

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 1, 1944 V-MAIL

Dearest Love,

Another night darkens our flat plains, another supper is over and I'm settling down to enjoy the evening as best I can. It will be good, too, for I can go to a movie if I feel like it, I have plenty to read - a Time and New Yorker came today, and Hans received some spaghetti from America and is having a small spaghetti dinner around 10:30 PM. Today, I got two fine letters from you, Oct. 17 & 19, one from Dad, Oct. 12, and one from Kathryn Steinz, great blessings all. In reply to your questions, I did get the woman's shoes and will despatch them by the next person going to Rome. I'm sorry about your not getting the Schiapparelli's and will institute inquiries if you don't get it within the next month. You can throw away your old bank statements as soon as your heart desires. On second thought, why not stick them in envelopes and send them to me? Just to see your quaint script on any old envelope suffices to lift this old heart skyward. Besides, as an army man, I can enjoy putting a second endorsement on it and sending it back, through channels.

It's such fun to play. (*Continued*). I don't need any more copies of National Guard records. My income is now increased by seven dollars a month by virtue of the original you sent me.

In appreciation: your little cartoon of yourself, bank statements & book worm was very cute. I'm glad you liked the brooch. I thought it was too but was afraid to commit myself in advance. I can hardly wait for the Kodachrome. I hope your hair is revealed in its beautiful natural state, even if your body is not. Thanks in advance for the Christmas presents which I'm sure cost you a great deal of trouble and annoyance - even as you so clearly depicted it. You shall learn to play trumpet and I'll never mention the drums again. I just read your warning of the package the "block" is sending me and it caused great amusement to everyone.

Later: I didn't see the movie but did have a good spaghetti dinner that Hans thought up. We also had chicken noodle soup, Gruyère Cheese, sardines, bread & coffee.

And so to bed. I am uninspired tonight for anything else to say save that I love you and Kathy & hope that we can be together soon.

Always your love,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 2, 1944 V-MAIL

Sweetheart darling --

I love you I love you I love you and I hardly have the time to say it. I got your letter of Oct. 19 this morning and didn't get a chance to read it until five this evening. The cleaning woman has been cleaning the kitchen all day, Jane Hess was over for lunch yesterday, Mac was over to lunch today, Diane and Helen and their babies were over at tea-time (though they got no tea, nor anything else, for that matter except black looks), the phone is ringing constantly, the campaign is going on under my very nose and I am going nuts.

But let's get back to your letter. I think it's significant of the profound rapport that exists between us that we both mention such intimate hopes as having another baby at the same time almost, and that we both say the same things about it -- that it would be worth it even if I had to do it alone again. God yes, darling, I would too, and feel no more martyred having a second that way than I did with the first, which wasn't very. And you are right about Kathy cutting down the feeling of wasted time. It's only now that she is quite a big girl that I'm getting that feeling all over again -- of here I am a grown woman and what have I done -- only one child to date.

Of course, since that child is retarded, it cuts down the actual length of time she's been in this world. I refer of course to her teeth, which are just now making their appearance. She bit me today and for the first time drew blood, and I looked in her mouth, and there was a little edge of white peeping up, as crooked as can be. I am putting nickels in an empty milk carton, starting tomorrow, to pay for the braces she will undoubtedly wear ten years hence, even as her mother did, otherwise known as the Blight of 86th St. in the old days.

Jane Hess and I spent a pleasant day. I met her down at the bank building where I was distributing leaflets and she helped and then we went home for lunch. Kathy was the best publicity the Democrats could possibly get, because of the sign on her buggy (My Momma is going to vote for Roosevelt) and the way she stood up in her buggy and yelled for an hour straight. I don't mean crying either. She just hollers out of sheer exuberance, a kind of protracted "Hi!". Anyway, Jane and I sat around and talked all afternoon. John is in Holland with a tank company and she's naturally pretty edgy about it, although she doesn't say it or dramatize her woe as much as little Liz Evers, who surprisingly enough has proved to be the most desperate of all the war wives I know, from point of view of feeling terrible consistently. I think that is because she has been the most sheltered of the girls I know, a veritable tender little flower compared to such worldly hussies as Jane or J. Kelly or I. Despite the swankiness and apparent sophistication of being brought up on the continent, I don't think anything beats a good public high and co-ed college social life, with access to a big city, for hardening one's intellectual and moral arteries, so to speak. And a little of that toughness helps. Anyway, Jane left and then I went to Laura Bergquist's for dinner, where I had a terrible argument with Jane Cates, another war wife except her husband isn't overseas where he pines to be. He was being trained to be a member of a French interrogating team at Ritchie before he got re-assigned to the infantry, the reason being that (she says) Eisenhower doesn't want any more specialists. I said, that's perfectly reasonable, if you spend a lot

of money and time and good red blood getting a man to the front he should be a fighting man also. But no she said any old dope can be an infantryman, etc. etc. Well, you get the drift. I'll have you know I spoke with great authority about t.o.s combat teams, etc. etc., of which I know absolutely nothing. But I am your wife and somehow the glory seeps through, lighting up my red (says the laundryman) hair like a halo, making me unpopular as hell with my friends.

I don't remember what pictures I sent you that so evoked the beast in you and also led you to deem unfruitful my expenditures on the great grey bathing suit (which really was the all-time screw and as I have said before wittily, I'd still rather have it in bed).

What did I do today? Oh yes, I cleaned and those people came that I told you about and I get tired and depressed very rapidly, particularly after reading your letter, because I realized (for the millionth time) what I was missing, in the way of a guy and a home life. Then Kathy empties a box of soap flakes on the floor and in my surprise and horror I broke a glass, so my mood was quickly dispersed in a flurry of sweeping.

Did I tell you I was reading Trollope, a dear Victorian novelist, and I love him dearly. It's all about life in an ecclesiastical town, with the ecclesiastic personages as the dramatic personae. It sort of reminds me of the people we stayed with in Washington - - they were Episcopalians as you may remember and were constantly urging me to read this novel a friend of theirs had written on life in a cathedral town. Incidentally, that cathedral that they were pillars of -- well, the organist some time last year got murdered by the colored handy-man, so I guess life even in a cathedral can have its non-kosher aspects.

How I digress! And how I love you! Many big kisses. Kathy sends a neat nip on your chin. I send a styptic pencil.

All my love, Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 3, 1944

My Darling Love,

No inspiration from you for a couple of days, enough to drive my spirits lower than the primordial ooze that lies everywhere. However, I know you are a most prolific correspondent even as you are a mother, & I someday will be *[word missing]*, and therefore am not despairing.

I remember now that I didn't think the Evers baby was cute at all. Kathy was much prettier or, better, less ugly at the same age. But anyway, it's alive, kicking & healthy, the most important things.

It has cleared up today after raining all yesterday and this morning. There is enough work to keep one busy and enough to do with one's leisure time, but everything is petty, inconceivably so when one thinks how large this war will look in history. But it's as important as the little figures who participate in it are unimportant. That's the fate of modern man -- to do things bigger & better yet to decrease his own stature by the same stroke.

This country is pretty dull, too. Nothing so grand to literate as Rome or Paris or lovely mountains -- just ugly products of the machine civilization and some ragged old farms that never had a chance under any economy, free or otherwise.

In the next war, perish the very thought a thousand times, I'm going to join the navy. They really never suffer a war. Imagine a warm shower, a shot of whiskey and a good clean bed always on hand. A ship's laundry, easy chairs, etc. ad infinitum. The poor damned infantry. I don't think anyone can know what a war is who hasn't spent some time in an army on the ground, from headquarters down. Anything else is a picnic. No wonder that armies have always been the sources of new ideas, contagions of all sorts, mental as well as physical. I'm sure I've learned a great deal more about everything than if I had been in the navy. But I'm tired of wandering through the circles of purgatory.

Every new idea hurts -- as some pragmatist pointed out some time ago. I'm tired of hurting and having the GIs too, without proper toilet facilities. Several of us have a mild dysentery at the moment and I think you can imagine how miserable it is to get up in the middle of a freezing night to use a stinking damp latrine a hundred muddy yards away. No fine ship's drainage system, no clean food & dining room. There is absolutely no comparison, nor with civilian life either, God bless it. *[Nov. 23 - added later?]*

Did I write that we must write cheery letters? So sorry. I really don't mind these things much. Half my pleasure in life is stirring you up, whether by arousing sympathy or love. Just because we have a daughter is no reason for me to lose out on all your protective impulses.

I'm enclosing a couple of shots taken recently. Hope you like them.

All my love darling to you and Kathy,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 4, 1944 V-MAIL

[Note: pre-election of FDR speech assigned Nov. 4, 1944. But Nov. 5 letter says "two whole days have gone by without my writing you", so this letter should probably be Nov. 3]

Darling --

I guess my luck so far as material objects, household arts and finances has changed. This morning I opened the mailbox and 15 bonds, count them, fifteen, in fifteen envelopes, tumbled out. I guess your strong letters to the War Finance office had some effect. Now I do not know whether to expect any more or not. These bonds are dated from April 1943 to June 1944. Did you stop your deduction at that time? If so, and if the deduction is no

longer in effect, I'll try to buy 25-dollar bonds at monthly intervals from now on and also make up for the six months or so we didn't buy bonds.

The radio is blaring in one ear but not in the other, because I have cotton in one, having a slight cold. It makes for a peculiar effect. I have been lying around in an exhausted fashion all afternoon, watching your child wear herself to a frazzle. First she sits in the playpen and methodically throws everything in it out, then she weeps to be let out and when she is out, throws everything back in. She quite purposefully plays with a ball now, throwing it down and crawling after it, and finally pulling herself up onto the bed where I was reclining, watching all this fun and frolic, and putting the ball into my partly opened mouth. I also made some fudge this afternoon for Mom, as part of her anniversary gift. I'm also giving them a bottle of rye and one of fairly good burgundy, making it a consistently alcoholic anniversary if you want to count the sugar in the fudge, which will doubtlessly ferment.

I also spent the afternoon answering phone calls from friends who wish to break or make dates with me. Tonight is the night of the great Roosevelt meeting down at Soldiers Field and I must have told at least a half dozen people I would go with them, including the Kerners who will attend with sandwiches and a quart of scotch, with Roosevelt feathers in their hats. Meanwhile half the number have decided to do other things, such as one Bergquist getting her tooth pulled and the other a date. And I have decided that I can't make it and feed Kathy too, and much as I would like to forego the latter, I don't think it would look well to the neighbors to have Kathy scream until tomorrow morning. So I'll hear the speech over the phone, radio I mean.

Later -- I did hear the speech and now I'm sorry I couldn't go, except that probably I would have been one of the thousands standing outside. It was a pretty good speech, I guess. After 12 years of infatuation and indoctrination all his speeches sound pretty good to me. The thing about Roosevelt is that as a man,

he is so comprehensible, so sympathetic and so appealing. Even if Dewey were a Democrat, I could never understand or trust his YMCA, up-from-the-sticks background. Of course the same thing could be said about Willkie, concerning his rise from early small town origins, except that Willkie did become a urban personality. And somehow that is quite a necessary thing for a statesman to be. With the exception of Willkie, we have had a raft of bad Republican presidents and presidential candidates, and they have all had in common that quality of snide small-town mindedness. Even a corrupt big city boss like Ed Kelly is more appealing than an Alf Landon.

And here is the end of the page. More tomorrow, darling. All my love to you.

Jill

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 5, 1944

Darling Al --

Two whole days have gone by without my writing you, I'm ashamed to say. But as the time for election draws near, it seems that my days are either too busy or too disorganized to write. Friday afternoon Diane stayed with Kathy and I went downtown to IVI headquarters to work, stuffing envelopes and such. Then yesterday morning I handed out leaflets in front of the University Bank building. That bastard Hoff came out in a huff, telling me to go away in excited tones but I said there was no law against my doing this and so we compromised by my moving three feet away from the door. He threatened to call the police and I didn't know really about the law, so I thought it better that way.

Then yesterday afternoon we had this stupid baby buggy parade down 55th and 53rd, throwing the Republicans into a fit of envy. There were about 15 buggies and a much greater number of small boys and girls and dogs, particularly the latter

since the cocker spaniel which was supposed to represent Fala, bearing a Roosevelt sign, was in heat. It was very cold and since I had lent Kathy's mitts to Liz Kerner, a smaller and less hardy type, Kathy bawled most of the way and I had frequently to pick her up and instill in her once more a sense of Rooseveltian security.

Then last night I made the great error of attending an anthropology costume party with Oliver Kerner, who, as you know, is a great party goer. It's amazing the number of people who turned out, many in astonishing costumes, some of which were the clothing they wore all the time, like the East Indian girl Jody (whom you may remember from Int. House) and a Haitian girl Johnny Murra brought, who could only speak French and Spanish and was very odd and sexy-looking, with mahogany-colored hair, almost pearl-grey eyes and light-colored skin. Kind of a ghastly combination.

I just wore a dirndl and ankle socks and that silly sign about "My Momma wants Roosevelt", indicating I was a juvenile. I also had a badge with the words Roosevelt and Sinatra on it which nobody thought very funny. I hardly knew any of the people except a character named Demarest Polachek who knows you and is the world's greatest bore, with the possible exception of Oliver. I drank some scotch and finally, later than I had planned, overcame my inertia and went home and read for a couple of hours and then fell ill from the scotch and the flu germ I have been giving shelter and sustenance to these many weeks. This morning after breakfast I went back to sleep and so did Kathy, astoundingly enough, and we didn't arise again til noon. So I feel much better now. I think Kathy is a very good girl to behave this way on Sunday mornings, don't you? She almost always does when I want to sleep too, although when I'm just doing housework in the morning she shows no inclination at all to sleep.

She is also developing some other peculiar habits, such as tearing up paper and putting the pieces on her head. She also likes to throw everything down that is up, and put things that are

down on top of things that are up.* [*footnote*: *but not the same things]. She is learning about telephones now and if she is sitting on my lap when I answer the phone, insists on grabbing the receiver and holding it to her ear, assuming a fay expression as obliging friends shout "Hello Kathy", at her, and whistle the tune of "Where did you get those great big beautiful eyes" at her -- her theme song.

I've only gotten one letter from you all week so I guess you must be very busy or moving or both again.

I'm naturally short of jittery about the elections Tuesday. You never can be too sure about the results. And now that I've heard or read some of Dewey's speeches, I'm more than ever convinced that his election would be a national tragedy. He's such a liar.

My feet are cold and so are my hands and my head is foggy. I guess this is not one of my great masterpieces. But anyway, honey, I do love you terrifically, and so does Kathy.

All my love and a million kisses,

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 5, 1944 V-MAIL

Ma pauvre chérie,

What great strain of melancholy ran through three full pages of a lush V-mail from you this morning. Oct. 21 must have been one of your bad moments and I will remember it next year by taking you out on the biggest eat and drink night short of New Year. And every time you stop laughing, I'll hit you over the head with a bottle of burgundy. Then you'll wish you were alone and melancholy again. But lo and behold, just a minute ago arrived a bright and gay card praising candidate Dewey for what he is. I'm always so happy, though I know it is always coming, to

receive the next letter after one of your gloomy ones. If you ever send me more than two grim letters in a row you can expect the next one to find me in an acute anxiety neurosis waiting for it. Very simply, I do not like to see you unhappy which is also a fair definition of love for one who has gotten to the point where he doesn't mind at all seeing people unhappy at least part of the time. Still, the few remaining months between us are certainly a piddling price to pay for the grand prix afterwards. It is almost laughable.

About the election, I foresee another four years of FDR, though I do think it is sad that a great democracy find itself in a world where such continuity is desirable. I would rather have settled times wherein the presidency were not so crucial to the life of the nation. And by this, I do not mean that Roosevelt is not one of the greatest presidents America ever had. And I would probably be against Dewey under any circumstances. I expect Roosevelt to win by a large majority of the vote cast, despite Gallup who I have heard by the PWB tomtom system predicts Dewey by a close margin. Even if he does, I've taken everything else and I guess I can take that too, without this ridiculous thing called morale being lowered. I actually think I do not possess "morale" anymore.

I'm very sorry that your Renoir perfume was broken and one of your gloves lost. I myself can't hold on to a pair of gloves for love or money. My hands are always freezing for that very reason. Fred Faas, a New Yorker who just joined us, lent me his pair two days ago and I lost those. I can't ask for any greater virtue in you or yours. Just think of the exultation that was Kathy's when the glove tumbled over the side of the buggy to be lost in the great beyond. It was as if you could push some foreign body from the edge of the earth, beyond redemption. You ought to put all sorts of useless articles in the buggy that she can throw out as she goes along, paying due regard to the local city ordinances.

Now there is a great commotion here in getting down to supper. Tom has gotten back from Paris and says it's fine and I ought to

go sometime. I'm in no great hurry to get there. I've seen it before and it must be no better now. Besides, unlike Rome, Paris is a city to be seen in company - your company and that's all there's to it.

So, until tomorrow and forever. I'm yours,

Al

CAPTAIN Beaudry of the Canadian Army is another free spirit, and he, too, becomes loosely assigned, perhaps because he is an uncommon Francophone in a largely Anglophone volunteer army. No one would think of asking anything of him but a favor, which he is delighted to do. Next to the drunk hung on with Captain Charlton in Naples, De Grazia's worst binge occurs the night Beaudry takes him to a French outfit with which he has connected near Epinal; it has a great chef and good wine; they make the most of it, and afterwards talk and drink till dawn back at Al's bivouac. Beaudry is reporting to someone, somewhere, the Exec forgets, *in vino amnesia*. Beaudry is a dare-devil and the Exec pulls out of a couple of his proposed expeditions, pleading larger responsibilities. Beaudry describes a little hotel in Paris and Julie, a French girl so beautiful that Alfred has to write home promptly in order to dispel the notion of the trip for the moment. He is sorely tempted.

Then he does go to Paris with Beaudry for two days -- hardly time to say hello all around. Julie is there at Madame Heller's little hotel, but a) isn't all that beautiful, b) is either menstruating or sick. So back he goes -- remarkable how little he allows himself in the way of leave -- especially when you think of how easily he gets it: it is not really called leave -- he writes a pass, ordering himself to talk to this one or that one, to pick up this or that piece of equipment or set of reports, to deliver something or the other, all destined to end the war sooner -- asks Roos to sign it, puts various stamps on it for Seventh Army Headquarters over at Headquarters itself, and now it looks almost as impressive as the aforementioned *Passierschein* leaflet that is disseminated among the German troops in large numbers, that one

that guarantees them safe conduct through the lines and decent treatment -- nothing so nice as Paris, of course.

He has visited Herz, though, and whoever else is around; the liberation flush is almost gone. He is embarrassed and annoyed by the large banner flung across the Champs Elysee, exclaiming in huge letters, "Hart, Schaffner and Marx Employees of Paris Welcome Their Liberators!" (Which Army Historian S.L.A. Marshall, writing about Liberation Day much later on, relishes to say was shot down by a French gunner the next day; either Marshall is mistaken or it was re-erected.)

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 6, 1944

Darling --

I was lying down this afternoon, contemplating the fact that 99% of the people I know are either shits or asses, when the mailman brought three of your letters -- the 25th, the 28th and the 30th -- all of them optimistic, calculated to refute my gloom, and all assertions of the fact that the other one percent are probably all DeGrazia's. Just why you should be so optimistic is a little beyond me. I don't recall which picture of me threw you into such a trance, nor do I likewise remember the previous photograph that you didn't like so well.

But I'm sorry, I can't share in your projected mutual elevation society right just now. Maybe after elections. I'm damned worried over the results, even after having listened to the pre-election Democratic broadcast tonight, in which Lana Turner, Frank Sinatra et al spoke up for the great man, and in which the next two most beautiful men in the world next to you -- Humphrey Bogart and Joseph Cotton (I run to homicidal maniacs) spoke substantial pieces. There is still a terrible chance that Dewey might win. I had another terrible argument with my overstuffed self-seeking laundryman this morning (I really must start doing my own sheets, even if I have to wash them in the bathtub), and he's still for Dewey. And I still don't

think it would be very funny to have a bucket of ice water poured down your or anybody's else's back (except a Republican's) and I refuse to laugh.

I didn't read Buss's article on Shostakovitch, suspecting rightly (since I can hardly spell c-a-t) that it might be too high-powered for me, as indeed are many of the things you write about. For instance, the paragraphs you have written on urban culture or art and mass response recently. I can get about as far as a feeble defense of the two-party system, which I only did tonight to confuse my idealistic fellow worker who gets shocked at intimations that votes are bought with turkey dinners or that people will vote just to please their precinct captains. She is this girl I've been making calls with in the neighborhood, a former U. of C. student and very religious and idealistic. We went out for the last time tonight, making a couple of unfruitful visits to people who will probably vote Republican.

Oh, I got your little picture and agree with you that it isn't one of your best, being too dark and strong on the blacks and whites. But I still love you.

November 7.

Today is the great day and I'm writing this in the morning, before we get dressed and prepared for the work ahead. This afternoon, I'll do errands for the precinct captain, running, I think they call it. Klaus and his girl are going to take care of Kathy as their contribution to the cause. His girl is very nice and has been doing a lot of work down at IVI headquarters. I admire the volunteers down there as the work towards the end was altogether shipping clerk stuff yet the volunteers would stay until midnight doing it. I was able to get out twice last week but that still isn't very much.

Speaking of people's girls, Jane Hess called me yesterday, with the plan that she might stay in Chicago and get a job here instead of going to Toledo and would I like a roommate. She is a good girl and it might be fun for a while though I warned her I

was a manic-depressive, a classification which might appall you but is good for propaganda purposes. She's Johnny's wife, you know. It would be easier to bunk up with her than a girl with a baby because if you came home or we didn't get along, she could move easily. Furthermore she has a car which I am urging her to bring back from Toledo and which would certainly enhance her charms. So far as living with another girl, the advantages, lacking a car, would be mainly on the other person's side, since I have the furniture, the apartment, etc., and would have to give up some privacy. However, expenses (which were always quite tolerable) would be cut and the grimness of meals alone dispelled. Also, on weekends, there would be somebody to leave the baby with if I cared to spin around by myself for a few hours.) God know why I ended that up with a parenthesis. We shall see, however.

Kathy is getting hotter than a pistol. If you hand her a sock she will put it next to her foot, she will put her hairbrush on her head and tries to stick everything in my mouth, evidently imitating my feeding her. I guess I told you about her passion for the telephone receiver. She has been a very good little girl lately. I had her in the house all yesterday afternoon while I cleaned and she was really quite amenable, only upsetting one bucket of dirty water.

Well, I guess I'd better dress us both, to go forth and exercise our sacred prerogative. Much love to you old thing and I promise my next letter will be more cheerful or I shan't write at all.

All my love,

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 6, 1944 V-MAIL

Jill, my love,

I have withdrawn into my room for what remains of this night, and, in breaking off my reading of Maugham's *Razor's Edge* to take up the *Theory of Opinions* which I have neglected lately, I thought I would write you. This book of Maugham is good but doesn't promise to be great. The weather today has been filthy. I should spend an hour simply scraping mud from my boots and clothing but I'm too sick of the sight of it to bother. The driving I did this afternoon was bad. The roads are covered with that slick stuff I remember well from Italy, caused by all the vehicles coming out of their bivouac areas onto the road. The wind was strong and blew the rain into the jeep. And of course, the whole world looked bedraggled. The other night, while I was trying to find my way over to Wally's (Wallenberg's) place, I stepped straight into a hole and skinned my leg badly. But I'm thankful that it was only a skinning, since it might have been worse. A bandage was placed on it, and now my chief preoccupation is how to take off the bandage which is stuck without hurting. I guess I'll wait for my next bath or an accidental bump.

I got a very nice letter from you today with two pictures of Kathy enclosed. It was dated Oct. 24. The one of her reaching out to the next buggy is a honey. She is a very beautiful baby, any fool will admit. I also am sure now that she bears a very strong family resemblance. I can't place it exactly, but I feel it's there. Maybe you'll get someone to resemble you the next baby we have, although I suppose it is still possible for her to change any which way. I seem to recall babies changing from one parent to the other whenever the mood seizes them. And, as for my duck skin, that comes from not withering it up by bathing. I just read an authoritative article in the *Reader's Digest* on skin and it says that washing is terrible for it and so is sunbathing. So there, my dear Witherspoon. You can't be a sailor without looking like one, nor a fish either.

'Tis the night before elections and all through the house went a

great yawn. I am sorry to be missing all the excitement of election day in Amérique. WE have so little evidence of how anything is going to go here that the discussion boils down to the partisans yelling dogmas of faith at each other, "Roosevelt will Win" or "Dewey will Win". Yet we have Dewey people here. It doesn't bother me. I know the limits of education and persuasion. FDR gets a majority here, Crowell, Wallenberg, Isenberg, Faas, Pittman and Degratz vs. Adams and Roos among the officers. We will be glued to the radio for breakfast Wednesday morning, which is about 2 A.M. where you are. I'll think of you sleeping and blow you many kisses.

Always your love,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 7, 1944

Darling -- 9:00 PM

Here is the big night and we are huddled around the radio (somebody just complained about the typing), listening to the returns. It is of course too early to say anything, unless of course one were too terribly optimistic. I wish I were little again so that I could go to bed early, being forced, of course, & be wakened up by my mother in the middle of the night with a kiss and "Dear, the Democrats have won again." So it was in the days of my youth.

I ran around this afternoon for Duffy, the precinct captain, reminding the few people who hadn't voted to do so. It wasn't very necessary because there was a record turnout in our precinct. I had to wait about a half an hour this morning to vote. I voted straight Dem. on the big ballot & followed the Bar Ass. recommendations (incorrectly, I might add, since I made an unsuccessful effort to copy them from memory) on the judicial ballot.

It's been a very exciting day, needless to say. Klaus & his girl Lucy & Betty Chapman are with me listening to the radio & after a while we may go down to IVI headquarters. Thank God this doesn't happen more often. The country would go to pot, most especially me.

NEXT DAY -- boy, am I happy! There's no point to laboring for more sophisticated expressions of the great glee that we're all in. Roosevelt is in, Emily Douglas is in (the rest of the state isn't final yet), Ham Fish is out. The only disappointments I felt was that Mrs. Luce was re-elected, that universally acclaimed prototype of the compleat dirty bitch, and that MacDougall didn't get in our tenth Cong. district. But what a thrill it is to listen to returns and realize that the hard-fought and difficult battle is really won. We started touring the neighborhood last night as Chappy had brought her car. First we went in the company of a quart of rye to some people named the Bob Murray's where I met that distinguished alumnus of the university Dave Eisendrath. As you well know, this young man is a model of modesty, self-effacement, yet withal full of droll and interesting tales. I think in my previous letter to you this week I evolved my now classical trichotomy of the world into fools, pricks and DeGrazias. Mr. E. has the distinction of falling into two of those groups, whereas most people I know are one or the other. I do not know if in that way he has loused up my methodology or proved my case.

Anyway, to get on with this tale of my election night hegira, we left the Murrays, and went home to gaze on the tranquil features of Kathy, then set out again for the house of Helen and Dick Baker, accompanied this time by a quart of bourbon I had purchased for Dystal, who didn't touch a drop, it turned out. So we drank that and listened to returns until my ears rang and my step faltered. About three I gave up the ghost and went to bed, replete with poor whiskey and the knowledge that once more the forces of good had prevailed.

There is something so mysterious about elections, even when one is sober. When the votes start rolling in, it is as if some

supernatural forces are at work predetermining the fate of our rulers, rather than that ballot you cast that day. Also, I was led to wonder what would happen if the solid South were not so solid. Would it mean that we would have a permanently Republican administration? Also, our organization, the Independent Voters of Illinois, is going to continue on as a pressure group. Well, since it is so difficult to elect a Democrat who, as in the case of MacDougall, really stood for progressive ideas, in districts like the tenth (which includes as you know Lake County which is part of that solid Republican northern tier of Illinois counties) could a group like IVI exert pressure on the Republicans to select more liberal candidates? What would that do to the concept of the two-party system? I don't think the Democratic party would like that very well, yet they must know they'll never have a chance in those counties so why not have an opposing candidate that goes along with some of the ideas of the top men of the party. Anyway, what do you think of this all. Don't you think politics are mysterious. They are a combination of ideology, habit and the economy of political job-holding, and you never know where one starts and the other stops. Was it always like this, I mean, did the Whigs in England not only believe in free trade but also have a bunch of boys in the Lord Mayor's office they had to support? Please answer all questions clearly and legibly.

As a testimony to the triumph of virtue and good works, I have not a single trace of hangover today although I went to bed feeling quite nauseated. I might also attribute it to the quantities of cottage cheese and crackers I threw down me at the Bakers. I don't know if you knew Dick Baker. He is a great swing fancier and also a sybarite in such fields as liquor, food (he told me how to steam clams) and girls. But he is not the dilettante of the Eastern college type, rather just an average sensual dopey good Joe, the kind you find at officers clubs from here to there, amusing but eminently useless.

I've been writing this letter for 24 hours straight it seems. It's now after supper. Jane Hess was by today and we talked more about living together and it seems like a pretty good idea, I

suppose. I can hardly get excited about living with anybody else but you. I got three v-mails from you today, the 27th and two from the 23rd. I get mad when the mail comes in such great gobs as it has the past two days. It means that I don't have the chance to read and re-read and treasure each sentence the way I would ordinarily, if they came in one at a time. I just get dizzy. There are so many things then in your letters to answer and comment upon that it almost seem like writing a term paper.

For instance, I'm relieved you got the shoes. Now, how am I going to make a transition between that noble thought and the next one, namely, that I will get you all the Thomas Wolfe in sight, even though I am not an admirer of his. (I'm still reading Trollope.) I found a new pocket edition of *My Name is Aram* in the drugstore yesterday which I got through I've read it before. I want to see if I think as well of it at second reading as I did the first time, when I borrowed it from the corner drugstore when we live on University Ave.

Day wrote yesterday that Unk had just had an operation for prostate trouble or however you spell it. She says he's doing all right but it's a painful affair. I think that and a general desire for a brief change will motivate my visiting New York in the next week or two for a few days, if Mom will take care of Kathy while I'm gone. Now that elections are over I feel pretty let down, needless to say. I was happy about it all day but now that the winter stretches out drab and forlorn, I'm not exactly elated. But those feelings will pass, of course. I'm already looking around for something else to do. Somebody talked to me about doing some statistical analysis over at school for Warner. I'm seeing the girl who talked to me about it on the morrow. I rather doubt that I'll be qualified, however. And then there is always the possibility of doing something in the permanent organization of IVI, like compiling and analyzing these election returns to help us win the next one.

But win or lose, do nothing or something, there will always be you and the hope of seeing you again. For truly I love you.

Always your

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 7, 1944

Dearest Jill,

It's somewhat after seven and if I were home with you we would probably be getting ready to hear the election results either at home or surrounded by friends primed for either a celebration or an Irish wake. But since I'm not home, there isn't much I can do except go to bed the moment the impulse strikes me and get up tomorrow morning to have the results laid before me. So simple and not so nice. But tomorrow morning is one time I won't have difficulty getting myself up, although if Dewey wins I'll probably go right back to bed and stay there.

The day has been very wet and cold. I spend most of the time getting wet and drying out. We have really got some soupy mud now, acres of it, pelted constantly by the rain that looks as dirty grey as the sky it comes from. I wish I were holed up with you somewhere instead of cursing it futilely and weakly. I wouldn't mind a lull in operations ever if the lull meant seeing more of you and playing horsey with Kathy who looks in her latest picture as if she is already on her way to becoming a great sport devotee. Like you, she looks as if she's game for anything. And desirable game herself. I enjoy that wonderful look of the child grasping eagerly for the world. I think the greatest function of the parent is to break the bad news to her gently.

I'm enclosing two group pictures for home consumption. The inside of this gutted house is where the work is done. I found out that Scott once belonged to the Black Horse Troop too, though we didn't know each other at the time. He is from Buffalo and used to do motion picture publicity I believe. We got him recently from a trucking outfit where he was a driver. He drives now too, one of our weapons carriers, but also does more

interesting work and I know he is finding the whole atmosphere in our outfit more intelligent and stimulating. The group isn't complete for my particular operation and I don't suppose I'll ever be able to round up everyone at the same time. Harold Adams is the man with a fine collection of pictures. I think I'll just let him go on with his collecting mania and then worry about getting prints from him back in America after the war is over.

I almost finished Maugham's book last night and am very sorry because I will have to read something duller afterwards such as the *Théorie des Opinions*. So far, the man that the author calls seriously his hero is an intellectual and moral infant. I hope he improves in the last few pages. And if he doesn't pull through, the book as a whole flops, because he's the only point really making in it. It's pathetic the way untutored authors try to get intellectual, and it's even more pathetic how a great mass of buyers think it's wonderful. It's also pathetic how I think you're wonderful and can't do anything about it. I'd like to kiss you 99,000 times tonight and 1000 times upon awakening in the morning, so as not to wake you up, much.

All love,

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 9, 1944 V-MAIL

Angel --

Isn't that cute? I decided that writing my name and address every time I sent a letter or more particularly a bill was too enervating for one of my limited resources so for a buck I got that little rubber stamp made at Woolworths. Now if I ever run for office, people will refer to me as a rubber stamp candidate, as indeed I'll undoubtedly be. Don't you envy me having it though? It gave me a splendid impetus to pay the bills this month, which in turn led me to check our bank balance against the bank statement. And although I was in a dreary mood after

supper tonight, not knowing how I would pass the long damp evening, I am now in a relatively frivolous mood, thrown into it by the Olympian amusement I derive from my own mistakes. It would absolutely appall you to know how many times I erred, or to look at our checkbook, which looks like the copybook of a subnormal fifth-grader. The only reason that we continue to have money in the bank at all is because my wants are relatively limited.

Absolutely nothing has happened today, ghastly or otherwise. I went to bed about nine last night out of sheer ennui and got up rather late this morning. I did the shopping and the laundry and this afternoon went over to school to look at some material of Lloyd Warner that this gal marshal Meeker had told me about. They're trying to get some statistical symbols for class and caste stuff and I don't know whether I'll be able to help them any. It was rather hard to do much talking as Kathy was roaming the halls of Grad Ed shouting and pawing the ground, and a tremendous and habitual somnolence descended on me shortly after we entered. I am reminded of Mac's comment on Sibyl Farreter who, before she left Chicago, whirled around in such intellectual circles as George Huzzar's. Said Mac, "Sibyl spends all her time looking like and trying to be an intellectual when the only damn thing she really is interested in is sex." And so it is with me. You might add politics. I was knocked near dead with moderate pleasure when Mac also told me she'd voted for Roosevelt. She said that once she got in the polling booth she thought, oh what the hell difference does it make, and the hell with my family anyway, and so she did it.

Kathy and I listened to Churchill speak this morning. He stutters. But it was very soothing to the child, who is getting definitely fractious on her never-varying breakfast of oatmeal and a boiled egg. I give her bacon once in a while but she can't eat it because it's too stringy and ultimately drops it on the floor in frustration. She's not a very big eater by the way, although she always enjoys her fruit and milk. The big eaters are usually the more turgid types of babies. Diane's baby is still the littlest mite imaginable and can get so little food down her that she has

to eat about ten times a day. Yet at five months she does all sorts of astounding things, earlier even than Kathy, like sitting up and pulling herself to a standing position. She is very cute but frequently unhappy these days because she can't coordinate very well in all these new poses and probably feels uncomfortable and frustrated part of the time. I think Kathy used to do that too for a short while. Babies are so damned cute. I wish we had more.

Here's the end and I still love you.

Jill

AL TO JILL NOVEMBER 10, 1944 V-MAIL

Jill, my darling,

I have been selfishly reading two New Yorkers that came in yesterday instead of writing this letter which I had intended to be at least three-pages long and which may still achieve that stature. I have been huddling over the too self-contained little stove too, absorbing some of the heat that I missed so badly during the day. I have laid out my boots on top of the stove so that they will be dry for tomorrow morning. I find that the room and floor aren't warm enough to dry them completely otherwise, and they feel very uncomfortable in the evil morning when the world is uncomfortable enough anyway.

This morning was particularly bad as I had what in my dull social experience amounted to an escapade last night. After chow, I went with Pregre, a French lieutenant with us and Beaudry, a French-Canadian friend of long standing to an FFI mess where we ate most of a second dinner, composed of common food well-prepared and various liquors, bitters and vermouth, a bottle of Bourgogne and one of Bordeaux, and some cognac. We escaped with a bottle of apple brandy which we consumed at our camp. I didn't sleep well in consequence and both Beaudry and I had a fairly shaky morning, he having a

pair of pupils that wouldn't stay focussed and I having a hypersensitive muscular system which, for example, made my hand move twice as rapidly as it ought when I went to write something. I think that this was only the second time I have been unbecomingly high since leaving your fair bosom for bitter pastures, the other occasion being in Napoli with Charlton. I hope that it will be the last time too. I was very angry with myself this morning and may have even bitten your neck if I had had the opportunity to kiss you.

But, in truth, my only nice thoughts of the day were regarding you, for I got more letters from you, yesterday two, one undated and another from Oct. 24, today a nice one from Oct. 26. Their moods were very different, the undated one a gentle, self-consoling love letter, the second a chatty My Day one, and the last one of your witty masterpieces that leaves me at a loss to explain my appreciation since I would have to quote it at great length. I'll bet that I would have fallen in love with you through your letters even if I had never known you before - or is it that one can only write good letters when he is very seriously in love?

I'm glad that you got the two bottles of perfume. If ever I meet up with another bottle of Renoir, rest assured that it shall be yours. Flash - Kathy's hair came with another letter just received. It's lovely, paint and all, and looks like yours. Will you send me a lock of your hair, too, please? Thanks for sending Hank the dough. It was nice of him to send the package, whatever is in it.

I haven't written you since the election results came in. I know you must be as happy over them as I am. I like the changed complexion of Congress too, though an international program must have a basis in both parties and cannot depend on even a substantial majority in Congress for its fulfillment. But I believe the situation is present. You must be gratified to have done your part of put[ting] Illinois in the proper column, you and your buggy brigade. And Fish flopped well, didn't he?

I got a nice letter from Ed which he wrote the day before his classes started in earnest. The schedule does seem very stiff, though he wrote almost apologetically that he realized that he wasn't really in the real army (ed. note: a mythical body). But the program looks very good, like a genuine college program with a mathematical slant. I'll like the scarf you're sending me, I'm sure, despite the fact that I already have one. It's good to have two anyway, since they're not easy to replace if one gets lost, and besides a scarf from you is doubly good. I wish you could be here to wrap it around me and tuck it beneath my collar. It would easily be worth a dozen kisses to you.

I don't mind your sleeping beneath an open window for the cold but don't you think the invitation to prowlers a little too explicit, especially since you lack ammunition, not to mention expertise, for your revolver?

I read the story by Cheever you mentioned and agree it was good. Walter Bernstein wrote a fine war story in the Sept. 23 issue which you should read if you haven't already. That magazine has almost incredible perspicacity. It is almost too good to be true. It means a great deal too, for when one is inclined to say that the human race is hopeless, it stands as a clear denial of the thought. Because here is a group of people as they should be and there can be many more of them.

Well, it's about the end of my second page and I feel like turning in. I haven't had any chance to say how much I love you, but I refuse to credit any of your nonsense about loving me any more than I love you. Sometimes you get unbearably rash, and I'm sorry I'm not near you to pin you down on your back where I can torture you at will. Woe unto you, for all this will end soon. We are well-equipped for this winter which can only mean that the war will end before we use the equipment; that is my great principle of warfare to out-Clausewitz Clausewitz.

All my love to you and Kathy, who is warned sternly not to eat any of my books above the dollar class. Such conduct is the unkindest cut of all to her father who has traveled these many

miles to destroy people who burn books.

Good night, love.

Al

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 11, 1944

Darling --

Saturday

I feel like somebody ought to send me a basket of chrysanthemums (otherwise known as Mums in a city which glows happily under the appellation of Chicagoland) for being a shut-in, another phrase which should have never been coined. Kathy and I have been confined to quarters for two days now since she has a cold. It started Thursday night which she spent wakefully and so did I. All day yesterday her nose ran and she had a slight temperature and today likewise. Needless to say I have not called the doctor with my sublime faith in myself to handle minor emergencies and also a certain timidity about calling him. She is otherwise quite lively and sporting about staying in all day.

It is rather fun for me to play nurse when the situation isn't too grave. I gave her a sponge bath and an alcohol rubdown this morning, though she didn't appreciate them as much as I or you would have. Yesterday I kept changing her bed and scrubbing floors, because dimly I could remember magazine ads depicting sick rooms, in which all principals except the sick one, were down on their hands and knees, sanitizing with Babo, douching with Lysol or making the floors and their hands bloomingly radiant with mild Ivory. The scrubbers all wore expressions which, if you didn't confuse them with the patient and therefore diagnose the grimaces as those of risus mortis, might be called smiles of grim determination. And so it was that yesterday my face was dimpled with that heavenly look of virtue and pure ennui combined.

Last night Mac came over for dinner and then went out again. My unmarried friends always come over for dinner and, after a couple of glasses of light wines or beers, start bending my ear with their romantic difficulties which are present even in these days of manpower shortages. Romantic is a euphemism, since the problem invariably boils down to "Should I sleep with so-and-so?" or "Should I sleep with anybody at all." You might guess that I always give the counsel of the devil, mostly because the older I get, the less I see where everybody should get so excited about sex and virginity. If you love somebody, sleeping with them is life's greatest good and even if you stop loving them I don't see where anybody is the worse for it. And if you sleep with somebody you don't love, it may be disillusioning or dull but I still don't see where anybody is greatly harmed. Altogether my attitude towards the subject of sex in the abstract can be summed up in one great big yawn.

I got a letter from you this morning, Oct. 31, in which you touch lightly on the subject of our Future, from the point of view of careers, money and stuff. Well, you're right the first time -- I'm like you and don't worry much about it. I admit that I'm acquiring a few prejudices and pre-conceptions but they're surface ones insofar as I could be argued out of them. For instance, if someone were to rush up to me and yell, "What do you want your husband to do after the war, answer right away", I would probably answer, "Make a lot of money and influence a lot of people." My desires for comfort and prestige are no less than the next one -- particularly for the latter, but they are rather passive desires. I wouldn't even urge you to get out of the bathtub to achieve any end I might have dimly in view. Certainly I'm not the kind of woman who eats her husband and children in the desire to get ahead. Right now, too, I'm sort of prejudiced against the academic life, after seeing the people around here and the way they bullshit around, like Oliver and the way he rolls around the phrase, "The the-o-ret-i-kle aspects." And now that I am far away enough to say this without being hit, I never did think Gosnell was any great shakes and any good ideas he ever did have were probably thought up by you, Buss or Morris

Cohen. I think you would have to face that kind of thing -- stooging for a great (?) man -- if you returned to academic life. On the other hand, I don't think getting a law degree would be a bad idea if it didn't take so long and require so much dull study. Maybe you could buy one at Wards. I'm also getting less and less averse to the idea of business, if the product made or marketed is respectable, like books, airplanes or bauxite, to be distinguished from zippers, wigs, condoms and ladies ready-to-wear. But there's no point in planning or worrying now. I'm confident that there never will be anything to worry about.

I'm amazed at the plurality Mrs. Paul Douglas got, aren't you? There's an example of being swept into office on a fluke. She never had any experience of anything, certainly not a law degree. I haven't the faintest idea whether she will make a good Congressman, as neither did the other million or so people who voted for her, yet she was intelligent and respectable, and not an isolationist. Maybe I will run for Congress some day, except that I don't like public speaking. Maybe I ought to start now, filling my mouth up with peanut butter and reciting the Gettysburg Address to Kathy.

I won't bore you with my story of how I broke my arm reciting the Gettysburg address. Not now, when you are so defenseless.

God knows how I will pass the time the next day or two while Kathy is healing. I think I will iron this afternoon and I have invited Klaus to lunch so he can sit with Kathy while I do the shopping. I would like to go to the movies tonight but can't leave her alone and the minute I start thinking about getting a sitter my enthusiasm for the movie diminishes.

If Kathy is all right I'm going to New York Tuesday I think. But I won't be certain up to the day before.

Well, I guess I've given you a good dose of the minutiae of my life. And all this so that I can say I love you at the end. I do, really, too.

Always your -- Jill

P.S. What do you think of my living with another girl? This is very import[ant] to our (your & my) relationship. If you think it is a good idea I will divorce you.

Really, the more I think of it, the less it appeals to me. After all, I've gotten on well enough this far without anybody.

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 14, 1944 V-MAIL

Sweetheart --

Two letters from you today, one half of November 1st and Nov. 7th, to brighten up the day. Actually I would feel pretty good except that I have a terrible cold and the first day of the curse and walked all day long on the theory that fresh air is the best thing for everything. So now I'm just tired, but not too tired to write you before eating my evening meal. I put Kathy away just now, also dog tired. She still has a running nose but acts perfectly normal and cheerful otherwise.

I also feel pretty cheerful because I finally made up my mind and also got a reservation to get to New York this week. I'm leaving Wednesday. Tomorrow I have to deposit Kathy at Mom's. I'm sure I'm going to miss her terribly but it will be so much fun seeing Day and not having to clean house or do the laundry for a week, and to go to movies and art museums, that I think it's worth it. Then I shall return to Kathy with renewed vigor if not enthusiasm since my enthusiasm for her is always at the same high peak. But I have been having this ambulatory pain the past three weeks, first in my throat, then in my back, and now this head cold, which a week of rest could probably cure. (As if I ever get any rest in New York.) Anyway, I've advanced you enough excuses by now to convince even the most hard-hearted husband that his wife needs to go to New York.

I had another one of my funny dreams about you last night -- of

the same patterns as before -- that you came home and I could never get a minute alone with you. In this one you were clearly unfriendly and the cause of it our not being alone. However, you took me along on some airborne operation over Germany and it was rather fun, even if we didn't get to neck with one another. I thought in the dream and I still do that having husbands and wives in military operations together is a good idea. I'm sure I would be sufficiently savage to satisfy the most exacting marine sergeant.

I got the two group pictures you sent and they are OK, though rather dark. However any picture of you is a good picture.

Yesterday, Bill came over and then did Priscilla and we had spare ribs. I felt so badly after dinner I had to lie down and they did the dishes, much to my pleasure. Then they left and I went to bed, stuffed to the brim with aspirin and sleeping pills. I also cough at night, god wot. Saturday night I had a sundae with Priscilla, who inexplicably was over for dinner then too, and went to bed early also, coughing and wheezing. Well, it's a clean life anyway.

I have finished Trollope and feel I've lost a good friend, except Joan tells me that he wrote approximately a novel a day during his incumbency as a government clerk (which answers my question as to whether they had wardheelers in those days too), so I need not despair of losing all the clerics and their ladies of Barchester. But now I have nothing to read at the moment. I was about to buy the Pickwick Papers at the bookstore -- Diana and I took one of our stumbling walks together this afternoon -- but didn't have the money at the moment. I should learn to knit.

Much love to you darling.

Jill

JILL TO AL NOVEMBER 15, 1944 V-MAIL

Hi Flash!

Just a bright morning note, to cheer you on whatever day you get it. I won't have time, probably, to write you the rest of the day. Have to take Kathy to Mom & get my ticket (re my trip to N. Y.) & maybe, on my return from the N. side, drop in on a neighborhood movie, unfettered soul that I be.

Spent a pleasant night coughing.

I either think of you or dream of you a lot. Anyway, your visage has been cluttering up my consciousness a great deal lately, & what a lucky girl I am for that. I wish to hell you would be a little more forceful about getting home & stop wasting your substance on the road to Berlin. I really am very anxious to see you again, to put it mildly.

Here goes for another cough. Much much much more and all my love to you.

Jill

End of November (first of two parts) 1944 letters

