

Mitchel Field, N. Y.

May 13, 1947

My darling Cathie:

I received one of your letters today and a belated one a couple of days ago...It had gone to the squadron mailroom, to which I seldom go, as I pick up the Beacon mail at the postoffice. I liked your first letter, but your last one made me sad. I decided that I was going to go all out to try to improve your dampened spirits. It makes me feel blue when I know that you are feeling blue, Cathie, because you are the only one that makes life bearable for me now. I work, work work, with this newspaper. I'm sick of it; I'm sick of anything to do with the newspaper business.

If we had more help, maybe I wouldn't mind it so bad, but now I hardly have time to even write to my mother.

I've heard and read how things are in England now. Darling, can't they do something? Britain didn't lose the war. From all reports, even Germany is being better fed now. If something were done, instead of all the bickering and the armchair strategists that tell the world how to get along, but do nothing about it. When I think of how much we have; how much we waste; enough to keep hundreds of thousands.

What to do? Spring, almost summer, is here. The fields are green....what little there is here. And the trees are all in bloom. Green leaves. Maytime. It's not like Romberg's "Maytime," because this is not the proper setting. Long Island is so thickly populated, that you have few miles without villages and towns. I don't like urban life. I wish we were situated in the country, like Cyderstone, where you could hop on a bicycle and breeze down the road, pass brooks and farms and forests...

A change of typewriters because I had to be alone to really get down to business writing this letter to you. A couple of guys in my office were arguing and I couldn't get into the mood to write.

What was it about England—with all her privations, her wartime restrictions that got under my skin? It wasn't only you Cathie, dearest. Because I loved London, and all the other places that I visited. But especially London. I have menus from Simpson's—inthe-Strand, and other restaurants there, which I take out of my suitcase occasionally and read over; it seems that I have not left London; that I can't take a train and in three hours be there. Oh, why did I have to rush right back home. Having been away for two years, I was eager to get back, to the states, and I was only here a short while when I realized that I shouldn't have been so hasty. If only I had stayed around long enough to have married you before I left, things would be so much easier now. But as it is, we have to wait, and wait and wait.

I am waiting, but not very patiently. Time goes on. It has

been two years--over since I saw you...In fact, I remember the exact day; the exact hour, I boarded the liberator and left the base at Chetington, for Prestwick, Scotland. It was about 10 a.m., on July 9, 1945. Then we stayed around Prestwick for quite a while, and I never realized that I was preparing to leave this country behind. This country with its age-old villages; its ancient Gothic and Norman churches; this country with its tiny farms, its tea, its Yorkshire pudding, and its stubbornness, which brought the people through the dark times. This country that had produced a girl which was to steal my heart forever and ever. The girl who raced down the hill on the bicycle, laughing and her hair blowing in the wind...so tiny, but so real, so alive. The girl who liked to sing "Always", who was so sweet and kind that before she would say anything unkind about a person, she would say nothing.

Now you wonder, Cathie, darling, you wonder if I want you; if I could live without you. I may as well tell you again, as I have over and over, that you are the only girl I'll ever love. You're not the only girl I've thought I've loved, because when I was going to school, I used to think that I surely would die if I could not have some little 16 or 14 year old girl who was my "puppy love". How can you ever doubt that I could love anyone else as long as I could remember your eyes, your funny little laugh....I can still see you standing under Nelson's statue (I never did get to see you standing there, thanks to fate) but I can imagine how you would have looked. Why don't you go there sometimes, darling, and feed the pigeons...watch the crowds who seek temporarily to get away from the hubbub of the teeming city. And walk down into the Strand, across from the Tivoli theatre to the queen's head. There you will find Mom; she is the sort you can't miss because she is the typical Mom, huge, round and very kind. She used to treat me kindly. I wrote her a letter, she answered it and I failed to write, but you can ask her about the guy she wrote to at Mitchell Field. Tell her that I still think of her and that I will write to her. Explain how being in the Air Forces, and trying to edit a paper without 1/5 of the staff I need occupies most of my time.

But that I could just stroll down the Strand with you. You know that is my favorite section of London. Piccadilly is second because it is the entertainment center of the city, and I think I like Marble Arch next. I want to cry when I look back at the wonder full times I had there. Of all the laughing young Americans who tramped London's streets, thinking they didn't like it, but all the time loving it. Again I think how sad it would be to go back to that city and find it all changed....find all Americans gone. You probably think of it as an interlude that has passed. You knew London when it as didn't have Americans. I never did. To me London is filled with Americans...in the pubs, in the streets, restaurants, in the hotels. I can't picture it without them. So perhaps it is best that I don't go back, because doubtless I would be disappointed. It all would be so different...so unlike the London I remember. Even the friends I made in London have changed.

I could sing the praises of the island for days, and whenever I get the chance to do so, I sing those praises.

I, at last, have my teeth, after more than 120 hours in the dentist's chair. They fixed me a permanent bridge that can not be detected (they say) or removed. Everyone says they can not be detected...to me they don't look natural, because I know how my

real teeth looked. They were crooked, but these are so perfect that I can't imagine them as my own. I've had them in for a couple of days. Tomorrow I'm going to have them cemented in. then its permanent. The doctor has been very nice to me, although I have become an institution there. Its going to seem odd not to be able to go back to the dentist again after four months, I went once ever days, and sometimes twice a day.

The picture "Odd Man Out" which you saw in London, and said you didn't like, got rave notices in New York and is doing a landalide business. Have you, by chance, seen "Oklahoma" which opened there recently: the reviews that reached this side of the ocean said that it was the greatest American play to have opened since the Belle of New York in 1898.

LATER:

Since I've started this letter a let has happened, and I've put out an issue of The Beaces, too. First I received your telegram. Then I received your letter. Happy days. I'm so glad that you could get things arranged--I still don't know why you're coming. I want to warn you again of all my faults. You probably won't be able to stand me, but shall we give it a try anyway. Sometimes I get temperamental. You knewthat though. I live a keyed up life, fly off the handle easily, but get over it soon, and am sorry. I suppose its the Irish temper though.

I'm taking a pass this weekend, going out to Elmira for 5 days, to renew old acquaintances. May go to New York, too and see some shows. Joan of Terraine as treated by Auther Maxwell Anderson and Ingrid Bergman, the star, was a simple country girl; neither a mystic nor seldier.

I haven't had a pass since I went home on furlough last December. I need one terribly....I have to get away from newspapers for awhile or go crazy. I work too hard on this darn rag, and let every thing else drop while I'm doing it. I don't know why. It's not getting me anywhere .

Of course I'll write a letter to your Mother. Flying is

safer than travelling by automobile or train now. The percentage of accidents in the air are much less than travel by land.

Things will be all right after you get settled here, because the Army provides a fair allowance for dependents, but it will take a month or two for things to get straightened out. If I can obtain permission to live off the post (and I'm sure I can) they grant you another \$37.50 a month for quarters...perhaps its more. The main problem, now, is to find a place to stay...an apartment. The housing situation is nil. Tee, I only work five days a week here, and could possibly get a spare-time job over the weekknds and in the evenings.

I think I could arrange a transfer near home, which would help a lot, as I would be able to build or buy my own home down there. But Long Island, being just a little more than 20 miles from New York, is the ideal place...if I'm to continue to try to stay in the newspaper business, or you want to continue your career. It's a shame for you to waste all that knowledge of makebelieve (which you call a hindrance) and which I love. I want to hear you as Lady Macbeth...(not that I think you are a Lady M) But I like to see actresses dig in, something they can get their teeth into, and turn in a performance. Maybe we can collaborate on a starring vehicle for you. ~~Remember~~ Remember the plot (or Plots) of the story I sent you before?

If I didn't tell you in Chapter One of this book, I have my teeth now, after a long delay. They look good--are not renewable, so I won't have to worry about being seen without them. Feat of then replaced.

It's a beautiful day here today, after rain last night. Spring has arrived, definitely. Before I thought it had arrived, but was fooled.

I'll check with the Legal Dept. on the status of getting into the U. S. It can't be very tough, though, because we don't even need pass ports to get to the country to the North. Laws are easy, they trust us and we trust them. Never were two countries more alike. We have the same accents, both like apple pie and coffee, and are brothers under the skin.

I've got a dental appointment in about 5 minutes, so for the present I'll have to suspend this "issue." Had more ~~xxx~~ time than I thought, so I can continue (& perhaps complete) this "note."

I'll be seeing you, I hope, and until I do....let me say... all my love to you. You've already got my folks and Aunt Cat on your side. They told me if I didn't ask you to come over, they would. They all want to meet you. There's a lot I want to tell you but it will be better to reveal all my past to you in person. It's not lurid, though, I can assure you. A little hectic, but not bizarre. So farling, until we meet....

All my love, forever and ever,

Just...

*Heathcliff*