

Friday - April 13th

Hells again - Cathie -

I suppose you've heard and read about the death of our president - Mr. Roosevelt. It puts me in an unhappy (sad) mood all over again, as though it were a very personal friend who had passed away. He was truly a great man, holding the hope of several countries' progress in his hand (note: France & de Gaulle were looking to the President for some solution to their ever-growing problem and desire to be a fully recognized partner of the big three - : former Army & Golden rule papers.)

I doubt that since Geo. Washington, our very first president, & father of our country, has a man been so esteemed in the hearts of the American people. I wept unashamedly when the news - like a thunderbolt struck from out of the blue. I went all thick inside & my eyes burned & a stray tear rolled down my face when we stood a special reveille this A.M., and Old Glory was hung at half-mast. The entire field (thousands of men) turned out at 6:30 this morning for the ceremony. As he was Commander-in-Chief of the entire Navy, Army, Air Force, & Marines, this ceremony was probably repeated all over the world because there is hardly a place the entire globe around where a York cannot be found. He was tops with service men and if he could have just lived until the dastardly enemy was finally crushed and destroyed.

April 14th

My dearest little Cathie:

time
a full-length novel, for which shall ask & demand
8 1/2 - as a true author should.

My dearest little Cathie: This epistle - by that I shall have grown & extended (probably into

I bought all of today's papers (which I shall send home) and every Englishman - from Mr. Churchill on down to the man in the street - were touching. I want my Mother to see that he was well-liked all over the civilized world. The flag is still flying at half-mast

and probably will for a month. We are restricted to the base tonight, as this is the day of the funeral, and the supreme command has issued a warning - or order - that mourning will be in effect for 30 days. I don't think we'll be restricted after tonight. I'd damn little to do (to stay in - I wouldn't want to go drinking to-night anyway - in fact, however much I love it, I'd restrict myself from alcoholics for the duration, if I thought it would help).

I went to see "Song of Russia" last night on the base with the ex-head knob, Robert Taylor, who is now an ensign in the U.S. Naval Air Corps - Hollywood's attempt to glorify the Russian cause - which, except for the music - by Tschaiakowsky (Pikethique) Symphony, Concerto in B flat major, etc., etc.) - which was beautifully played, the whole effort fell miles short of its intended goal. Albert Coates made a brief appearance, as conductor in New York's Carnegie Hall. He (A. Coates) Dr. Malcolm Sargent, and Sir Thomas Beecham are all in America now, conducting. The U.S. pays fabulous salaries to get these prominent conductors in an effort to make the public more conscious of good music. Anyone would be a fool not to accept such glittering prizes at \$25,000 per broadcast - that's what the National Broadcasting Co. pays Arturo (doubtful spelling) Toscanini for conducting the N.B.C. symphony (he recorded the album I gave you).

"Nuff" about that. Sir probably loving you. Sometimes I'd like to see you in one of your acts. I might consider writing a vehicle for you to star in. When you're a famous actress, and Sir a famous writer (& playwright - very, very doubtful - I mean as my part) I shall seek you for the feminine lead. In New Orleans we have Le Petit Theatre, 'Vieux Carre', which is known all over the State, & if you can maintain a French accent, I'll write you a play - where you portray a Louisiana 'Cajun'. Like Ingrid Bergman in "Saratoga Truck." If you ever get the chance, see that picture. It hasn't been released to the public yet, but the forces get the pick of new pictures. Gary Cooper, Ingrid Bergman, and your own Flora Robson (what an actress!!!) - Flora plays a mulatto (half negro, half white) and almost steals

the show from such an experienced actress as Miss B. It is laid in New Orleans of a century ago, when we still were the most romantic & dashing in the whole U.S. - the center of culture & society - brave men fighting duels at sunrise under smogged old magnolia trees over the hand of some delightful femme fatale - which often proved to be a femme fatale. But then we hadn't allowed English civilization (no inclinations) to crowd out our noble French customs, which are now dying a natural death, because where chivalry once ruled, the almighty dollar is now king supreme. Thank God the old French city (the oldest large city in America) is still retained, & the cuisine! Gum-gum! French pastries, breads, bouillon, greeds, sauces. I could go on and on. People flock from every corner of the State to sample the old spirit still kept in the French Quarter (Vieux Carre). Naturally where you find a lot of tourists, you find the extremes in religion & vice. The old St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Sq. is a perfect example of old-world architecture, and the house citizens of N.O. built for Napoleon is now a public bar & lounge, serving French cocktails & wine exclusively.

I remember perfectly my last night as a civilian - Oct. 19, 1942. I had been sworn into the Army on Oct. 6, received a 2 week furlough in which I had a perfectly sober time, but on this night I intend to have a "bang-on" (apologies to Miss C. Meyer) time. I was with a Jewish babe, and my good friend - already in the Army and on leave to help me celebrate, had his girl-friend. He started out about 10 P.M. after seeing a show, being a tourist town, N.O. night life begins about eleven P.M. and lasts until 4 the next morning, the night clubs, etc. remaining open 24 hours a day, except on election days - then they close & sell no spirits to protect the establishments from intoxicated north-makers.

New Orleans is the birthplace of blues, jazz, ragtime, boogie-woogie, and virtually all American music. We went from night club to patio, to courtyard-

restaurants - right out of one into another, having thick steaks
 charcoal broiled at 3 P.M. (what devils we were!!!), wine,
 & dining, forgetting the outside world & living for the present,
 sent only. Catch you should see that street you walk out
 of a Banian night club into a Gypsy Roumanian one, then
 to La Lune (Mexican flavor), then to Jean Lafitte (French)
 and scores of others. About 5 P.M. we wound up at
 Club Bali, the foremost of modern American nightclubs just
 as the first floor show was going on. Colored musicians were
 literally dripping perspiration over gaily colored musical instru-
 ments, while a young negro came out and writhed & wriggled
 into contortions while executing a savage, jungle dance that
 brought forth thunderous applause & deep admiration from
 the customers. For a second one might think he had been
 transported deep into the heart of darkened Africa & was witnessing
 an uncivilized ritual. Then the band played several "hot"
 numbers, and lastly Jerome Kern's celebrated "make Believe"
 which I love -- This was the last song I heard as a civilian,
 and so many times have I heard it since, during which time
 I am automatically carried back to New Orleans, Thimp Larre',
 Club Bali, and my friends. Stan, my best friend who was
 with me that night is now dead (as I've told you before) -
 killed in a Liberator's crash just one month after receiving his
 commission in the His Force, as a bombardier. What has happen-
 ed to his girl, I don't know....

As the musicians fondly packed hot instruments into
 gaiter, felt-line cases, I made my departure of the Club
 Bali - knowing it would be a long, long time before
 I set foot in there again - possibly never. I was a little
 saddened at the thought of leaving this behind - this
 gaiety, this life, this - now Orleans, because to me
 it represented home, where the old and new worlds met
 and often conflicted; it represented everything I had ever
 known and cherished - everything civilized. Even when
 we were in the tafi, racing out onto St. Charles Ave. with
 it's rows of castle-like mansions, where dwelled the
 rich, near rich, & socially prominent, I fancied I could
 still hear the melodious strains of "make Believe", and
 for a moment I sat back and sighed.

"make Believe", I said, half audible -
 "Only make believe."

As I predicted in one of the earlier chapters, this
nonsense promises to go on, (I keep making that mistake
over & over) I simply must write to my Mother,
and get out my newspaper column. Did I tell you
that I have contracted to do one article (1,000 -
1,500 words) each week for a newspaper back
home - a true story of my life in the Army &
especially of England. I'm doing a series now &
will send them 10 or 12, at a time to insure
arrival in time to make the deadline. When they
are published, I'll send you some of them.
Okay?

So let me say bye revive for the present -
and please write real soon (another masterpiece)
I'll be writing you soon, too -

So for now

all my love

Just

Heathcliff

P.S. Please remit \$16 by mail immediately
for this special "first edition."

Wm. H.