her back in. It's astonishing how mobile she's suddenly become. It's practically impossible to diaper her now, she turns and wriggles away so. And I do wish you would write her a letter one of these days. Not that I share the whimsical notion that you could thus control her behavior, or the sentimental one that it would be nice to have a long essay on why you are fighting this war. It's just that she grabs my letters from you away from me. I like to read your letters sitting on the grass and she crawls over and tears it from my hands. If you wrote her a letter she could have something of her own to chew up. And it doesn't work just to give her a blank piece of paper. She likes the ink, I think. And what a tough dirty little puss she's developing. She's a beautiful baby because her features are good and she's magnificently stacked, but she's got all the feminine charm of a truck driver. When she wants something she sticks out her lower lip and casts her eyes about wildly, and when she doesn't want something she emits a resounding Bronx cheer. I guess that popular sound does have a valid basis in the unplanned behavior of infants. I haven't heard any other mothers complaining about their babies making Bronx cheers but surely she can't be the only one to make vulgar noises. She's got this solid way of sitting too, the ramrod back that would please the most exacting sergeant, which adds to her general air of unfeminine determination. And to think you once were worried that you might have a spineless child!

I didn't write you yesterday because I went to the movies last night, for the first time in ages. I saw the first half of a quote, farce about Washington with Paulette Goddard and the first tenth of a movie about show business, by that very name coincidentally, with Eddie Cantor. I feel that my life has not lost much by missing the remaining fourteen tenths of both pictures combined. I had stayed in most of the day because the weather was rather bad. I washed the big living room rug which entailed much scrubbing on my knees and sandpapered her new playpen which Field's just got around to delivering. it was a job

that Marshall himself should have done, but this is hardly the time to quibble about such things, there being a war on as I am the first one to admit. It's a rather nice playpen considering it was very cheap and you can move it around easily so that at no time is the child bored or neglected. And what could be more interesting for a baby than to watch mother scrub the floors!

Walter and Day called the night before last, the call being followed up by a long dull letter from the big boy himself. He wants to borrow some money to expand his business or something (I certainly shan't bore you with the details). He wants to borrow as much as 7000 if he can't get it from other sources, to be paid off at the rate of 2000 a year at 5%. The bank only pays 1% so I couldn't kick about that. I guess he prefers to borrow it from a relative rather than going to a bank himself. We have 13,000 in the banks. Presumably the balance of 6000 would be enough for a down payment on anything like property we wanted to buy. I hear you don't buy houses or land outright anyway -- that's it's better business to get a mortgage. I can't see any objection to lending him this money unless there was something very large or lush that we wanted to get, or unless you planned to go into business yourself. This latter is a possibility that hadn't occurred to me until this very moment. So while this paragraph originally started out as a statement of facts, with the implication that I had already made up my mind, I guess that it ends up by being a plea for your advice. If you were here, I wouldn't be so high-handed about making up my mind about this in the first place. I hope you understand that I don't consider this money Mine anymore. But unless you have an objection based on things I hadn't thought about or known about, I think I'll go ahead and lend it to him. He's reliable and the money is just as well off in his hands than in a bank's, other things being equal. It's just that that phrase, other things being equal, lets in a lot of air. But what the hell, it's in the family. However, when I write him, which he wants me to do soon, I'll make it conditional upon hearing from you.

If you have a strong objection we can always say you were planning upon building a propaganda factory after the war

(genuine machine-tooled facts guaranteed not to slip or gap)
which I hadn't known about.

Christ, that took up a lot of good white paper. I assure you that if you were here we wouldn't spend our time talking about Walter's finances, curse or not.

I love you.

Jill

AL TO JILL JULY 27, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest,

If you could see me now in the sweltering heat, amidst all of the confusion of all my ugly belongings, in a frenzied hurry of packing, with all sorts of unfinished business preying on my mind and could know how hectic these past five days have been for me, you might not condemn me for not having written you. I told you I was starting out on a trip. Well, it took four days of heat and driving. I drove the damn car without a chauffeur for 600 miles all over central Italy with a total of about eight hours sleep over the whole period. I caught cold, had a fever, felt like hell for three of the days and to top off everything the car broke down towards the end. A few miles from home, no coaxing could get it to go for a while, though a triumphant return was finally managed at the rate of 2 miles an hour. No sooner did I get back when news of a new rush assignment descended on me whilst my eyes were still half-open and I was hacking away. It's the old excitement again. For a short while, once I get this all cleared in here, though, I'll have lots of waiting like last June to do and I'll write you lots and lots, as befits the girl I love so much. My new job will be within the new Jim Clark team. it reminds me too of the time I was wrenched from the middle of my Catarina work. Remember?

All my love. More tomorrow.

Kisses to Kathy.

Yours,

Al

JILL TO AL JULY 28, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling --

Another dull day gone by. I figure why I'm rather depressed. The weather is very cool and fall-like, and somehow the idea of starting another winter without you here fills me with dread and sorrow. I think that if you're not here by fall I'll got to the coast and there bury my head, ostrich-like, against the turning of the seasons.

Last night there came a call from Boston but the operator said the party, presumably Liz Evers, had changed its mind. I wonder what Liz is up to, and hope nothing is wrong with Bill. Her last letter said that she might take a trip out here in September to see me, leaving the baby with Bill's mother in new York. She said she was awfully depressed and that visiting me would cheer her up. I know she would like to live out here and I would like to live with her, but there is the possibility that you would come home sooner than Bill, and then she would have to move again. I don't know what to do -- move into a larger apartment which would be pleasant for us all -- or stay here, where it's fairly convenient, until you come home. I told the nosey old janitor to let me know if he heard of any five-room vacancies, but he advised me to stay settled where I am, the old fart.

We didn't do much of anything today. I'm reading on and off Joseph Andrews, and find it very amusing. Kathy is beginning to say something like dada-da, only she kind of chews it up. I've been sorting out your old letters too, for the desk is getting cluttered. (Excuse me, I have to turn that old asshole H. V.

Kalterborn off the air before my blood pressure rises further.) June was one of my lowest months yet you wrote me fifteen letters, which is certainly a good average, don't you think? I don't usually count them but I was just curious to see what I considered a bad month.

Jesus, I've been going around to the stores and you certainly picked the time to ask for chocolate and cigarettes. You can't buy more than two packs of butts anywhere, even at my friend Nudelman the delicatessen keeper, who loves me like a sister. And this is the lowest month for chocolate. Even the paper said so. I got five packs of butts today and will try to get about twenty together, the equivalent of two cartons and then put other stuff in the package to bring it up to five pounds. Powdered coffee is fairly easy to get in fancy stores. The brand I got you I don't know much about but it can't be any worse than Nescafe. I'll write Day to send you the latter.

I'm making meat loaf, which I detest, but the house is full of tempting vapors nonetheless. I get so bored buying meat that I'll try anything that doesn't have points on it, and for some reason ground beef didn't today. Anyway it's good for sandwiches. I wish you were home. I'm in the mood to cook gloriously but you are the only person I enjoy cooking for. One's friends are apt to be ungracious if things don't come out well and anyway, who wants to go to trouble for them. But you, to reverse the stereotype, were always very nice about my cooking, even when it snafu'd completely. I love you for that, as well as for a variety of other attributes and virtues.

Come home soon, old boy. We need you. Always,

Jill

AL TO JILL JULY 28, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

I'm back to the city of beautiful sunsets and enchanting waters - not to mention the poverty and the odors. I ain't where I was when I last wrote you but I am where I've been before. I don't have my terrace anymore but I have a comfortable temporary room before I move on to greater conquests. I got in this afternoon after a very tiring truck ride of six hours counting two flats. Altogether I'm not in top shape but expect to live an exemplary life these next few days and come out of it like the fighting army and my wonderful Jill deserve. Part of the new regimen will be a good substantial daily letter. I can tell perhaps in more detail the things I saw in Rome and points north. I can read some more now too and eat more and get more sleep. I started off in great style, tonight, with roast chicken, fried potatoes, peas and salad, plus noodle soup and ice tea, after having missed lunch while riding the truck. Tonight I shall get a good night's sleep and I shall have lots of time in the next week to think about you and exult in detail over the good war news with reference to yourself and Kathy.

I had a devil of a job packing this time in such a great hurry. I had to abandon most of my possessions to an erratic storage system, in order to take with me only portable baggage.

But at any rate I think I managed to gather all your letters of the past couple of months together and will sort them out during my quiet time for reshipment to you along with some of the pictures I've got. I find I'm getting too many of the latter to carry around safely. I shall always treasure, of course, your formal picture, particularly the one with the slight smile and the yearning girl expression. You look very soft to the touch, indeed, in that one. It and the shipboard picture are by far my favorites of you and also the one holding Buzz's Joey, taken while I was still in the States. You remember it? You were wearing glasses.

You probably are wondering what happened to all the work I was so busily engaged in when this latest quick shift came.

Well, so am I. In fact I have the wonderful feeling of not giving a damn and being highly amused by the whole thing. You know it's a great tonic to that vice of feeling indispensable. You merely, acting justifiably under orders, walk out on everything, letting all sorts of people scramble for the loose ends. In ordinary life, one could never do it no matter how much he would like to. I'll stop for now, darling, but I'll never stop loving you or the darling daughter you've magically produced.

Your, Al

JILL TO AL JULY 29, 1944 V-MAIL

Al darling --

Another letter from you, July 19 in which you discuss my 4th of July letter. That's pretty fast isn't it -- one round trip and it's still July. I'm absolutely amazed at Peck's story about Diter Dux, mostly because I see him very frequently on Kenwood, where he is living at the Sylvan Arms, which bears little or no resemblance to the Adlon in Berlin. It sounds like another of Christine's amazing and in this case vicious fairy tales. She's told some like that about a guy now hanging around here and formerly of Int. house, one Johnny Shaeffer. (By here I don't mean this apartment, perish forbid). She said he was sent to a German war prisoners camp and if so, what is he doing around here now? Apparently Chris even fools George, because I don't believe he'd fabricate things himself.

I haven't written Walter yet. I hadn't remember that I'd already broached the subject of loaning him money, so I was doubly grateful for your answer. It still doesn't exactly direct my hand, but now I have a better idea of what I will tell him. I think (for my mind is, as you know, subject to change at short notice) I'll explain to him that it's impossible for us to state what we're going to use our money for two years from hence, and that, if he wants to borrow from me, he'll have to do it at an on call basis. I'm not sure that that's the term I want, except that sometimes,

when I fascinatedly read the statements of assets banks put in the papers, I see that they always have a certain amount of notes at call, I think is the expression. Anyway, and in short and in fine, I have no objection to lending idle money now but I do have an objection to having some great plans of ours thwarted by having said money tied up in some asshole venture of Walter's. If he wants to borrow on that condition, then OK.

So much for money and dull things like that. Yesterday, when I started this letter, I had gone to the beach and today, though a fair and sunny Sunday it is, I am staying home, awaiting Mom's arrival. Dad had a concern south so she is coming down with him and will spend the time he is playing with Kathy and me. I like that much better than going to the beach for a change. The pictures that lady took of Kathy are ready so we can walk over there and pick them up. Last night I went to a party at Klaus Ollendorf. It was very dull so I only stayed an hour and then came home and read. I can't recall every going to a party that I wanted to stay much longer at, so now that I am free as a bird I can come and go from them as I please. Or rather, now that I am tied to Kathy I am given a sort of freedom by that very fact -- I can always rush in and out of things like movies and parties with the excuse and the incentive of going home to her. When I go out like that I leave the key with a neighbor, as well as the knowledge of where I am going and when I will be back. It is just as effective, well almost, as getting a sitter and a lot less trouble as I never feel that my ventures are worthy getting anybody to stay with her. Of course I don't leave her when she is awake. Kathy says "Dada" now and I guess that means you. I say I love you.

Jill

AL TO JILL JULY 29, 1944 V-MAIL

Darling Jill,

Thanks for a really fine letter that arrived for me today,

sidetracked and got to me before I ever expected any mail, by a faithful cohort. It was July 17, which isn't bad at all. Time mag. of July 10 also came. Your descriptions of the latest doings of our REMARKABLE CHILD delighted me. What a marvel to see her crawling backwards. I read in Time where a child's first steps are always East in the direction of the Earth's rotation. Observe same in Kathy, please, when the time comes. If she starts walking West, I'll be too frightened to come home. Getting a letter so nice and so fresh from home is a pleasure hard to describe. I'm not calloused to it at all. it brightens up the whole day and the memory lingers on. It also means that we are so many days closer and I don't have to think of the many dreary days that lay between the writing and the appreciation. I hope I shall get the pictures of Kathy you mention the lady taking soon. And you can tell Mom I'll give her five big kisses if she sends me the salami you mentioned. It is a wonderful gift. everyone enjoys it - Unfortunately, I managed to buy some PX supplies today, including the exotic articles of fig Newtowns and cheese tidbits. I'm eating the former now, in company with my new roommate, a Frenchman, who is a very nice guy and to whom I just explained briefly and without prejudice the essential failings of Hutchins' []. To me the great issue of the age, War and Peace, has given the refutation to him and his kind. He bases his educational plans on the victory of his one theory. This theory has its only justification, as he says, in teaching men to "think." Presumably, men who "think" reach the same conclusions (or else why all the bother, so Hutchins would admit). Yet his chief followers come to very divergent conclusions on W & P, in fact, very weird conclusions. But basta.

I shall rapidly lose now that peaked expression you noted in your last letter. I've had wonderful meals today. I had enough sleep last night. I shall have plenty tonight and tomorrow and tomorrow. And I'll be as beautiful as you are before you know it.

I just heard Jerry is in Algiers. And I met your erstwhile boss Dystal today. He didn't impress me much one way or the other, though I'm sure he knows his way around.

I never meant that you should go off buying land. I just think you should educate yourself rurally so that I can be back and dream up schemes and you can say "Nope. The ground has to have 50% sand in order to grow wild onions." Then, being reminded, we could buy lots of onions to put in our hamburgers that evening and exhale them in Kathy's face. Many kisses to you, dearest love.

Al

AL TO JILL JULY 30, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Jill,

I think I ought to write you this evening before setting down to reading my first new Yorker in detail. I've been thinking of you just now, too. It was with reference to the sky. I was lying on my back staring out the window and I thought of how the sky was the most communicative of all the elements of romantic nature, that when I looked into the sky, no matter how many miles from you I was, I could feel that it touched you too, that that same sky was above you too. In the land, there is the sea between us, and on the sea, there is the land, but the stream of spiritual touch runs through the sky like the filmy clouds which stretch out indefinitely in the colored sunset air over me. All through my life, as now, the sky has always profoundly impressed me and the twilight sky from my earliest memories has given me my most ecstatic dreams, any times fantastic and almost unbearable. I think I shall never be happy living in a house lacking a window to the west. And I shall be happiest when I can turn from it to you and thereby keep for all the night the magic of the Western twilight I find in you.

My roommate has just come in with a little bottle of whiskey and I had a glass. I don't know where he got it. The French don't get a whiskey ration though they do get wine. We toasted to our mutual returns home. I toast everyone's return home because we Americans are in the position that Dad used to conceive of

for himself. He wouldn't go to bed until everyone had come home and he could lock the door -- the noblesse oblige of 20th-century America.

Your letters of July 18 and 21 which came today were full of the convention. Down and under it all you are just an old Tammany Democrat, you know, full of blather and hokum, as sentimental as a ward-heeler towards a family of six votes. It's just as well I don't come home before Nov. 6 to see Kathy wearing a horrible "rattling for Roosevelt" pin on her drooly bib.

I ushered into Italian life a precocious C/F from OWI yesterday who is likable in a loutish sort of manner. He is very willing and is undoubtedly bright in his trade of radio engineering. I've been giving him caustic counsel on life in these parts and he loves it. Imagine that he left N.Y. only July 18!~ Every now and then I turn on him and ask him suspiciously and cynically some question about life at home. "Do you see many soldiers on Broadway?" or "Are the people optimistic?" or other silly questions. Whatever the answer is the response on our part is a sort of knowing, significant gesture or nod, as if the answer confirmed our worst suspicions. It's funny how natural that attitude is and when he pulled the old standby tonight at the dinner table "Give me a gun and I'll go in and fight," it was too good to be true. We all laughed like hell. Nothing in any of this is intrinsically silly. It's just not the thing to say.

But I haven't said enough of what I ought to say. All my love and K to K.

Always,

Al

AL TO JILL JULY 31, 1944

Dearest Love,

I think I can at least start a long letter now before dinner with the harsher tones and finish it on the sweeter notes that come from a full stomach. Today wasn't a particularly noteworthy day in my life. I did very little except see an opera (or most of it) this afternoon with a new-found friend who announces the program in English for the radio. He has been doing the job for so long he is tired of it. He's very amusing and just a little too affectionate for my solitary soul. I can't remember his name but he absolutely conforms to the type of the well-to-do Jewish professional amateur aesthete from New York - Amherst, Harvard, lectures, the musical world. He has been over a long time.

The opera itself was not very good. It was "Rigoletto" with a squeaky tenor and an unharnessed soprano that came from a bosom the amplitude of which would do justice to La Scala. The settings were well done but, hell, I'm just not an opera-lover, though I can enjoy excerpts on records a great deal. The audience was largely military, more British than American, the reason for which I'm not sure. I have an idea my lack of enthusiasm was typical. I really am at a loss to explain why people do like opera. Take Mom, for example; she loves it honestly and sincerely like she does a movie. And yet opera is generally considered high-brow stuff and fat, bejewelled women are supposed to be entranced by it. The third member of the party was a young naval lieutenant who has been cruising around the Mediterranean for the last year or so. All in all, it's a dull life, we agreed.

I returned early before Rigoletto had a chance to kill and be killed because I was expecting Dystal who had gone to the airport to get some stuff. He isn't back yet and I think I'll eat.

Apart from the above I had a couple of requisitions approved, talked with a few people, ate a good lunch and bought Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* to read tonight and for the next

few days.

Not a very busy schedule certainly, and not one to keep my mind off of you either. Perhaps tomorrow will have a letter from you and be less dull. I await with open arms gifts of cigarettes, salami, and Nescafe

I figured out that I really don't get a hell of a lot of money. The only social pastime within these territories governed by military law is drinking with one's fellows, and a drink of gin and fruit juice costs 30 cents, of cognac and vermouth 40 cents. Well it doesn't take more than a couple of these a day to eat up my month's salary of \$54 or so. And then my mess bill is considerable, little extras they tag on, about 20 cents a day. I just paid 1200 Lire (\$12) when I left my last mess three days ago. My fountain pen took 20 cents to get repaired. Though I have enough clothing generally, if you don't have the right article at the right time you must buy it. I'm spending \$9.00 on a pair of tank boots tomorrow. A dime for a handkerchief, here, 36 cents for a pair of socks there and there's no stopping the constant leakage of clothing. Why did I start this? I don't need any money from you or anything. But it'll probably interest you. I do wish I could spend the money on chocolate fudge sundaes for you though. The drinks are so bad but there's nothing else to do most of the time, and the hot weather makes one very thirsty. Imagine all these thousands of soldiers running around with nothing to drink, whereas their idea of heaven would be a fruit juice stand or a coca-cola dispenser. If they could only have a big cool park to lie in, plenty of good swing music blaring out, and a cold coke to drink, they wouldn't ask for anything more on pass.

I've had dinner and it was good. There was rice and vegetable soup, a tomato salad, hamburger, fresh fried potatoes, canned peas, iced tea and a kind of sponge cake for dessert. The food at the mess here is much better than when I knew it before or than it is in Rome. They even make good pancakes in the morning which is unheard of in the best of army messes.

I had an interesting time at the table talking with three men who are by coincidence all from Illinois. Two are civilians, Hank Miller, a fantastically tall guy, and a man named Toberty who was T.V.'s congressional secretary. Toberty and I found some friends in common at the U. of C. and 1313.

I'm sorry I wasn't able to see more of George in Rome. We just couldn't find each other during the last period there. I escaped in such a great hurry that probably a number of people thought I was there after I left and may still.

Last night I read a very dull Reader's Digest synopsis of a woman's experience who married a sheep rancher and decided to advise you firmly against considering going into that laughable pastime. Let us raise green things and dogs, with perhaps rabbits to give the dogs exercise.

I think I'll go back to reading Turgenev. It's unfortunate he has no fine feminine characters that might remind me of you, though his hero is supposed to be most awe-inspiring.

Give the beautiful Kathryn a kiss for me. All my love to you, darling.

Al

[the letter clearly says January, but contents suggest July]



Clara Unghy by a Roman fountain.

