

122

The Drive.

Friday. 16.11.45.

My angel,

If you have read the heading you'll see that I'm spending the evening out. Joan & Frank have just gone off to a dance, leaving me with a gloriously peaceful evening sunk in an armchair by a roaring fire. Luxury? Wish you were here with me to enjoy it!

Joan looked very sweet and about 16 in a turquoise coloured evening-dress that she made this week - remember we bought the stuff last Saturday? - and Frank had put on a navy chalk-stripe lounge suit + they buzzed off in their pre-war fashion in their car. Nice work eh? And I can see us doing just that in a very few weeks from

now.

Actually I had a smashing letter from you tonight (94) but I saved it to read after they had gone, and I am just now all aghast from your words. You are Sweet.

I can see how happy this camera has made you & I think this gallery idea is quite super. We have already a number of Indian pictures, and there is nothing so wonderful to look back on as photographs of bygone happy days. How I wish we had more shots of our early days together! There must be a thousand and one scenes that hold glorious memories for us that should have gone down to posterity. However, in the future we shall have pictures galore - and we'll spend our old age doing as the

rather handsome couple that we were
in those days. I think we should have
a double leave set too - especially if
we go away on holiday. And then of
course there will be volumes devoted to
the off-spring - if we have any. Oh
the list is boundless. We'll probably give
any number of "at-homes" and entertain
our friends with lantern slides. Maybe.

A "top secret" lot of the Body Beautiful
huh? Well, I'm not so sure that I
would make much of a model, honey, but
of a Skinning-hiz y'know! And anywa-
y you'll have me in the flesh so whadda
you want with photos!

So you are glad about the flat.
Certainly I spend my days planning,
my lunch hours hunting, my evenings

needlework & my weekends Charming,
and all so that Westaway House can
look like 'home' when my man knocks
on the door. Honestly, honey, I think
we shall be really easy here for a
year or so, and by that time we shall
be in a position to pick & choose our
permanent castle. Yes, dearest, life is
very good, and I never felt like in
my life before.

Of course having Mum fixed up so
splendidly has lifted such a weight
from my shoulders. I don't know how
she will stand financially, but that's
not what we were worrying about, eh
Sweet? To have a place of our own,
and not to feel that it is at the expense
of someone else's happiness makes me
feel so happy. I don't know why

5 I allow myself to worry, its just a case of having faith and doing one's best, and somehow things work out. God is good.

have taken your letter in rotation.
She said - ho honey, I promise that if I begin to feel the strain I will ease up - after all one can get through an amazing amount in 6 weeks and I am fixing my deadline at Christmas. All must be shipshape & a good working order by then - ready to welcome home that man again.

Yes Mrs Gifford is the old lady - but she seems considerably older to me since the blitz and I rather doubt if she will do much hard work. There is another old dear on the top floor who spoke to

me to her day, but she seems rather
gossipy, and I think we shall probably
see very little of the other inmates.

Actually I think the flat will run
quite smoothly when we settle down at
the office again & we won't need any
outside help. The only problem is
fires in the winter, but if this point
is fixed up soon, we shall be able to
plug in on the electric until a coal
one burns through. Sands hunky-dory
what!

Incidentally I have not yet splashed
out on a fire, so we shall reap the
benefit of the reduced purchase tax.

ho honey, the kitchen would not
hold more than a small cabinet or
cupboard the size of our bedside one, and

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also a safe on the wall somewhere
for cooking ingredients.

'S matter of fact will be standing
pretty close together if we do the
washing up à deux. Still I won't
mind that after all this poring, will
you? You can stand as close to me,
as often as you like, in fact folks will
have to just drag us apart, after having
thousands of miles of ocean between us
for nearly a year.

So you want me to drip with
glamour eh? Well, you asked for it
honey, so if you are afraid of the young
lady who will meet you at Watelao,
well all I can say is you asked for it.
I've got a hat that will knock 'em cold,
I'm even a little frightened of wearing

it myself. But if its Glamour ho! ^
You want - well that's what you shall
have.

They certainly are putting the glass
back in the station rooves & really
old London is getting into stride again.
I know I feel like a schoolkid at the
sight of all the lights. - Can you
imagine all the office blocks with their
windows lighted on the river side?
Shell-Mex & Adelpi? and all the bridges
with their orange and green street lamps.
It really is a sight for sore eyes to
cross Hungerford Bridge in a train these
evenings.

This week the weather has been clear
& frosty. Everything coated white in
the mornings, and people waiting on
the platforms with pink noses, breath

9 turning to little clouds. What I
wouldn't give for a tramp in the
country these mornings. A nip in
the air to set the blood racing, the
ground hard & crisp to the tread, and
the grass & trees sparkling like a
Fairyland. Good old England! There's
no place like her. I feel that way &
have never been away from her, so how
you boys will appreciate her beauty
when you return is beyond imagination.

There's been a mail hold-up eh?
Well I jolly well hope the pipe & bank
notes have arrived safely by now. Happy
birthday on Sunday Super plum.

I have already told you about the
joy at the receipt of the mg - you
hit the spot there honey & will no

doubt be hearing to that effect from
Joy. I am a trifle perturbed about
the non-arrival of the carpet for us,
and suggest that if it doesn't turn up
by December we institute some inquiry.
True, the dock strike lasting a month
has probably delayed its arrival by that
much. It must arrive soon!

I still owe you £2 towards mum's
rug & really will send that off
tomorrow morn.

I quite lose track
of the cash situation these days - no
hope of budgeting while I am dumping
all this gear for the flat. Still we
have broken the back of the home stuff
now, and the other knicks knacks can
be acquired in easy stages.

I had to pay 15/- again on the
rugs. Since you ask.

"

You, angel, looking to buy table-cloths.
Believe this if you like - but a girl
looked at some cloths with 8 napkins
to match and the price was 79 qns.
Fact! The sheets & table cloth
material arrived this week (4/6^d duty
on the latter) and they really are useful
pet. If you've got the cash you can
splash out on as much household linen
as you like. It costs the earth and
coupons here!

Sweet of you to send along the wallets
for dad & Albert. I rather hope they
will arrive in time for Xmas - cos I'd
like to give Alb something too. I'll buy
him a couple of ounces of bacery to go
with it. Pop was tickled pink with
the cigars.

Oh darling, how heart-aching for you
all to see those liners come and go.
But it won't be long before you will
be one of the lucky ones aboard &
bound for home. What a day! And
I hope once more that you will make
the most of the sea-trip through the
Suez & the Red. Collect a few spoils
& I will try too, and will get some
super pictures of the Middle East and
spots of interest en route. (16 on a 120
ch? I've made a note of that).

How you do eat!! Cor!! I won't
debrate any more cracks about my
appetite. Gannet yourself!

I certainly liked the sound of that
Persian rug. Seems to be the place for
carpets. Alright. Alright!

Stockings did you say. STOCKINGS.

One gets so sick of always darning a pair before wearing 'em. Believe it or not I have 14 pairs to my name.

The first I bought for our holiday in Bournemouth this time last year, and the rest are 6 months old. Gosh!

Betty & I were aily recalling the other day how we used regularly to call in Woolwich on a Saturday afternoon for a pair of pure silk, FF for 7/11. So wear a stocking with a darn in those days was undreamed of!

Yes darling. I is the size, and I'd forgo, rugs, table cloths, sheets, almost my eyeteeth for a couple of pairs of the real Hekay. And that's

not being selfish is it sweet, cos you'd
get just as much of a kick out of 'em
What!

"George White's Scandals" eh? You're
way ahead of us. - That's in the West
End now. - and "Wardman" has not
yet reached the Odeon Leicester Square!
You saw that weeks ago.

Mum & I saw "Johnny Penchman"
last evening & I loved it. Story of a
Cornish fishing village & French poachers.
Sam Wells played a fine character
part, and Patricia Lee was sweet as
usual.

Did I tell you that Joyce came
up to the flat on Wednesday? She
was staying the week with a girl
friend in Welling & thought she'd pop

in and see us. Mum is sure she is going to have a boy - don't know how they tell - but mum generally seems to be right. She's ready to have a sixpenny bet with Don's who thinks she's in for a granddaughter. Well see. Actually Joyce has not got huge - of course you can tell she is pregnant but you wouldn't think baby was due in 6 weeks time.

She is awfully good company and I can quite imagine how she broke so many hearts.

Well, pet, I could write reams, but it is almost midnight & the folks will soon be home. Actually I had to stop writing a while ago cos baby woke up screaming. She must have had

an awful pain, cos she passed a lot of wind, kept vomiting, & was finally violently sick. Thanks to the training I've had with all these babes, I did not fly into a panic & managed after a deal of rubbing and soft talk to calm her screams, and get her back to sleep. I dumped her with some magnesian & hot milk but she wasn't having any - I bet she'll be hungry in the morning!

So, sweetheart, its goodnight. As soon as the kids get home I shall be whizzed back to the flat by car, & so to bed. But until they do arrive I can re-read your letter & weave a few more rosy dreams.

I love you with all my heart
Clare

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Central forces

BOMBAY.

INDIA



POST EARLY

