

October 31

Peter dear man; This is a preliminary thank-you and I shall persevere until I reach the point of being able to write odes.

You were angelic; you see, both can say it. And also you are sweet. And enchanting. And whatever the other word is that you bandy about; but oddly these ghastly adjectives take on a certain freshness and power when applied to you. Ah yes, you are also great fun. Even more oddly, I mean it.

You are also patient, kind and generous. You are also a crazy, mixed-up, old kid; but that's your problem thank God, not mine.

I do thank you for habroging me, first seasick then a viper in the bosom; and believe me, there are not many who could take it. Let us add "brave" to the foregoing adjectives. I only really liked the few times I saw you alone; but that's what happens to solitaires -- they become ever more solitary.

It was a good idea to have a bash at Aziz Khan though my skin has already relapsed. He prescribed a bear grease which costs a fortune and has to be seen and smelled to be believed, and this stuff -- with which I smeared myself before entering Mombasa this morning -- is clearly not good; it is supposed to prevent sunburn but I returned from my a.m. lollop through the market looking like a leprous tomato. However, now I know that a week's treatment will return my face to normal, so before I go back to civilization I'll just get shot full of whatever-it-is and sail off, unblemished, to northern climes. And return and get blemished and the hell with it.

It is blissful here. I must be quite mad. I have ahead of me six months without even an expected telephone call and my heart sings. The weather is plain glorious, day and night; and never in my many lives and too many countries have I so loved where and how I live. I accomplish damn all in any given day and the day has slipped through my fingers like feathers, and then it's time to enjoy the night. Golly. No good can possibly come of this except that I think it is so rare and so good to be happy, that I cannot fix my brain on the serious aspects of going to pot.

Got a letter from Virginia, waiting here, and it is all full of things, events, people, etc., and might have been written to me by a buddy on Mars. Sounds nightmarish to me; but they are on the crest of the wave and on Nov 11, the world is going to get self lighting cigarettes in which she and Aidan have invested and I hope to God the world is silly enough to buy same by the million million, thus putting V. and A. on easy street.

Tell Frank Waldron that I wrote to Betsey Whitney as promised, and she will think us both crackers but that cannot be helped. I have a wide variety of errand running by mail and to my amazement am involved in helping a young German lawyer collect and publish all the material on former Nazi judges now holding high judicial position in the Federal Republic. I cannot quite see how this awful task came on to my plate but there it is.

But what really thrills me is to lift my eyes from the typewriter and look at the sea, blue on blue, and the leaves shining as though done with Johnson's best Wax Polish, and to hear nothing except surf and monsoon; and to know that I've got the one invaluable commodity: time.



Now I am going to nap for an hour, since I got so involved with reading last night that I stayed awake, prying my eyes apart, until 2 a.m. and was waked by the sun and the idiot dog yapping at monkeys at 6:15 a.m. Though in this benign climate one is never entirely awake or entirely asleep.

Come down some day. You can pick up a nice case of photo dermatitis and read a book.

I do thank you, Peter dear. You were quite saint-like, and it will be restful to you to have your house to yourself again.

Love,

*Wantha*

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Peter Marrison, Esq.

P.O. Box 30221

Nairobi

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