POLLY THE PAGAN

ANDERSON

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POLLY THE PAGAN
Her Lost Love Letters

BOOKS BY
ISABEL ANDERSON

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THE PAGE COMPANY
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From an ideal portrait by DeWitt Lockman
Polly

POLLY
THE PAGAN
HER LOST LOVE LETTERS

BY
ISABEL ANDERSON

WITH A FOREWORD BY
BASIL KING

THE PAGE COMPANY
BOSTON
MDCCCCXXII

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I dedicate
this book with love
to my cousin, Mary Brandegee,
who is as dear to me
as a sister.

"She vanished through the fingers like a card in the hands of a magician."

FOREWORD

Of the many subjects open to the novelist none is more fertile in interests than the international theme, and none more arresting in appeal. Clash of character being the starting point of drama we have it amplified in the international by both sympathy and dissonance. Mutual attraction between individuals will sometimes overleap racial differences in point of view; and yet racial differences in point of view will always be at war with mutual attraction between individuals. All contrasts, all complexities, are focussed on this single stage, while one gets as nowhere else the conflict which each new-born generation cannot but wage against the dictation of the ages. On this crowded scene bring in that American element to which the dictation of the ages means relatively nothing and the wealth of the dramatic field becomes obvious.

It is curious, therefore, that it has been so little touched. It has been entered, but not very far. The great Russian and French novelists, with their concentration on the life immediately round them, in the main ignore it. The English have worked it a little, but not often, and not with much insight. The truth seems to be that the European nations, with their strong lines of cleavage, have difficulty in understanding each other, while they understand America not at all. Steeped and dyed in their own national prepossessions they regard other national prepossessions with indifference, amazement, or hostility. There are exceptions to this statement, of course. I speak only of general tendencies. The trend of events since the war even more than the war itself brings home to us the fact that the European mind is tribal.

The American mind is more open, as it is natural that it should be. It has its national prepossessions; but it has them less exclusively. Moreover, it is endowed to an unusual degree with the impulse of curiosity. It likes to see, to know, to explore. Beyond any other type of mind it regards a foreigner as a man and a brother, and not as a foe. To the American a foreigner’s life, habits, prejudices, and outlooks are of interest. He often likes them. He generally finds them picturesque. He may think them foolish, but he never thinks them dull. Being so busily occupied in creating a life for himself he enjoys inspecting the lives other men have created for themselves, just as a man who is building a house will examine with care the experiments of a neighbor doing the same thing.

The international attracts the American, and yet even the American has no

broad international strain in his literature. The theme crops out occasionally, but is never constant. Two or three writers have made it specially their own, but they have founded no line. When we have mentioned Hawthorne in one notable book, Henry James and Marion Crawford in not a few from each, we have almost exhausted the list of the great names of the past, while of the present there is practically no one to quote.

The explanation, if we wanted one, might be found in lack of authority. Though many writers travel in foreign countries few live in them with sufficient intimacy to see below the surface. Against outsiders continental European private life is guarded like a shrine. The Latin countries in particular know little of the easy throwing open of the home instinctive to the Anglo-Saxon, so that, as a rule, a stranger steps within the seclusion of a French or Italian family only by marriage or some unusual set of conditions.

And yet both marriage and the unusual set of conditions occur.

In the case of the former we who remain in America are not greatly benefited, since few of the American women who marry into continental Europe ever tell what they know for the information of compatriots. The power of absorption of a highly organized social life, like that of Italy, France, or Spain, is such that not many who enter it ever come out of it again. They are held by a thousand social and domestic tentacles, which have no counterpart in happy-go-lucky American relationships. Amid their surroundings they may always remain alien, and yet they are enclosed by them, as insects in amber.

It is to the unusual set of conditions that we owe most, and the author of the novel of which these words are meant to be a prelude has enjoyed those conditions to an exceptional degree. Diplomatic life has the special advantage that it establishes close relations as a matter of course. It admits one to the palace of which the chance traveller sees only the windows and walls. It knows no slow approaches or apprenticeships. Not only are the barred doors thrown open, but to the most sealed society the foreigner in diplomacy is given the key.

Of this *entrée* not merely to foreign houses and hearths but to foreign points of view Mrs. Anderson has been always quick to perceive the potentialities. Revealed by her other books as gifted with a power of observation at once delicate and shrewd, she has shown a remarkable faculty for reaching the significance of things beyond the objective and the ceremonious. She knows the value of European stateliness as set over against our American slap-dash; and she can also throw into relief the human spontaneous qualities in our American slap-dash in contrast to the calculated efforts of European stateliness. In her game she plays the New World against the Old, and the Old World against the New, in the spirit of comedy, not without its tragic points. She uses her

hemispheres like cymbals, for resonance and clash, for emotion and conflict, and also for joy, for wonder, for laughter, and for the leaping of the heart.

BASIL KING.

THE LOST LADY

These letters and the journal of a young American girl travelling in Europe came to me under circumstances as strange as they themselves were unusual. Some of the letters were written on heavy blue stationery without monogram or heading; some bore the names of various continental hostelries: many were written on the embossed paper of the United States Embassy at Rome. All were faded with age and were without envelopes, definite dates, or identifying signatures.

They came into my possession in the following manner. I was in Paris on leave that terrible Good Friday night of 1918, when the spring drive was on. The Red Cross had ordered me to start for the front next morning with some other nurses, and we were to leave at an early hour, so I had paid my hotel bill, packed my bag, and gone to bed, partly-clad, as was the custom in those exciting times.

But I had hardly got settled for sleep when the shrieking siren announced an air raid. My room was on the top floor, and offered too good a target, so I jumped out of bed, slipped into my uniform, seized my bag, and ran out into the hall. It was in darkness, save for flashes from pocket-torches. Half-dressed people were hurrying through the corridor and groping their way down the staircase to the cellar for safety.

As I passed an open door, I heard a woman call loudly, “Oh, won’t somebody come and help me?” I went in to find, as I turned my flashlight about the room, a pretty, golden-haired lady, an American, with big deep blue eyes, struggling to get into a black dress. One of her arms was in a sling and she was having trouble. She looked ill and weak, but seemed a perfectly plucky and determined little person. I slipped her heavy coat over her shoulders, wondering, at the time, where I had seen her before. As we started for the door, she remembered something she had left, and said, “Wait—take this,” putting a small morocco bag into my hands, while she ran back to find something she wanted.

“Hurry!” I begged, for the air raid was a bad one and I was alarmed.

“I will, I will,” she assured me. “You go down and I will join you in a minute.”

“We’ll meet in the hotel cellar,” I answered.

Barely had I reached the first floor when there was a terrific crash; the front door flew open and several panic-stricken people rushed in from the street, seeking shelter. A bomb had struck near by.

Forgetting the woman upstairs (but still carrying the bags, hers and my own) I ran out to see if I could be of any use to those who had been hurt. Someone remarked as I passed, “Crazy American—imagine going out now!”

Airplanes were buzzing overhead; searchlights were meeting in the sky while anti-aircraft guns banged away. Bombs were bursting and shrapnel was falling. It was the worst raid I had seen. “‘Crazy American’ was right,” I told myself, and ducked into a low entrance marked “Cave.” It led into a wine-cellar, and a number of people were already there, all as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. The walls were lined with dusty bottles and the place was dimly lighted by candles stuck round here and there. Some of the people sat at tables playing cards, while others, wrapped in blankets, were making themselves comfortable on mattresses that lay about. The crashes continued, so I stayed there till the dawn crept into a small window before I ventured back to the hotel.

The building was still standing, but a great jagged opening had been ripped through the upper stories. A watchman was on guard. Several people had been killed, he said. The ambulance and police had come and gone. The guests had scattered. It was clear that the owner of the little bag was not there, and I had no time to search for her. The sun was rising, and I was under orders to be at the railway station to take a train that would leave in fifteen minutes. So I jumped into the Metro and set off on my journey to the front, taking the stranger’s bag with me.

During the days that followed, so busy that we could not believe anything lay outside our crowded wards, I forgot both property and owner. Only when I reached Paris several months later did I make an effort to discover her. After consulting the police and the American Embassy officials without result, I decided to break open the lock and see if there was any clue inside to her identity.

The bag proved to be full of papers which I felt obliged to read. What might they contain?—romance, scandals, and maybe military secrets? There was a clipping about a mysterious Russian Prince masquerading under the name of Kosloff, and a Red Cross badge and some secret service insignia. Did these badges belong to the blonde lady herself or to the Prince, or to her friend, the diplomat mentioned in the letters? Well, we will see. I searched the lists of American Embassy officials for the diplomat, but without success; I discovered that their names were legion, and the Prince, too, I was unable to trace.

The difficulties lay in the fact that all the letters were signed with nicknames—and with the death of so many people in the war and the length of time which had evidently passed since they were written, most of the avenues of identification had been blocked.

Nevertheless I put notices in several of the Paris papers asking for information regarding a little fair-haired American woman who had disappeared from the Grande Hotel du Nord during the night of the air raid, leaving a black morocco bag in charge of a stranger. The only three letters which I received in answer were as follows:

Dear Madame,

In reply to your advertisement in *Le Matin*, I would say that I think I saw the woman you refer to at the Café Russe on the Rue des Capuchins one evening in February. She was dining with a big blonde foreigner whom she addressed as Prince. Catching a word or two of their conversation that implied they knew more of the military situation than ordinary civilians should, my suspicions were aroused so when they left, I followed them. The man evidently noticed me and knew my game, for he put the lady in a taxi, telling the driver to go to the Grande Hotel du Nord, and then led me a chase, round corners and down alley ways, finally dodging into a crowded music hall where I lost him.

She was so charming that I could not believe her guilty, and yet, her companion awakened deep distrust in me. I have often wondered if by chance she were a member of our own American secret service and he a German spy. I never saw her again, though if I did, I should know her at once. Since the hotel you mentioned was her destination, it may be that your lady and mine are one and the same. This is all the information I am able to give you, but I hope that even this faintest of clues may lead you a little farther in your search. I beg to remain

Very truly yours,
T—— F——.

Captain of —— Regiment,
—— Division of Infantry.

The second reply came from an American Y. M. C. A. worker who wrote:

I think that I talked with the little lady described in the *Paris Herald* while I was travelling by train from Amiens to Paris. She was in my compartment and carried a black morocco bag, like the one mentioned. She was dressed as a Salvation Army girl, but I could get nothing from her about her work or where she had been stationed, and though at the time this impressed me only as ordinary discretion, yet when I ran across her later in Paris, and found her wearing the Y. uniform, I stopped and spoke to her, and

asked her if she had left off being a Sally, and why. She pretended not to know what I was talking about, and assured me she had never been anything but a Y. worker, and that she had never seen me before to her knowledge.

I was convinced that she remembered me perfectly, for all her denials, and looked her up only to find that no one answering to her description was either on the Y. books or on the Salvation Army's. The only surmise possible is that she was in disguise for some reason. With apologies for troubling you with this trifling information, I am

Sincerely,
S—— B——.

The last letter was even more unsatisfactory, and came from a clerk in the Grande Hotel du Nord. Translated, it runs as follows:

Madame,

I have seen your notice in the papers about the woman very fair-haired and petite, who disappeared from our hotel during the disaster of Good Friday night. She had arrived that evening. I remember thinking it was very late for a pretty woman to come alone, but as she was tired and her arm was in a sling, I admitted her without looking at her papers, although I took them to my room to go over in the morning. They were destroyed in the fire caused by the bomb, so I can give you no more information.

I have, madame, the honor, etc., etc.

JOSEPH M——.

Since surely somewhere in this great world there is a man or woman to whom these letters will have poignant meaning, I have come to the conclusion that it will be well, on the whole, to publish extracts from them, hoping they will be claimed. I am doing so, leaving them much as they were written, with some excisions and few changes, but yet so no one except those concerned could possibly recognize them.

If by some miracle the little lady, who perhaps was Polly herself, and who gave me her old love letters, still lives, I believe she will want them. If she perished on that Good Friday night, or if for reasons of her own, she wishes to remain silent, I hope to be forgiven for publishing them but I feel that I have done only what was my duty.

ISABEL ANDERSON.

PART I
THE DOINGS AND MISDOINGS OF POLLY THE PAGAN

POLLY'S JOURNAL[1]

Steamship Cleopatra,
January.

I don't know where we are, somewhere on the Mediterranean on our way back from Egypt. It is the middle of the night, but I must write down what has happened, for it's too exciting! Well! There's a Russian aboard, and he is a Prince—Aunt discovered that, trust her, she's absolutely set on my marrying a title. Anyhow we are all at the same table and last night he and I walked on deck together. There was a full moon, by the way, and really there aren't any other nice young men on board, except Checkers, and brothers don't count, so of course the Prince and I started a little flirtation. He's as clever as he can be—very cosmopolitan, rather a mysterious person, and big, with a blonde moustache.

[1] Written at the age of twenty. I. A.

But when I went back to my cabin and put on my rainbow negligée, the one with the wing

sleeves, and started over to Aunt's cabin to bid her goodnight,—why, what do you suppose? I went into the wrong stateroom! Honestly, I was sure hers was 26, but it wasn't, and the minute I entered I saw I had made a mistake, for there stood the Russian, still dressed and staring out of the porthole. Of course he turned and looked at me; I tried to explain but stuttered in my excitement. He proved to be nice about it, but rather silly, I thought.

The worst of it was, though, that the boat lurched and swung the door shut, and then, of all things, the knob fell off! Really, I was so embarrassed and so furious with myself for being embarrassed, when it was such a chance to show what a woman of the world I was, that my hand shook and I could hardly get the knob into place again. But I did, with the Prince's help—only I must admit his help didn't amount to much—however he opened the door and bowed me out as if I were a great lady.

On the whole he really behaved very well, but foreigners are so different

from Americans. I'm rather ashamed, so I'm going to dodge him after this if I can.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Steamship Cleopatra,
The next morning.

My dear Mademoiselle Hummingbird,

In your negligée you looked like a humming bird and I do not know your real name, so may I call you this? Here I am writing to you, weak, weak man that I am. I have no other helper than my dictionary, and it takes me a long time for the writing in English, but I feel you will like it better.

Did I fish[2] much for you last evening? Fishing is not good for going in the Heaven, they say, but I did one good action. The devil pushed me very strongly to kiss you when you came into my cabin, but I bowed you out. That was meritorious. (You can say, "Beautiful, indeed!" as said Wellington, seeing the charge of the French Imperial Guards at the battle of Waterloo.) I hope how God will give me good mark for that in his golden book.

[2] Intended for flirt.

I am reading much today, trying to forget you. The language in the French books is very instructive to the mind but destructive to the moral. The vice of the French or the bragging virtue of the English—which is better? I finish this letter by begging you to walk with me again in the moonlight. Send me a line if you will. I say goodbye till tonight.

BORIS.

P.S. You have given me very much pleasure. It is sufficient for me to see and hear you. It make me pairfectly happy just so. I find you very charming.

How shall I say it—like or love you? In French they have only the one word, and the womans understand what they want. How you think? I like lively American girl, not afraid of anything, not even of wicked man.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Steamship Cleopatra,

The following day.

Dear Mademoiselle Avis,

Did you leave me last night when I try to join you on deck because you not like my letter or was it my foreign gesticulations which frightened you or you find my funs stupid? You angry when I kiss your hands in the moonlight perhaps? But why you not tell me your name and where you live when home?

You said me you just American girl called Polly the Pagan, and you would not interest me,—but you do interest me. Please do not be so jingoist. Is not this word one of your Franklin's?

Ah! I believe you disappear because it is that we sail in a magic boat among the islands of the gods over water that is—what you call him—fairy water which is bewitched, and at sunset reflect the brilliant plumage of the phoenix and at night the silver of the lady moon.

Maybe men are stupid and women wicked? Was it possible to be more bad as Eve and more dull as Adam?

I say you goodbye, naughty girl.

BORIS.

POLLY'S JOURNAL CONTINUED

Rome,
A week later.

I'm so glad we're going to stay here in Rome for a while! Aunt has taken the upper floor of an old palace, and we're all nicely settled for the spring. Up on the roof is our little terrace garden, so tiny but so perfect, with its stone paths and its borders of pussy-faced pansies and violets. In the corners are huge earthen jars bubbling over with pink roses, and the trellis to one side is covered with big-leaved vines where Cæsar, the mockingbird, hangs in his yellow wicker cage in the shade and makes joyful noises.

The sky is always so blue and the sun so warm and golden up there, and yet, it makes you cool just to let your eyes wander off to the snow-capped mountains in the distance. The dome of St. Peter's is not far off, and the Vatican —I wonder what plans the clever old Pope is devising over there.

Sometimes I stand by the stone balustrade and gaze down into the narrow dark street far below, where there are small black creatures scurrying and hurrying about, and the bad odors of the city come up, and I hear faintly the

shrill cries of the vendors. It is wonderful way up there, in the sunshine, and still lovelier at night when the great moon is sailing in the sky. I hope everybody down in the street has a terrace to go to and be happy on, sometime in their lives.

There's a little room off the roof garden where we go when the chill of late afternoon creeps over Rome and drives us indoors. After the sun has set behind the clouds, we start an open fire and make tea by candle-light. It's an artistic little nook, with old carved furniture and brocades and sketches by well-known painters. A wonderful place for beaux!

Just as I finished writing the last entry in my journal, Louisa, our pretty Italian maid, with a great air of secrecy, brought me a sealed letter that a foreign gentleman, so she said, gave her. My Roman adventures have begun!

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

My leetle Pagan,

May I come up? I see you on the terrace in the sunshine and in the moonlight with arms outstretched to the heavens, worshiping the elements. But you who worship nature, you give to the world yourself the perfume of the rose, the sunshine playing among the leaves, the song of the wild bird of the woods. I can imagine you dancing in the forest to the strange notes of Pan. Nature is just, but often ruthless. I pray civilization may not bring you ruin.

Boris.

JOURNAL CONTINUED

I haven't told a soul about yesterday's letter, nor have I yet put down my next thrilling adventure, but Aunt manages to keep a fairly watchful eye on Checkers and me. Being twins, we are much alike and always under suspicion of what Uncle John used to call "collusion." So far we've behaved very well, but when we do anything we should not, she says, "There's your uncle cropping out," or "You're as wild as hawks; where do you two get these ways?" and then I answer her with this song:

"I'm a little prairie flower

Growing wilder every hour;
I don’t care what you say to me,
For I’m as wild as I can be.”

Checkers has a little cart and horse such as the Roman swells drive; he hunts in the Campagna, and everybody simply loves his American slang. When people remark how much we are alike, he retorts, “Sure! We’re twins, and she’s as close to me as my glove.”

But my adventure—well!. Yesterday I was out shopping alone when I noticed a man was following me at a distance. I hurried home, not daring to turn around, but he followed me all the way, and then proceeded to walk up and down outside my window in Italian fashion. I could only see the top of his silk hat, but I thought just for fun I would throw him a rose. Aunt caught me at it and she certainly was scandalized; hereafter I am never to go out alone.

Louisa, looking rather demure, came in this afternoon and announced the American Secretary. And who do you think came with him? The Russian Prince of the steamer. And that isn’t all, for it was he who followed me home! Now that he has been properly introduced, Aunt has forgiven him everything, and is all smiles. He talked to her most of the time, not to me, and she says he is very agreeable. I adore his broken English, but how is he going to smuggle letters to me, unless maybe Louisa will continue to help?

Auntie is perking up and taking notice. She is certainly getting frisky. Our good old Cart Horse, as she calls herself because she thinks she does all the work, has come out of mourning and invested in a lot of new, artistic clothes,—lovely colors, but floppy—that go rather well with her reddish hair. She’s making a specialty of artists, and of one artist in particular, a temperamental soul, dark and handsome with wild hair called Don Peppi, who is painting her portrait.

In the midst of a party last evening I was introduced to Captain Carlo somebody—I’ve forgotten the rest of his name—who at once began a desperate flirtation with me. Desperate indeed, for he’s a dashing young Italian officer who wears his beautiful uniform most smartly, and speaks good English and dances simply divinely. Checkers says he hunts on the Campagna, and being a reckless rider, cuts quite a figure there. I think he may be a close second to the Prince. When we were leaving, he got our things for us, and he, and the American Secretary, the Turkish Ambassador, “Pan,” they call him, and a Spanish diplomat, Marquis Gonzaga, managed between them to put us properly in our carriage. This is LIFE!

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Cherished little Hummingbird,

I wish to know you better—you who throw me the red rose the color of your lips when I so wickedly follow you home. Your skin it resemble the pure white snow upon the steppes of Siberia, your hair the golden doubloons found in the depth of the Spanish Main, and your blue eyes the fairy sea on which we met. But when I draw near to catch you on that boat *Cleopatra* (has her spirit entered your soul to haunt me?) I find you vanish through the fingers like a card in the hands of a magician.

I inquire of you in Rome—no one know about hummingbirds—I am in despair. Then the saints are kind. I see you on your terrace. I wait at your door. I send you a letter by your maid. You not reply and you not look at me when you pass by me in the street. I follow. But you vanish again into the door of that dark palazzo. I ask the concierge your name—he will not tell. Outside I wait, and the saints they are still kind. Down from Heaven falls the rose!

Next day I see the Secretaire Americain, my old friend as I remember at once. We meet on the street outside the palazzo—he say he goes in there to make call on lovely American young lady. I take him by the arm, I beg, I implore him to introduce me,—ah, I am so desperate! Perhaps he have pity on one who suffer so much. He take me in and—I have to talk to your Aunt. He speak all the time to you, and I have to see you together and talk only to the Aunt. Are you willing I should come again, Cleopatra girl? Post Scriptum. I come again anyway!

JOURNAL CONTINUED

Rome,
February.

The dashing Italian officer, Captain Carlo, with the piercing eyes and the Roman nose, gave a dinner last night at the Grand Hotel. He’s not exactly goodlooking but very attractive—almost as fascinating as the Prince whose letters certainly do amuse me. Later the carriage was to come to take me to the

Duchess Sermoneta's dance. Well! I made my adieux and started to leave the hotel.

But alas, my carriage was not there, and I was quite disturbed when up came the American Secretary and offered to take me in his brougham. I was very glad to accept. Do you know I think I am going to like him! He is dark and slender, clean-shaven and romantic-looking, and has very distinguished manners.

We got to joking and he remarked he was love-proof. I wasn't going to be behind in a matter like that, so I replied promptly that I was, too. "We can be awfully good friends, then, you and I," he said; "it's perfectly safe." I decided then and there that I would just see how safe it was, for him, at least. I call him A. D. for American Diplomat, he's so very promising a young secretary.

At the ball there were princesses, duchesses, and all that. I met a lot of them but saw more of Captain Carlo and A. D. than anyone else. I stayed until about two o'clock, and then came the question as to how I was to get home without any carriage, but my diplomat again came to the rescue. Prince Boris was not there. Aunt says hereafter I am to take Louisa with me.

Roman society is well worth seeing, but I like country life better with hunting and races and things like that. I concluded I wouldn't go to the next party, and told the Prince so flatly when he asked me for the cotillion, but Aunt felt badly about it. I gave in and went. The favors were lovely—I got fifteen—and A. D. was there. He has invited us to dinner at his apartment. When he declared he was love-proof, I wonder if he meant he was engaged. He is devoted to a clever American divorcée, I hear. I will go for a walk with Sybil and talk him all over. She's a dear and my best friend; it's good to have her here in Rome this spring.

After a little drive on the Pincio, we dressed for A. D.'s party. He has the loveliest rooms. The Dutch Secretary, "Jonkheer Jan," Lord Ronald Charlton, a British Secretary, very pale and thin, and the Turkish Ambassador, the latter with a red fez on his head, and his hands covered with jewelled rings, all were there. Afterwards we drove on to a ball. The Prince appeared but I didn't want to talk to him, so when the gay little Spanish Marquis dashed up, I danced off and spent the rest of the evening in the conservatory. He's a dear, with flashing black eyes, and curly hair, but a little too fat.

We stayed till dawn, and the long, long flights of stone steps at our Palazzo seemed longer than ever at that hour. A. D. is coming to see me tomorrow, and I

don’t know why, but I don’t want to see him, either.

Aunt and I dined one night at the Grand with a big, wild-eyed American from Pittsburg. He is rather excitable and erratic, but he cuts quite a swath here. It was a magnificent dinner with all the Roman swells, and I sat between Marquis Gonzaga and Captain Carlo and oh! what a funny time I had! Each tried to go the other one better, and the Marquis went a little too far. His broken Spanish-English allows him to say almost anything. When I am angry he pretends he doesn’t understand, so I pricked him with a pin in punishment and then he kissed me right there at table. I was so ashamed. These foreigners do the naughtiest things.

Captain Carlo is poor and Gonzaga is rich. The latter is a diplomat, a gambler and very quick-tempered, but most Spaniards are that. Carlo is an officer and a sportsman; he has some British blood. They are both delightful gay young devils. The Prince was there, too, and it was lots of fun to see him glower at the other men. He was very cross with Gonzaga and went home early. A. D. I saw only for a few moments; I like him even if he is calm and reserved beside the others. But he’s an American!

The dinner went on and on in numberless courses with plenty of wine. There were quantities of flowers with electric lights under them and not only was all Rome present, but they say people were there who didn’t even know their host by sight! Pittsburgo, as everybody calls him, who certainly does love big and costly festivities, had hired an orchestra. Then two other dinner parties joined his and we had a dance, the liveliest I ever went to, though it made me think of some jolly ones at home. We ran races and jumped chairs—a wild affair! I haven’t had such a good time for ages, even though A. D. and the Prince didn’t stay.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Mon ange, je t’adore! Please not fish—no flirt, is it?—with others. You are

the most extraordinary and nicest little flirt I never saw! Alas! but I suffer,—a sad inhabitant of this valley of tears, and because you fish not with me alone.

I am curious to know you better. You have not told me enough of your life. What you think is more interesting to me even than what you do, because the secret agitations of the heart are more revealing than the tumult of exterior life. I love to travel, but there is no strange country which I should so like to visit as this mysterious region which is your heart. I love novels, but there is no wonderful novel which I so much should like to read as the closed book which is your soul.

Do pity me who walk alone the desert of life. I want to take interest in every one of your thoughts and all of your sorrows. I should like to be Adam and give you all my ribs. I mind I have twenty-four, for making twenty-four girls, all just like you! And I would keep them all and not let them run in the world without me.

I had today one great excitement. The postman brought me a letter in a woman's handwriting. It was blue, blue like the sky, and had the perfume of flowers. I felt at last had come the love letter from you I have been waiting for so long. My heart throbbed, my brain was on fire, but, alas! it was from another—not from a hummingbird, but a gray Miss Mouse.

I am very furious—my servants have never seen me so terrible.

JOURNAL CONTINUED

Rome,
February.

Pittsburgo came to call and stayed forever and ever AMEN. He talked most of the time about a beautiful Italian singer. Then A. D. and the Prince arrived and we had tea, and it made me feel like old times when I used to sit in the parlor at home and have beaux, knowing all the time that Auntie was behind the screen. Those were good old times, but they seem a long way off now. Finally Pittsburgo and A. D. went, and Aunt invited the Prince to stay to dinner. Afterwards Aunt was so tired she went off for a snooze. But if it had been the temperamental Peppi that stayed, I don't think she would have been so sleepy; or maybe she wished to leave us alone.

Later we went to a charity bazaar at Baronessa Blanc's, where there were flunkies in beautiful liveries at every landing, and flowers and tapestries. A. D.

appeared upon the scene. He and I are getting to be quite good friends, though I know he is terribly devoted to the pretty divorcée with a Mona Lisa smile and a come-hither eye. Probably she is the person he is engaged to, if he really is engaged. He has me guessing.

The Prince is very cross with me. He makes me laugh, and tells me I would flirt even with a pair of tongs. The more I see him, the more mysterious he grows. He talks incessantly, and is as strange as the Oriental cane he carries. He is not officially attached to the Russian Embassy, at least, so A. D. says, and his best friends seem to be the Turks. When he is not speaking broken English he uses French, but that's the diplomatic language everywhere.

The other night I started out with Louisa to a dinner at the French Embassy. She's the prettiest, dark-eyed, olive-skinned contadina you ever saw, and while we were driving she chattered to me in the most knowing way about the King and Queen and court, of their family life, even telling me where the King has his washing done. She doesn't know why, but—strange to say—it is all sent to Milan! It appears she knows intimately the Queen's hairdresser. Louisa is trying to learn English and delights in showing off. Much to our amusement, she refers to Aunt as "he," to Checkers as "she," and to me as "it."

Don Carlo, who has just recovered from the mumps, was at the affair. I danced afterwards with the extravagant Pittsburgo. A. D. was terribly devoted to Madame Mona Lisa, as we call her, and I don't care if he was! I walked through the great bare galleries and tapestried rooms with the Princess Pallavicini and the Turkish Ambassador, who seemed to know about my flirtation with the Cossack Prince. Somehow I felt glad to escape and go on with Aunt to Mme. Leghait's "impair" reception where the very gayest of Roman society gathers on evenings of odd dates.

February 14.

St. Valentine's Day! Just as I waked up, Louisa brought into my room a large basket of the loveliest flowers. Never have I received such beautiful ones or so many. With them was a note, "From your Valentine," but Louisa recognized A. D.'s man, whom he calls his faithful Gilet, bringing them. It was very kind of him, of course, but I wish he would let me alone, and send his old flowers to the grass widow.

This afternoon Aunt and I hunted all over town for philopena presents. I had lost one to A. D. and she to Peppi. When we got home, in came Captain

Carlo with his mother, who was oh, so beautiful. She went soon, long before I had enough of gazing at her, but he stayed till A. D. dropped in to rescue us.

After dinner Aunt and I put on black dominoes and masks, Checkers, Peppi, and A. D. made themselves perfectly killing in Pierrot costumes of black and white with white caps and fat-cheeked masks, and off went the five of us to the Veglione. We had a box in the theatre, but it was much more fun to go on the floor and dance. Whom should we see but Pittsburgo and with him his Italian singer. He hadn't the remotest idea who we were. So I said all kinds of things to him, and got him all mixed up and it was the best fun! How we did laugh when I pushed him just a little and he tripped and rolled head first into the fountain. I simply loved the whole affair.

Once in a while Checkers and I go for a drive in his little two-wheeled cart with the absurd pony that looks like a broncho who has missed his growth, and when we get way out on the Campagna we burst into song:

“Pull off your walking coat,
Comb back your hair,
Cut loose your corset string,
Take in some air;
Put on your bonnet, love,
Don’t act a fool;
See that your harness fits
Same as a mule.”

We almost feel we are at Black Horse Farm again at home. Between parties Sybil, Checkers, and I go sight-seeing, for Aunt says we must learn something besides deviltry.

“So you think I’m enjoying myself too much over here, Auntie,” my twin remarks. “Well, when I get home I’ll show you I’m not afraid of work,—I’ll lie right down beside it, see if I don’t. But while I’m here, I’m out for a good time.”

I’ve seen the Prince many times lately; he is most devoted. I love his letters, he interests but he frightens me a little. My feelings are so mixed I can’t write them down. When not with me, he spends much time with Peppi and Madame Mona Lisa. I often see them prowling about among the old paintings in the galleries.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Oh, Cleopatra child, present in my mind and heart is ever strange emotion I felt on meeting enigmatic girl, the first time and all times. But I have not progressed in detection of enigma, and it may be I shall die without solving it. The more I think, the dearer she becomes to me.

That night on the steamer the lady moon, how she danced on the fairy water! When talking to you in the cabin of the ship, I felt like a small boy, daring to do or say nothing. How stupid I have been that night, how little I profit my time while you bewitch me. I told so few things and I had so many to tell.

When you first appear in the doorway dressed like a rainbow in the sky you looked more like a fairy goddess than earth woman. Were you inhabitant of star?

But what have you done in star for having fallen down amongst us humans? Or was it penance enough that you fell?

I feel strong emotion in my being. As I think of you, the music of Werther flows through my veins. All things of that first meeting rush round me. How the sea was sparkling, the sky silver, the air sweet!

JOURNAL CONTINUED

Rome,
February.

This morning I thought I never should wake up—it was twelve o'clock, but even then I felt tired. Yesterday was the last day of the carnival, the last ball for me. Marquis Gonzaga sent me the loveliest bunch of flowers, great orchids tied with a beautiful ribbon.

So much for the pleasant—now for the unpleasant. I got an anonymous letter about Captain Carlo from an Italian girl who is in love with him, saying she will kill me if I do not leave him alone. I can't imagine who she can be—I'll try to do some detective work, be a Sherlock Holmes, and find out. I think it would be fun and I'm sure I'd be good at it. Living in Rome is like being in a play, it doesn't seem real at all.

But the climax came when another epistle arrived, this time a catty note from the Mona Lisa divorcée saying she was soon to leave Rome and A. D. to me, and she hoped "little Pagan Polly would enjoy herself." Checkers and I went off for a long drive through the Campagna. It was good to get out into the country, away from all trouble. I wonder what on earth will happen next?

What did happen was that the divorcée followed up her note by a call. Louisa announced her just as I returned, and I heard Checkers greeting her in the next room—"Good afternoon! Glad of your hand. Hope you feel as good as new money."

She laughed a little, but for all that, he hadn't put her in a pleasant frame of mind. When I went in to see her, I looked a little surprised and asked her what I could do for her.

"You can let my friend alone," she said.

"I do not know whom you mean," I retorted.

"Oh yes you do! You can't play innocence with me with your big blue eyes and your nursery airs."

That made me angry and I told her to be civil to me or she might be ushered out. She fired up then, though she had tried to keep hold of herself at first, and pointed to A. D.'s picture, asking sarcastically if he had given it to me, and if she was to congratulate me on my conquest. I saw she was afraid I was really engaged to him and was trying to find out and I determined she should not.

So I hung my head and pretended to be dreadfully shy, and murmured she might congratulate me if she wished to. Then I was sorry, for she turned very white and then red.

"I don't believe a word of it!" she choked, "and this is all the congratulation you'll get out of me!" She snatched his photograph off the table and threw it into the fireplace, and as I did not know what else to do, I rang for Louisa to show her the door, but before the maid could come, Mona Lisa swept out, muttering to herself, "I'll get even with you yet." That is the last glimpse I shall get of her, I hope.

I went and told Aunt. The American Ambassador came to call in the late afternoon and they were both closeted for about an hour. When I asked her what they talked about, she said about A. D. and Mona, but she wouldn't tell me anything else. But I know that divorcée is trying to make some mischief. Well, she may if she wants to. I don't care. If A. D. likes that kind of woman, he may have her.

Pittsburgo and Captain Carlo came for luncheon, and then later in came the Prince for tea. Aunt insists on leaving us together every chance she gets. But he is a trifle too impassioned, even for me. When he left today, he said, "Why is it you are unkind? You say me not sweet things, I who would kiss your feet. Naughty one, you are cold as March to me when I want you to be like the month of May." And that's the way he's always going on.

After Marquis Gonzaga's dinner, the other evening, I left while the others were still dancing. Carlo was watching mournfully from the balcony above and ran down to put me in my carriage, but round-eyed Pittsburgo caught up with him, much to his disgust, so he did not have the farewells to himself, and Louisa and I set off for home.

But when we reached the Palazzo, what do you suppose? There was Carlo to open the door! He had gotten into another carriage and raced ahead of us. He begged for the violets that I was wearing. I wouldn't give them then, but when I reached the upper landing, just out of deviltry, I threw them out of the window to him. It's a funny game, but this isn't the first time I've played it, nor the first time he has either, for that matter. I wonder if I'll get knifed by his Italian girl. I'll risk it, for it's all such fun.

The dinner had been awfully uninteresting, and I had to have a little bit of

amusement. A. D. was to sit on one side of me but he never came. I suppose he was with Mona Lisa. Also I spilt coffee over my new dress and got rather cross. I didn't sleep a wink all night.

In the meanwhile I hadn't forgotten about the anonymous letter warning me to let Carlo alone, so one afternoon I showed the note to Boris who was here calling and suggested that we do a little detective work together. His eyes glittered and I told him he could be Doctor Watson, but I should be Sherlock. As we sallied forth for a walk to talk it over, we saw a pretty contadina sauntering up and down the street outside the palazzo, and just on impulse, I said, "What do you make of that, Watson?" She happened to glance up, and if ever there was a look of hatred on a human face, she had it.

"I have seen her before," remarked my companion.

"You have?" I gasped.

"Dining in a little trattoria with—"

"Anyone I know?"

Boris nodded and I guessed at once that he meant Carlo but preferred not to say so definitely.

So I took the hint and kept a careful lookout for a few days, and sure enough, there she was, hanging about or strolling past every time that Carlo came to visit me. Once the captain who had just been calling on me, stopped and spoke to her; he appeared to be angry. So I took the Prince, who had dropped in, and we shadowed them home, quite delighted with ourselves and our adventure, until they separated, he striding away surlily and she looking after him until he turned the corner. Then she went into a tumbled-down house.

"Signor, who lives there?" I asked of a neighbor lounging on his steps.

"The gardener of Capitano Carlo," he told me politely. So there was all my evidence, and the next time we met I told my Italian Captain about the letter and that I had discovered the author of it. He admitted that I was probably right, and that it sounded like his gardener's daughter.

She was jealous of me, evidently, but he didn't seem at all put out about it, —in fact I think it rather tickled his vanity. People say the poor girl is half mad about him.

Carlo is now in an army prison for having been seen at the Marquis' dance when he was supposed to be on the sick list. He writes me he will go to South Africa if I won't be good to him.

This afternoon we got our things together to give our American Dip—short for diplomat—a surprise party at his rooms. But he had found out somehow or other, and as we entered we saw a large sign, "**WELCOME, SURPRISE PARTY**," and in other places there were drawings representing "the joyous hand" and "the joyous eye," and besides these, a notice saying that suspicious people had been seen about the place. He is very original and clever. The dinner was awfully jolly and we had great fun as people always do at his parties. Thank Heaven, Mona Lisa was not there.

After it was all over we drove to the Coliseum, for the moon was full. A. D. and I wandered round; it was a beautiful night, the great amphitheatre all gleaming silver. I hadn't seen any old moonlit ruins since Karnak on the Nile, and there wasn't any nice young man to see that with. He is such a dear, but a flirt, and I'm sure he's engaged to Madame Mona Lisa with the lovely gray cat's eyes. I wish he were half as devoted to me as the Prince is—no, I don't either, but there isn't any rubber on my pencil, so I can't erase it.

What a country for love and romance! Even the Americans are affected by it. Poor wild-eyed Pittsburgo shot and killed himself today in his room in front of the portrait of the beautiful Italian singer. I am terribly shocked and can hardly believe it is true. Some people thought he was in love with me because he came so often to our apartment, and just to make some fun, I wore his ring for a time. All Rome is talking. Poor old Pittsburgo!

This evening I went to the American Embassy—a large dinner of thirty or more people in a lovely big dining room, and with beautiful silver plates and then gold plates—the first time in my life I ever ate from gold plates. The Ambassador was specially nice to me. I tried to pump him about Mona Lisa but didn't get much. I wish she would leave Rome. Our Dip is rather a puzzler—he just keeps me guessing. I don't know whether he is engaged to the divorcée or not. I must admit she's rather fascinating and she has had a sad history, he says. We went on to the Princess Pallavacini's evening reception—he spent the entire time with Mona. Of course she and I didn't speak or even bow. Aunt likes him but still prefers a titled foreigner every time.

The Prince was at the reception, too, but I managed to spend most of my spare time flirting with Marquis Gonzaga; he talks a lot but is not so amusing as the Prince. Boris declares he is going to follow me about Europe. Aunt is taking us first to Sorrento and then Florence—after that, the Lord knows where! He is

more ardent than ever, so I bet Checkers a hat I'd make Boris propose before I left Rome. I like him better than I did. Checkers says I'm getting used to foreigners.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Darling Miss,

Have you really decide not to let me follow you? If it so, your heart is darker than the Black Forest and you are more wicked as the bears that live there, and if one of those bears eat you, I will say, "So much the better." But when they see you, I fear they will only lick your hands. Perhaps it is you do not understand the tender language of love belonging to the old countries, you who come from so far away new America? Maybe only way to make you love me is with the rough language of the savage and the hard hand of the brute. I would like to tear the delicate feathers off the hummingbird to punish her. *Bozhe moi!* But I would like to beat you!

It has been said once I resemble D'Artagnan and perhaps you are afraid of me, afraid of what Spaniards call a *furia francesa*. Perhaps you feel I carry you off like a hero of antiquity—Paris, I think—took Helena away.

You are making game of me. I am very furious. I have try lately to console myself to find another woman, as much as it is possible like my hummingbird. I look but cannot find her. I have treasure long time the only thing I have had that was of you—the handkerchief. But today the handkerchief it is gone and not to be found. I have sorrow like for the loss of a dear friend.

Here I am alone, with thirty people in the hotel, and not one of them hummingbirds. I am weary and think often of you. I would give them all for having you.

JOURNAL CONTINUED

Rome,

March.

Hurrah! I have won the hat from Checkers. When the Prince came to say goodbye, he proposed. “Some speed to that boy,” says Brother. Of course I refused him. Oh, if Aunt knew, she would be madder than a wet hen. But Boris swears he won’t take no for an answer, “You mock me like wicked Pagan girl that you are. But I love Pagans. I meet you in Paris before you sail for America.”

We are leaving Rome tomorrow. A. D. and I had a long talk on the terrace and just a wee bit of nonsense. He wants to spend next Sunday with us at Sorrento. I told him to come along. Thank Heaven the divorcée has left Rome at last.

Carlo also asked to be allowed to come to Sorrento, but I don’t want him to, and so there’s an end to that. He can have his Italian girl. I wonder if Peppi will turn up, for Aunt’s portrait is finished and she likes it. It ought to be good after those long sittings.

It has amused me to lead these foreigners all on, but it is dangerous to play with fire. Gonzaga remarked today, “My mother says me marry my cousin, a Spanish countess, but you, Miss Polly, you hear from me again.” As to foreigners in general and Prince Boris in particular, they certainly know how to flirt, but I wouldn’t trust them around the corner. They like to tell naughty stories and pretend they’re dead in love.

So the Roman season is over; the fun and the beaux and the parties and the drives on the Campagna are things of the past, things for me to remember when I’m old and gray. I’ve had a glorious time here and I’m sorry it’s ended, but Aunt says we must travel again, and I must study. The happy days for Checkers and me are over. I wonder if I will experience some day “*une grande passion*” as they call it over here and marry. Who knows?

I am not sure that I shall have much time to keep a journal after this for it seems as if I’d promised to write to half the men in Rome.

PART II
COURT AND COURTING

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

My Easter greetings to you, dear Polly; I hope they may come in time. I have been desolate since you left Rome, and am looking forward eagerly to seeing you next Sunday at Sorrento. As I passed your Palazzo, I glanced up and saw the flowers nodding their heads above the walls of your terrace, and I met the Prince wandering about outside, appearing decidedly forlorn, poor devil. I fear you treated him badly. I felt more than a little forlorn myself thinking of you so many miles away.

I went up with a picnic party among the Alban mountains today, first to Frascati, then, after déjeuner, we climbed to the ancient city of Tusculum, and the view was glorious. Way, way off lay Rome and the great dome of St. Peter's, and near it, I knew, was your Palazzo.

POLLY TO A. D.

Sorrento,
March.

We've been driving about all day, and have seen such a lot of people we know at the hotel. Oh, isn't it lovely here! And it will be even nicer when you arrive. Of course you know Sorrento well. It's very fascinating to me,—the white oriental villas, the peacock blue of the sea, and the gray-green olive orchards. We wanted to buy some olives, but what do you suppose the storekeeper said?

"We have none."

"But I thought this was the land of olives!"

“We have none,” he repeated. “Ship olives to Park and Tilford, New York.”

When you come, I am going to take you over to Naples to see an octopus. I know he was once a faithless lover, and has been changed into a many-armed, flesh-colored monster by a water-siren whom he failed to adore properly. Here he is, now, doomed to move forever in a house of glass where humans come and point their finger at him.

So beware! Such is the wrath of—sirens.

At night we go out on the balcony to listen to some gay Neapolitan songs sung by a handsome, dark-eyed fellow. He looks like the black and frowzy-headed Peppi. Aunt threw him a handful of lire for that reason, I believe. Then we watch the brightly-dressed peasants dance the tarantella—I have bought some castenets, so when you get here, I’ll dance for you!

You write of a picnic at Frascati. Was it as nice as ours?—when you and round-faced Pan went, and the Prince, and lanky Jan, the Dutch Secretary, and my friend Sybil with her straight black hair and her flirtatious dark blue eyes? How we enjoyed the yellow wine, and gobbled our sandwiches under the trees and told naughty stories and sang lively songs. And on the way back wandered down that lovely avenue of ilexes hand in hand!

Checkers wishes me to say he would give all his old boots to see you. Aunt wants me to thank you for the photograph you sent her, ahem! Please do not get spoiled if I add that I think you are very good-looking.

A. D. TO POLLY

(*Telegram*)[3]
Rome,
April.

I am coming to brave the wrath of one little siren tomorrow.

[3] These and succeeding telegrams and cables must have been transmitted by telephone and jotted down since I found none on the regulation blanks. I. A.

POLLY TO A. D.

Sorrento,

April.

You have only just this minute gone. I wonder if you are thinking of me—I don't believe you are. I shall treasure the pretty gold pen you gave me, to write you with. I am christening it now. Aunt calls me Pliny—she says I write so much that she is sure I indite my letters from the bath.

Will you hear my lesson? Although I have not been out of school very long I find I have forgotten a lot and I have really enjoyed reading about the very early days of Rome, of the Etruscan lords, the raids of the Sabines and the Celts, and the sack of Rome by the Gauls, the starting of the republic with the plebs and patricians, about Hannibal, the Punic wars, and the Macedonian wars, and all kinds of wars.

Checkers was tickled to death with my anonymous letter signed "Brown Eyes." He didn't say a word, but has smiled ever since receiving it. All women, he declares, are devils. I notice, however, like the sailors, he discovers a pretty girl in every port. He's as fickle, looking this way and that, as a blade of grass in a high wind. I just wrote some more nonsense, supposed to be from an Italian girl who had seen him on the street and had fallen in love with the handsome American boy. I wish he would fall in love with Sybil, however, but they are such good friends that I do not so far see a glimmer of hope.

Now I am going to bed, but instead of dreaming of something pleasant, for instance of you, I shall be wide awake and my head buzzing with history and dates,—Goths taking the city of Florence,—where we go tomorrow,—the visit of Charlemagne and the story of the Countess Mathilde who ruled for over forty years, of endless feuds and battles and Guelphs and Ghibellines of long ago. Now perhaps I can go to sleep, having written you all this, and if you don't remember your history, you had better read it up.

As one of Checkers' numerous girls once declared, "You are so fascinating I can't stop I writing!" This must be my case for here is a very long letter. I wish we could stop in Rome on the way north, but shall expect you for over Sunday in Florence.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,

May.

I feel lost and strange and don't know what to do without you. Only

yesterday we were driving together in Florence across the river, up the hillside, to that little church high above the valley where we had our photographs taken together beneath the gnarled cypress. Then we came rattling down the zigzag roadway, past the fruit trees in blossom, and had tea and chocolate and beer, each according to his taste, at the pastry cook's, and then went back to the hotel and stood on the little balcony, looking over the gleaming river Arno, and beyond to the setting sun.

This pin I enclose for you—a baby Leo, a little relative of the Lion of St. Mark's, which you should be wearing, now that you will soon be in Venice. I bought it today in a little shop as I was toiling up toward the Pincian, where I listened to the music and watched the people and the carriages go round and round. Groups of red-robed Bavarian student priests and straggling bands of monks, brown-cowled, with sandaled feet and ropes of rattling beads about their waists, and children, rolling hoops so merrily.

Here, we are smothered in flowers, great baskets full on the streets for sale, crimson and gold-colored, and the Campagna outside the wall has its patches of poppies and cornflowers. Spring is very lovely in Rome, but the season is fast coming to an end.

The garden party late this afternoon at the Spanish Embassy in the Palazzo Barberini was quite fine,—the Palazzo itself is so glorious! And the approach up the great staircase through the vast antecamera, through the salons, and across the bridge into the gardens is splendidly impressive! It was gay with bright dresses, and a military band played dance music, though no one danced.

I recollect how you loved the place, but the garden was too damp to stop in, so I made a circuit, then went back into the house where I lost the little ghost that had walked with me among the flowers.

The Prince, Gonzaga and I traced our way to the buffet and drank a glass of champagne together. Gonzaga was as lively as ever, but the Prince still looks a bit gloomy.

And now for a confession. I have been to Signor Rossi's studio and asked for a photograph of his drawing of you. Do you mind? For I want it very much. After this long letter, now who is fascinating?

POLLY TO A. D.

Florence,

June.

Yes, A. D. dear, I, too, am thinking of the balcony and the sunset and everything connected with your visit here. I have ever so many enchanting memories of Florence to carry away in my brain, so that in time to come, they can be taken from out their gray cells in quiet moments when I am by myself. Especially that stroll through the Cascine gardens and into the park, where, in its wild hidden places, we sat and talked,—the warm sunshine streaming through the trees and the flowers springing up in the grass under our feet. And how magnificent the Boboli gardens were, their arcades and statues peeping from the hedges, and the long walk with its splendid vista looking out beyond the Palace. Then our excursion to Fiesole, breakfast at the little *osteria*, and shall you ever forget how we climbed up to the monastery and walked bravely in, where women had no business, and when the monks saw *me*, how they scuttled away, hiding their faces in their sleeves!

But, by jinks, this sounds terribly like sentimentalizing! I will stop at once and be prim and proper.

So you have forgotten what I look like? And have to go to Rossi to get a photograph! Is it true, I wonder?—"*L'amour fait passer le temps; le temps fait passer l'amour!*" How I wish I could have looked in at the Spanish Embassy—to me, the Palazzo and the garden are just bits out of the fairy tales of my childhood.

Many, many thanks for St. Mark's little gold cousin of a lion. He is a dear and I am now wearing him on my chain. I shall look for you next Sunday in Venice.

A. D. TO POLLY

Venice,
June.

It seems very long since you went away, dear Polly, although it was only the day before yesterday that you left. This morning I went into St. Mark's and sat at the foot of one of the great pillars, trying to imagine that you and I were there together, and that the great iron shutters were rolled out, and we were seeing again that glorious golden screen set with onyx and aquamarine.

As I write I can hear the water of the Grand Canal gently lapping the little terrace of the hotel, and the ripple and plash from a gondola going past, and the

cry of the boatmen. When I look out of the window I see the saffron sails, patched and tipped with red and brown, or lemon yellow pointed with faded blue, that come sailing home in the late afternoon. Soon I shall venture forth by the little back passages, along the streets, crossing the arching bridges, beneath the loggia and then finally enter the piazza of St. Mark's, so gorgeous in color, as lovely as anything in the world.

Last night I tried to jolly myself by asking my colleague Charlton of the British Embassy, who has come up here for a day or two, to dinner, but he must have found me poor company, for my thoughts were in the train going North with you. Later we took to the water, but—tell your aunt that she may know I have reformed—I was home by eleven o'clock, quite tired out.

There was a fête on the Grand Canal. A beautifully decorated barge came gliding down with singers on board, while hundreds of gondolas clustered about, and Bengal fires burned all along the terraces. It was wonderfully weird and fairylike.

Out in the open water the "Stephanie" was illuminated, preparing to start out at midnight, and the passengers were hanging over the rail listening to a boatload of serenaders, as they did the evening we paddled near and watched and listened. But your rooms at the hotel were empty and as I looked up at them, there was no light nor anyone standing on the balcony, and I realized how far away you had gone. I hope you are safe and happy; I pray so.

The pocket case you gave me, dear Polly, is the handsomest in the world. I have been flourishing it about a great deal to pay, or rather overpay, gondoliers. I wish to recall the past days as vividly as possible and so I have been making alone the excursions that we made together. And it is funny, but I still draw ancient gondoliers, just as we did.

POLLY TO A. D.

Bayreuth,
July.

What a heavenly night we had in Venice out in that gondola when we stuck on the sand-bar and didn't care at all, we were so happy. It got later and later and the moon went down and not until the tide rose in the early morning did we float away. When we arrived at the hotel, oh, but wasn't Aunt angry? She didn't believe one word we said! I don't think she believes our story even now! She

suddenly declared tickets had been bought for the Wagner operas and that we must start the next day. I never heard of those tickets before! Evidently she still wants me to marry the Prince and does not approve of my flirting with you.

Even so, I am going to be good to you, for you were good to me in Venice. I feel pretty blue now that those happy days are gone, and I wouldn't part with a memory,—from the merry-go-round at the Lido to the sand-bar!

But I shall never hear the end of that evening. And I know that's why Aunt hurried us all to Bayreuth. Checkers has been making up naughty verses about the sand-bar, but I shan't repeat them to you! I doze off at night thinking about the gondola, the serenades, the moon, the funny old boatman who was so sleepy, —it was all like a bit out of fairyland, my fairyland. And now I have waked up and found myself in a bustling little German town, my fairyland vanished, and my fairy prince gone!

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
July.

As we glided into the station yesterday (the last time, I had gone to the station with you!) shoals of little urchins were swimming in the water and tumbling in such comical ways that even Gilet couldn't retain his gravity and burst out laughing as the small rascals went splashing and diving into the canal. Too soon we reached the station, too soon the train ran out across the trestles, and too soon Venice faded in the offing.

Friends came to meet me (the Consul General was the first to greet me in Rome this morning), and all must think yours truly mad or in love, for I am so excited and enthusiastic over my holiday. Do you know, it is just a week since we came back from the Lido together, skirting the lovely panorama of the city rising from the sea, when we had so much to say to each other and a great happiness settled down upon me.

Write to me soon, dear, and tell me what you enjoyed most in Venice.

POLLY TO A. D.

Bayreuth,
July.

Such a heavenly day! Aunt and I are sitting on the balcony and resting. The opera begins tomorrow. Most of the people are in church and the street is quite quiet, and empty save for a few pretty peasant girls in gay colors walking the streets. Lots of things have happened since I last wrote; we drove over to a fair in a little town yesterday which was very amusing,—cows and pigs, boots, pipes, and all kinds of things for sale. Then we went into a little inn and had beer and danced with the peasants. It was lively, but rather different from my last ball at the American Embassy after the big dinner served on silver and gold plates, and dancing with “Dips” and princes.

Aunt, my dear old cart-horse, tired me all out in Venice. She instructed me properly like a well-brought-up American girl, and took me about sightseeing with the Red Book in her hand, every minute you were not there, into all the old churches until I feel I never want to go to a sanctuary again.

You ask me what I liked best in Venice. Well! After you, sir, perhaps the marvelous bronze horses. I never got tired of looking at them, the most perfect ones in the world, and I adore horses. Did you know they were first known to have crowned one of the triumphal arches in Rome? They journeyed to Constantinople in the time of Constantine for the Hippodrome, but Doge Enrico Dandolo brought them back to Venice when he conquered Constantinople in 1204. But this was not all. Napoleon wished them for his Arch in the Place du Carrousel and not until 1815 were they returned to San Marco by Francis I of Austria, to whose portion Venice fell in the settlement. Now can you say the humming-bird has not been sucking wisdom instead of sugar from the flowers of Venice! And next best, perhaps, I enjoyed the paintings, especially the auburn-haired Tintorettos, because Aunt too, has just such beautiful hair.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
July.

Jonkheer Jan has had a house warming in his new apartment in the top of the huge Falconieri Palace, hanging high above the Tiber, with the Farnesina opposite and the Janiculum, and the city far below. He has a sunny terrace with the plants already climbing up a trellis and a little set of rooms which he is

beginning to furnish. Today several congenial souls met up there for tea and music, and then looked out over the city and the river which lay mapped out below us. He was quite devoted to our blue-eyed Sybil.

I went yesterday to the Piazza del Quirinale to see the royal processions come out of the palace and had a fine coign of vantage. The fanfare blew and the soldiers presented arms, the cortège issued out beneath the gate and slowly moved across the square and round the corner out of sight. It was the day when the new Parliament was to be inaugurated and the King and Queen were to go in state to open the session, and the Ambassadors and Ministers had to attend in uniform. There were outriders and cuirassiers and great gilded carriages of state with lacqueys hanging on behind, and they made a fine show. The music was gay and joyous, and the sun was shining brightly, but within an hour it was raining in torrents and the return procession was through a downpour. But by that time I had sought the protection which the Embassy grants and was hard at work.

An American Admiral has come to Rome for a few days, leaving his flagship at Naples. He wishes to be presented to the King and Queen and so among other things I am busy about that. Last evening I went over to see him and took him and his flag lieutenant, with whom I at once struck up a great friendship, to Count L.'s reception in his palace which lies low beneath the embankment of the river. Through the courtyard we went, and up the stairway, into the suffocating rooms, with little knicknacks about by the dozen, all in a mad confusion. I tried to make the officers enjoy themselves and introduced them to some girls. When it became too stiflingly crowded, I steered them away, added dear old Rossi with his genial smile to the party, and we went to a birreria in the Capo le Casé and had some wiener wursts and beer; while we were there the Prince came in and the German Counsellor of Embassy, and we all sat together some time. Then through the moonlit streets we drove home.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
July.

What, mademoiselle, do you think was one of the things which happened after my return here from Venice? The Prince dropped in to see me, and running after him came a messenger who handed him a letter—a letter from you, my

lady!—and I can tell you that although I was happy to see your handwriting, it made me jump a bit and feel queer to think it was from you and to him, and not to me. I had to sit tight for a little while and say nothing.

But later came the missive I had looked for, the letter for *me*, dear Pollykins, and I can tell you I read it eagerly and tried to make it longer by going over it again. But no matter how many times I read it, it is too short. Your letters will never be long enough, though they be miles in length!

The Prince suggested an expedition—an ill-fated one—to Asturia. Claiming to know the road, he captained it for a while. The affair proved full of incident. The carriage got stalled in a bog, and one of the horses literally pulled himself out of the rotten old harness. My handkerchief and other parts of my attire were used to repair the break. The Prince, in the middle of it all, calmly said he was tired of the whole thing. So off he walked, leaving poor Charlton and me to our fate.

I had almost to lift the team out of the frightful place we sank into, and to keep encouraging the horses. Meanwhile, the winds from the Pontine Marshes came blowing over toward us, and even some of the flowers we picked were said by a passing fisherman to be very poisonous. The sun was going down and finally it set, and the interminable sands were still before us. I wrapped up in a newspaper to keep warm, making a hole in a copy of the *Daily Chronicle*, and putting my head through and wearing it like a cape, for I didn't want to be chilled after the terrific efforts of the afternoon. Finally we reached home.

But the extraordinary thing is that Boris didn't seem to be a bit ashamed of his desertion, after having persuaded us off the road because he "knew a short cut," and leaving us in that unspeakable pickle. He only chuckled over it. I half believe it was the reception of your letter that made him so unaccountable. I can't think he was playing a trick on me. Anyway, I have begun to dislike him.

Bayreuth I am sure you are enjoying. I always think over my visits there with great pleasure. Years afterward you will find yourself vividly remembering that wonderful stage setting, and the sound of that grand elevating music, rising, falling, in those glorious harmonies. It will be unforgettable.

POLLY TO A. D.

Bayreuth,
July.

I have only a minute to write, as I must hurry and read “Siegfried,” which is to be given this afternoon. Yesterday it was “The Valkyrie,” which seemed endless,—I had seen it before, in Paris. But “The Rhinegold” was simply beautiful. I am enjoying every minute of my stay and only wish you could be here, too.

What a funny world this is! Speaking of Princes and one Prince in particular, I will give you a little wish: “May the devil cut the toes of all your foes, that you may know them by their limping!” Where do you suppose we are going next? Not into a bog with Boris, you may be sure. I don’t believe you can guess. Well! We start off tomorrow and go to Baden Baden, then to the Hague, then England, end up in Paris.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
July.

It is a fête day in Rome, and a grand review of the troops was held by the King. About half-past six the regimental bands began to pass up the Via Venti Settembre. I enjoyed the lively airs which I could faintly hear from far away, growing louder and louder till under my very window there was a great burst of melody, mingled with the swash of marching feet, which went by and became fainter in the distance again. The review was in the Piazza dell’Indipendenza and a large holiday crowd had gathered there. The King came with a big staff, the Queen in semi-state, in a carriage with *corazzieri*. There were not many troops, but I always like to see the *carabinieri* with their three-cornered hats and tail coats and crossed belts. The *bersaglieri*, too, are amusing and exciting, going on the run, trailing their guns, with their fluttering cock-feather hats, and their fanfare in front tooting a gay quickstep.

The Corso, also, was crowded with a procession of bare-headed *contadini* in carriages with banners, the prizes won lately at the festival of the *Divina Amore*. The cathedrals were thronged, the doors hung with crimson and gold curtains, and within, hundreds of candles burning. Little girls in their confirmation dresses walked in procession, the proud parents following. It was all really very gay.

The Ambassador who has been away the past week, returned, and we made a long excursion to Bracciano, the small town on a rock jutting into the lake. The

great castle, once the stronghold of the Orsini, but now belonging to Prince Odescalchi, rises high above the village.

We had brought our luncheon and champagne, and had it served in the dining hall of the château. It was a very jolly luncheon and a good one. Then, after a rest, we climbed over the castello, up into the battlements and towers, and looked down at the vineyards and the lake far below us, and out over the chestnut-wooded mountains which stretch away to the northward. Although Prince Odescalchi passes some time here, and although he is very rich, yet the halls and courtyards are crumbling into ruins.

I experienced an exciting incident since I last wrote, which, thank God! had no terrible results. For a time, however, I felt I was looking down on a fatal panic. A fire broke out in a crowded theatre where I was, and I am much more moved by it now than I was at the time, when I took the affair coolly enough, though it was really frightful.

It was a gala night at the Opera House Costanzi, where we attended the masked ball in the carnival season, you remember. The house was crowded, the pit and orchestra jammed, the boxes all taken and a ballet with gay music and dancing was being performed—when suddenly in the molding above the top row of boxes,—I was in one with some colleagues—there was a phit! phiz-z-z, and a blue flame shot out and ran sputtering along the woodwork.

For a moment there was a dead stillness, and only the crackling flame along the electric wire could be heard. Then came a horrible cry which still rings in my ears, and it seemed as if the whole audience rose in a mass and rushed to the exits where it struggled and swayed and choked. The orchestra, instead of being panic-stricken and scrambling away, played the Royal March, which could just be heard above the din of confusion. Actors rushed to the front of the stage and tried to stop the mad stampede. Into the empty boxes, which had cleared in a twinkling, we rushed and hung out over the balustrade, trying to whip out the fire with our coats.

In a few moments, some police and firemen joined us and chopped the burning wood with axes and swords till it fell in sparks about the orchestra. Then it was a fight until it was put out at last, and the curtain dropped. Suddenly, again, this time nearer the proscenium, with its wings, scenes, and flies, there was a sputter, a flash, and the fire broke out again in a different place, evidently from the same dangerous wire. Another moment of intense stillness, and then the firemen rushed along the gallery a second time and whipped and beat out the flames. The curtain rolled slowly up, showing the great stage with the ballet only half-dressed, looking anxiously about. The actors pluckily tried to continue the performance; a few people stayed, but we scarcely felt in the humor for our coats

were scorched and our hands black. There were no terrible results, but it might have been so frightful, and the glimpse of the possibility has made me realize the terror of such a catastrophe.

I have been dining with Prince Boris lately; we do not speak of you, he, because he dares not, I, because I will not. I would rather think of you silently.

The heat is becoming intense and I've not been feeling very well lately.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
July.

This evening the Girandola came off—or rather, went off, for it was all fireworks, and very fine. The tribunes in the Piazza del Popolo were crowded, and two bands of music played in the thronged square. It was an astonishing sight when unexpectedly a powerful searchlight was turned on, illuminating a sea of upturned faces.

As we sat waiting, a rocket went up over the sky from the Quirinal Palace as a signal that the Royal Party had started. In a little while another told that they were approaching; in a moment more Their Majesties arrived in the royal box, the band played, bombs exploded in a salute, and a thousand Roman candles shot up in the black night and burst into a million stars. Soon there was a fizzing, and gradually the gleaming outline of a huge cathedral, which they say can be seen far out on the Campagna, was revealed. This is a design retained from Papal days. All sorts of serpents and wheels and golden rains followed. Then suddenly a fiery dart went hissing above the heads of the people and smashed against a great column in the centre of the square, flying into a dozen pieces, each of which ran on wires to a corner of the piazza, and set off the Bengal lights.

And so the celebration ended in the midst of a great red glow. The crowds went away in their thousands, down the Babuino, the Corso, the Ripetta, and the huge searchlights were directed along each of these streets, making them bright as day while the people moved along. But Polly, perhaps like Mr. Dooley you think that "th' doings iv a king ain't anny more interestin' than th' doings iv a plumber or a baseball player."

POLLY TO A. D.

Baden Baden,
July.

"I love you just as much as ever, dearest A. D.—Do you love me? Will you be mine?" Checkers is dictating, so don't be alarmed!

What a terrible fire that was! I am sure you were the hero of the occasion. Thank heaven you were not injured!

About two weeks ago this time, you and I at the Lido were riding madly on merry-go-rounds, seeing trained fleas, and throwing balls. Tonight my twin and I are going to have a game. You know the old saying—"Lucky at cards, unlucky at love." I wonder if I shall win or lose.

We got so desperate we asked two dreadful Americans to come up for poker. Checkers is having even a more stupid time than I am, but he is becoming very chummy with the proprietor, and was actually roped into going to church, where he passed the plate with an air almost as fine as yours!

I know he wants to send messages to you, for he often says, "Well, I really am going to write to A. D. today." Whether these letters ever get off or not I do not know.

The other evening, however, was quite amusing, as the beer garden was full of people, and there was a handsome Italian whom I thought I was falling in love with; he gave a fascinating bicycle performance. I bought his photograph, but after talking with him, I decided I did not like him at all, and threw the picture away.

Signor Peppi is with us, as you know, and Aunt is happy. If they aren't engaged now, I think they will be soon. We all went to ride on horseback today and came home nearly dead, though P. was plucky and stuck it out. It is so nice to get on a horse again, you can't imagine how I enjoy it. I think it is next best to a gondola and a sand-bank. I am sending you, by the way, a little silver gondola with my love.

P. S. Is there any news from Don Carlo in South Africa? Did the gardener's daughter follow him? And my little Spaniard, Gonzaga, how is he?

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,

July.

Here I am at Monte Catini for a cure. The gods were good to me today, little Polly, indeed they were, for I received a silver gondola and oh, I am so happy! It is the prettiest little toy in the world, and a reminder of the most wonderful evening ever spent. It shall stand on my table before me, though I do not need anything to recall Venice and what is always in my heart. Tell Checkers I will certainly be yours, and I wish he would dictate oftener.

I am a little nearer to you than I was yesterday, and that of course is what makes me feel better already. A complete cure would be to be with you. But still, I'm not feeling very well yet, and long for you to write often, whether you are tired, or travelling, or wish to, or don't!

All the way up to Florence on the train I thought of the time when you were there, and how excited I got as I hurried up the stairs and arrived at your rooms all out of breath,—though I hoped you wouldn't notice it. And this led me to thinking of the wonder of the spring in Rome, and of the dance in the lovely Antici Mattei palace. Do you remember how I stood keeping your place in the cotillion? Why I was even jealous of poor Pittsburgo then, for I didn't know he was in love with the Italian singer. And how you came out and favored me—it was the sweetest thing that was ever done. Meanwhile, journeying through this age-old land, a snatch of verse goes running through my head.

“Helen’s lips are drifting dust,
Ilion is consumed with rust;
All the galleons of Greece
Drink the ocean’s dreamless peace;
Stately empires wax and wane—
Babylon, Barbary, and Spain;—
Only one thing, undefaced,
Lasts though all the worlds lie waste
And the heavens are overturned.
—Dear, how long ago we learned.”

So, thinking of you, the trip which promised to be tiresome and long, turned into a very interesting journey. It occurred to me to stop over at Orvieto, perched up on that great rock, jutting out of the plain, a medieval but clean little town with very correct architecture, and of course most famous for its cathedral, thought by some to be the most beautiful in the world. I do not think it is, but then to me it was chiefly a reminder, for seeing its mosaics and gorgeous façade, I could only think of St. Mark’s, which we had visited together, and which, accordingly, is to me the most glorious that I have ever seen.

In the sunlight of midday the church at Orvieto is brilliant but glaring. The carvings are rich and handsome, but the mosaics are out of place in its Gothic character. Inside are some very fine frescoes by Signorelli, and oh, such a wonderful silver lamp!

Here I saw, too, the Podesta, and the Ospedale. The Duomo in itself is rather insignificant, for its façade in Pisan style, with ascending stories of little colonnades, is too small, but I liked the ancient fortified tower, which has been turned into a campanile, with its crown of pillared porticoes. Inside, in one of the chapels, is an altar screen of silver, not to compare with the screen of gold and carbuncle, aquamarine and precious stones of St. Mark’s, but with a story in high relief of the Saviour and apostles and saints. It was made in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Just before leaving Rome, I called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as our Ambassador was out of town. At these receptions the Dips are seen at their best, with their most diplomatic manner, all meeting in the anteroom, waiting for their turn to enter (ambassadors take precedence), talking on anything but politics, yet smiling knowingly as if they were bottling up most important state secrets, pretending to be unruffled, though very excited. The time that each one remains with the Minister of Foreign Affairs is carefully noted and commented on.

It was amusing, for the Turkish Ambassador and the Greek Chargé smiled and bowed and scraped in the outer room, and then went and probably did all they could to harm each other in the private room of the Minister. As we had nothing of importance to discuss just now, His Excellency and I only passed compliments and assured each other of our mutual and highest esteem and consideration, and expressed hopes that everything would always be satisfactorily conducted and concluded between us. As I came away, the French Chargé was disappearing through the folding door—for an Ambassador, they would have opened the double doors. It is mysterious to watch these disappearances into a room where a Foreign Minister is hidden.

I dined with some Diplomats the night before I came away and it was a sad sort of a meal. I think they'll miss me, for each of them confides in me about the peculiarities of the others. Really, the Prince is behaving in a most extraordinary manner. The other night he began running down France to a mild, new, little French Secretary—called French women ugly, French society a sham, French institutions bosh, and so attacked the poor astonished little gentleman at his own table that the others had to break up the dinner and the conversation. I can't think what he was driving at. But whatever his faults, he is very clever, and he and I still go to the *birreria* together. As a rule, he is a most agreeable talker, which makes his outburst the other night all the more incomprehensible.

Today is quite a fête day in Monte Catini. The *contadini* have been coming down in swarms, and are standing about the crowded main square beneath my windows, doing—nothing! But doing it so well. I really think an Italian idles more complacently and contentedly and picturesquely than any other mortal.

The little town is crowded with country folk celebrating the festival of the Assumption, or the Madonna of Mid-August. The little cracked bells of the tiny church have been tinkling and in front of the church is a staging for a tombola. A train with excursionists and a band is expected from Pistoja and they promise fireworks tonight.

The alleys beneath the trees are crowded with *contadini* wearing bright-colored kerchiefs on their heads, the women walking three and four abreast, while the men (what hulking, skulking, awkward creatures men are!) come lumbering after them, and there is a great cracking of whips and shouting as the little carts go rapidly past. It makes a very animated scene. About midday I think they'll disappear, though, for it is hot and the sun is beating down, while the distant hills stand out in this wonderful Italian atmosphere as if seen through a telescope, so distinctly visible are the white houses glowing on their green sides and little towns perched on their tops.

Oh, Polly dear, when I think of you, the whole world seems different to me!

With you in my heart I take a greater delight and interest in people and things, and feel new ambitions and enjoyments, looking at all things objectively, like a spectator at a play. You have awakened my sympathies so that I am excited when the villain comes sneaking between the borders, and moved when the heroine weeps, and exultant when the hero arrives in the nick of time, and virtue triumphs. In other words, I care more for the world because of you.

The little gondola is in front of me on the table with its saucy silver prow cocked up in the air, and its filigree cabin hood and its precious cargo of reminders of the happy Venetian days, for when I left Rome, although in light marching order, I couldn't bear to leave it behind, so brought it along in my pocket.

I am returning to Rome but just for a day or so.

POLLY TO A. D.

Baden-Baden,
August.

What a bad, bad child I am not to write oftener—does the fascinating Mona Lisa correspond constantly? I feel quite guilty, after receiving so many long and interesting letters from you. Well, I am very, very sorry that you are not well, and only wish I were with you at Monte Catini to take care of you.

A. D., what do you think? ! ! ! I have had another proposal—this one by letter—since I saw you. From Gonzaga; but I wrote him he had better marry his cousin the Countess and forget me. Aunt thinks it isn't so fine an offer, from a worldly point of view, as the Prince's, (he writes Aunt frequently) and she still has hopes of my changing my mind and accepting him. If I married G. his mother would not approve of me, an American. She would say I was too independent and had married him for his title. Although life as the wife of a Spanish Diplomat spent in the different capitals of Europe would be interesting, still I know G. would not remain true to me for more than a few months, at most.

If I married Captain Carlo, well! I would hunt on the Campagna, join the gayest set in Rome, and continue my flirtations. I would wear the family jewels and keep the tapestries (unless we got hard up) and be tolerated if I presented my lord and master with a son and heir. But then he is far away in South Africa by now.

If I should marry Prince Boris, what would my life be? Ah! that is a

question. On the whole I might get more out of life by marrying a foreigner and living in Europe, than an American and passing my time maybe in a small western town, who knows?

Signor Peppi leaves this afternoon for Rome, and, I fear, without making an offer to Aunt. I want to send you something by him, but he has already lost his boots and cane as well as his overcoat, so no telling how much of him will arrive there. However, I will risk sending you a little gift.

I am just full of business. Aunt says I must learn to travel, so this is the first trip I am to manage. I have been despatching telegrams in all directions, buying tickets, reservations, and Baedekers, and so forth, and I hope we shall get to the Hague all right.

Are you behaving yourself these days, sir?

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome.

THE DIARY OF A DAY'S DOINGS[4]

A leaflet published under the *nom de plume* of
"An August Daily"
(very august)
Dedicated with love to Miss Pollykins.

[4] Issued in response to a certain inquiry as to whether or not I am behaving myself.

Was awakened at the usual hour by the faithful Gilet, and as usual turned over and went to sleep again. Up betimes, however, and reviewed the morning news in the *Populo Romano*. Breakfasted on two eggs and a cup of coffee.

Today tried for the first time a new-fangled egg-opener, which, I concluded, would require practice and experience before using in public. Shall have to have another napkin for the table at luncheon time.

Then out and to the Embassy. Found the usual assortment of mail on my desk, desiring audiences of Queen, or Pope; loan of money, or of anything, and proposals of marriage, to which last item I sent printed forms of reply.

Work.

More work.

Will you subscribe to this publication, dear Polly?

POLLY TO A. D.

The Hague,
August.

So you have made a flying trip to Rome, launched a daily paper, and returned to Monte Catini. For that matter, I, too, have not been idle, for we have had, since my last letter, a chapter of adventures, really. You know I was going to take charge of this complicated trip. Well! Fate was against me. We started off nicely from Baden-Baden, but hadn't gone far when a discussion arose with the guard as to where to change cars. A station official settled that and hustled us into another train. As we were feeling quite contented and having a good snooze, we suddenly heard a great rumpus, and found our caboose had broken down on a bridge. They flagged the Orient express which was coming behind and hurried us out again into the dark with our bags and put us aboard, but in the excitement Louisa, the maid, lost her ticket.

At Strasbourg we had to change cars once more, and being late, we simply dashed across the station with the guards flying behind and yelling, "You have only one minute!" It really was awfully comical. Arriving at Brussels early I had a splendid morning, seeing among other things the Grande Place with its beautiful old buildings, and visiting the Gallery Wiertz with all those marvellous but crazy pictures.

Back to the train again, but alas! our troubles were not at an end. Checkers stopped to pay the cabby and Aunt and I went into the station. I was a little ahead with a bag in each hand when suddenly a perfectly strange man came up and kissed me. I screamed, dropped everything I was carrying and stared about me, only to see him run away and look back, laughing. Did you ever hear of anything so saucy?

We got into the car somehow, but Checkers didn't come and so we went off without him. Aunt said someone must have cast an evil eye on us. Such an amusing account as Checkers gave us later of his experience in Brussels! It seems he had only three francs in his pocket, not enough for the cab. The driver was furious and couldn't understand his French and thought he was trying to cheat him and demanded his arrest. A sympathetic Englishman offered to "change him a crown," which, unfortunately, he didn't possess. Finally he went

to a banker's and got things straightened out and came on the next train. It is only three-thirty now and I am wondering what will happen next. The excitement can't keep up much longer. The "Sensation Captain," as they now call me, has resigned.

Aunt sends her love but says the only thing she has against you so far is the fear that she may become a confirmed dipsomaniac through drinking your health so often. But it is really a silent toast to Peppi, I think. Of course, if she wants to cherish an absurd attachment for him it is none of my business, but she makes me just a little tired!

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,
August.

Dear, dear Sensation Captain, what a day that was, to be sure, that you wrote about. I have read and re-read your experiences and wish I might have been along to share the perils by cabmen and the perils by train! But you reached The Hague all the same while I was at this ineffective distance. Oh, please let *me* manage a trip some time for my pretty Polly.

Your little gondola is here in my pocket, for we are inseparable companions. Indeed I know of none more agreeable, since I cannot be with you, for while the little boat is always suggesting something pleasant, yet she permits me to do the talking; so we get on swimmingly, or rather floatingly, the gondola and I.

I often think, dear, how at the big receptions last spring, I found such delight in looking at you. Your manner toward all was so charming. And do you remember the dinner at the American Embassy when I didn't sit next to the girl I wanted? But you didn't seem to mind, and flirted with the Prince, though every now and then you did look at me just a little, didn't you? And then afterwards, in the great corridor, when the Ambassador was talking to you more affably than I had ever seen him, I stood by and felt proud and didn't know why—though I do now, indeed!

I saw the Spanish Marquis yesterday. He looked at me suspiciously, but perhaps it was just my imagination, because I knew you had refused him. No one has heard from Don Carlo, but I believe the gardener's daughter *has* followed him to South Africa.

As for my conduct in Monte Catini, I am doing pretty well, which is the limit of opportunity in this Tuscan place among the Pistojan hills. Anyhow, your Dip is thinking constantly of you, and looking a good many times lately into the back of his timepiece (which Checkers wanted to inspect, do you remember? and I wouldn't let him). People may think I am gazing at the face of my watch, but I watch another face, I assure you!

POLLY TO A. D.

The Hague,
August.

Oh, A. D., such a funny time as we have had since arriving here! Our bad luck still continues. First hotel, no rooms to be had; second hotel, rooms but no meals; third, only one room left, and they were surprised because Aunt, Checkers and I didn't want to sleep in it all together. "Why, it is a big one!" said the proprietor. How we laughed! But we have a fine apartment now and are quite happy.

It has rained steadily all day and this morning we went to see the "House in the Woods." The practical, plump little Queen is away. I suppose we shall spend most of the day in the picture galleries. The Hague gives me the impression of being one huge gallery of more or less immoral fat men and women carousing.

One thing is certain, this country is a paradise for cows, with its green pastures. I do wish we had our cow here with us for she would enjoy the grass so much.

Jonkheer Jan's house is fine and large. They have a remarkable collection of Delft ware, plates all over the walls, and tapestries, splendid wood-carving in the hall, and no end of old Dutch silver. Please tell him how we enjoyed meeting his mother and father, as he was good enough to give us a letter of introduction to them.

But, oh, I am so homesick I don't know what to do! Nearly a year away from home. At first there was the excitement of seeing new places and people, and I did enjoy travelling, but now it has worn off a little, and you are so far away. That ought not to make any difference, I have seen you so little, but I think it does. I haven't flirted with a soul for such a long time—not since I left you in Venice. Rather good for me. But, A. D., how little we have really seen of each other! Here and there last spring, just a glimpse at a party, a few words of society

nonsense, and perhaps a bit of a chat in the small room on the terrace, and—your coming to Sorrento. I was so surprised that you wanted to come.

But, to be sure, Mona Lisa had left Rome.

Then Florence and the sunsets, which I mention so often that Checkers thinks them a bit worn out, but now that I have Venice to look back on, the rest of it tends to fade away. And yet, we had only three days together there.

Everything will be so different at home for me, and very likely you will forget me if your divorcée returns to Rome. I am sure she cares for you, and besides, she is fascinating, and you and Peppi think her beautiful. Are you still devoted to her, I wonder, and do you write to her, too? You never mention her in your letters. I suppose you know just what you are doing, writing me so often?

What a long lecture I have given you, and you will probably say to yourself, what foolishness I have written! But I've told you I always write just what pops into my head. There's a kiss for you here somewhere; can you find it?

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,
August.

My darling, I am sorry you are homesick, for I know the misery of it, and how strange scenes and peoples and places and ways have kept you excited till now you feel weary. Believe me, Polly, I have spoken truly, and your letter which came to me today is so sweet, yet it troubles me a little with its doubt. Nevertheless, the kiss you send quite takes the pain away.

Charlton of the British Embassy has not been at all well and has joined me here to take the cure. The other day he said he had hoped that you and I might like each other (like each other, indeed!) and at this I laughed heartily.

I dined with him at his *locanda* last evening and as usual he had made all sorts of careful preparations and the dinner was the best the landlady could provide, at a little special table beneath an arbor with a trellis of American woodbine. We could hear in the distance a band, for it was a fête day again. He treats me with so much ceremony on these occasions—I am bowed in and bowed out by the whole establishment in such a way that I feel quite set up. I get him to talking on his hobby, coins, and then—I think of you. And so we are both happy.

Your token has just been sent on to me here by Peppi, and entrusted to the

care of Charlton. The first words I blotted with it are the two that begin this letter, “My darling.” I am so grateful for it, and you know the thought that sent it is most precious. It means so much to me. I truly was in need of a blotter, for both my old one and the little one in my travelling bag have been used up by my many letters to you. It is so nice to be thought of by one whom one wishes to be thought of by!

I am reading of the Prince of Naples’ visit to Montenegro to see his Princess, as interestedly as if I really had something depending on it. Everyone knows all the details of the royal match. As Mr. Dooley says, “Nowadays th’ window shades is up at th’ king’s house as well as everywhere else. Th’ gas is lighted, and we see his Majesty stormin’ around because th’ dinner is late and brushin’ his crown before goin’ out.” I watch the *contadini,* too, when they come into this little town,—the lovers,—and wonder at them and with them. For in these things, you know, dear, prince and peasant meet.

Do not bother your little head about Mona Lisa; *you* are a dear!

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,
August.

The papers today announce the engagement of the Prince of Naples. And so they are happy, for I believe it is a genuine love affair. Charlton says the Prince is a fine fellow because he is a numismatist, a collector of coins, while I think him a fine fellow for choosing his bride so, and doubtless we both are right. I wish them all luck, don’t you?

Boris and I said goodbye before I left Rome for Monte Catini. He may have an idea of how happy I am (he saw me enthusiastically so) but he didn’t let on. Indeed he may not suspect we are writing to each other. He is starting for Paris, but journeying there only indirectly. I can’t help wondering whether he is going to see you, or going on one of his strange private errands—perhaps a combination of both. You know every naval or military attaché is really more or less of a spy. However, he is not acknowledged as an attaché by his embassy. Rather peculiar, on the whole.

Just before leaving Rome he fought a duel. It appears he was rude to the Marquis Gonzaga, who they say, behaved like a gentleman in the affair, and there was a rencontre at which, alas! the Marquis was scratched, literally

scratched, and honor (the Prince's honor) was satisfied. So they shook hands. What a farce!

I believe that, as usual in such cases, a woman's name was mixed up in it, but I do not know whose. I sincerely hope it was not yours. I remember they had words about you the night of Pittsburgo's dinner at the Grand when Gonzaga tried to kiss you. Perhaps Boris will tell you all about it.

POLLY TO A. D.

London,
September.

Here we are in your old lodgings on Half Moon Street, and very cosy we find it. We arrived early this morning. The passage over from Holland was very smooth and comfortable, and what do you suppose? ! ! ! Mr. Easthope who keeps the lodgings handed me the dearest little bunch of white pinks! I thought it very sweet of him, but when I found your card tied to them, I thought it much sweeter. He appeared in a very fine evening suit, ah! But he couldn't look so fine as your Gilet. I remember him at the pretty dinners in your rooms, as smooth and dignified as a bishop. Those times seem so far away now—when shall I see you again? In Paris? Yes, the Prince has written Aunt that he will join us there. Whom could the duel have been about? Really *me*, do you suppose?

Such a delicious little dinner we had tonight, it seemed like home, with pretty flowers on the table, and we all drank your health. You must have lived like a fighting cock here—how many years ago was it, dear old A. D.?

Oh pooh! I don't see how you can say the Prince of Naples' engagement is a true love affair. Why, he can't marry anyone but a Princess, and a Catholic one at that, can he? So it doesn't leave him much choice. After all, I don't think it matters. My views have changed somewhat after being so long in Europe. Why, there are a lot of happy marriages over here that have been cooked up by the families!

Checkers wants to be remembered, but says his nose is out of joint since I have taken up with you. Thank you for the flowers, telegrams, messages—I love them all.

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,
September.

Oh how eagerly I read of your safe crossing and arrival in London, dear! I am so glad you are at Easthope's. I know every nook and corner thereabouts, so I can think of you in familiar surroundings, passing through the little hallway—isn't it a sort of toy play-house? Have you learned the postman's rap yet? I can hear him now coming gradually down the street from house to house, and finally knocking, bang, bang, on the front door. And then when you go out, Easthope takes down his whistle and gives a sharp toot, once for a growler, twice (two short ones) for a two-wheeler, and from the rank on the other side of Piccadilly, along the green park, there hurries a hansom and you get in. Easthope closes the flap in front and then looks inquiringly to know where he shall tell the cabby to go, or else the cabby himself opens his little trap (on a rainy day letting in a rivulet) and waits to be told—Eaton Square, Victoria Station, the stores, or the Gaiety Theatre—and off you start, the little bells at the horse's collar ringing, down the street and into the stream of Piccadilly.

I can see you dining, or breakfasting with muffins and marmalade, the table so spick and span, and Easthope so intelligent and thoughtful. But then, he is one in a million, really. I wonder if there is the same housemaid whom I used to hear before daylight beginning her work sweeping and cleaning, in the way it was done a century ago. She was so hard-working and so faithful!

It is not the same boy, I am pretty sure, that helps Easthope, for he no sooner gets one trained up in the way he should go than some lodger finds him so good that he takes him away, and Easthope patiently begins to turn another lout into a footman,—a worm into a butterfly!

Go through Lansdowne Passage some day—it is a short and curious way of getting to Bond and Dover Streets. Turn into Curzon Street to its very end and walk through the passageway between Lansdowne House and Devonshire House to Hay Hill. It is a mysterious little alley to be in the heart of a great city, the scene of a murder, they say. In my time it was kept and patrolled by a one-eyed, uncanny-looking old sweeper who used to waylay me for pennies. When the sweep left, he would leave his broom behind leaning against the wall to show he intended to come back, and so maintained his right against any other who might try to take his place. I send you a little silver broom, my broom, dear. Take good care of it and don't let anyone else carry it away.

I have woven a gossamer web of thoughts, oh so beautiful and delicate and fine, like threads of gold; and you are caught and tangled in it and you struggle

and struggle, and try to get away, but the meshes of the web are too strong, and all in vain. Then I, like a ferocious great spider, come quickly across the web and catch you, and there you are to stay—in my arms! And so you try to escape and go to Paris and the Prince, yet there you are in my arms—it is altogether puzzling but true.

POLLY TO A. D.

London,
September.

Darling! There is no dictation about that this time, A. D., for Checkers is out buying boots, neckties, and I know not what, for he lunches with a fair charmer today, and is getting ready to do what he calls “The Great Mash Act.” He is a dear old thing, all the same.

Such a lovely bunch of red roses and your darling little broom came this morning,—yes, I am fond of you, and why shouldn’t I say so? I am getting a little restless for you, I haven’t seen you for so long.

It is a pity to leave London even for a few days’ hunting in Leicestershire, for this little apartment is so nice and Mr. Easthope so kind—all on your account. I bought a lovely frame for your picture and you don’t know how gordgeous you look, standing on my dressing table where I can see you most all the time, think of you the rest, and dream of you when I am asleep. Now, isn’t that sweet? I can’t help laughing as I write, for you see I am not in the habit of saying such things. I wonder if many girls have written you that—Mona Lisa, for instance? I should think they all would! P. S. I am so ashamed—if you were here, you would see me blush. Now you will laugh, but I spelt gorgeous wrong. I asked Checkers who has just returned and I haven’t time to re-write the letter. Aunt is out, brother is packing, and it looks as if we were to move on again.

A. D. TO POLLY

Monte Catini,
September.

Charlton and I made an excursion to Lucca the other day and quite a success it proved. Off we drove in the early morning, with pheasant feathers and jangling bells on our horses, trotting by the trellised vineyards, the vines wreathing between trees of mulberry, and the great bunches of grapes beginning to grow purple, past brakes of cane, between the walls of villas, up and over bridges where the rivers run higher than the country, banked up by the levees, on through the plain. In the distance rose the hills, deep blue behind and pale blue in ranges beyond. We met the country people coming from the fair at Borgo Buggiano—the greatest cattle market in Tuscany—driving beautiful white and brindled cows. Soon we came to the town itself and rattled along its flag-paved streets, making a great noise with cracking whip and warning cries, and the *contadini* crowded up against the wall and stopped their business to watch us as we passed the gay booths with displays of many colored, mottled, glazed earthen ware, set forth, perilously near our wheels.

Then out into the country again, and on across flat green meadows from which rise the ancient walls of Lucca with shaded avenues of sycamores. We walked on the ramparts after luncheon and visited the gallery of the Palazzo Ducale with its good Fra Bartolomeos, and the cathedral filled with tinsel votive offerings of all kinds, and paper flowers. There were preparations for a pilgrimage which is to adore the Holy Image, a wooden likeness of the Saviour which Saint Somebody rescued in Palestine once on a time and placed in a ship without oar or rudder and set adrift. So the ship floated, miraculously directed by Providence, to the shores of Italy, and wonderment came over the people who saw the vessel mysteriously cruising up and down. They tried to catch it, but it fled from them until one Archbishop of Lucca, awakened from a warning dream, went out to find it. And the moment the boat saw the aforesaid archpriest upon the shore it sailed confidingly up to him and delivered its sacred image, which so came to Lucca. This is quite like the House of the Virgin at Loreto which was brought by a flight of angels through the air to that town—to be a fruitful source of income, for hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visit the place each year.

P. S. How I should like to run up to Paris, but the Ambassador would not approve of my having leave again. I am more disappointed than you can know, but I still hope to see you in America before long—am returning to Rome.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
September.

Think of it! The middle of September—and already it seems as if Rome were taking on its preparations and spinning its web for the catching of foreigners. One or two of the shops in the Via Condotti and the Piazza di Spagna have taken down the shutters, and visitors have already been seen looking into the windows. Next the antiquity dealers will open, then the hotels, and after that—hurrah! I shall hope to see you in New York.

The past day you have been constantly in my thoughts and my heart. Let me see, where have I taken you? To the Embassy in the morning, into the city to do some commissions, down the Quattro Fontane, down the steep hill past the Barberini, cutting the corner of the piazza with its glorious Triton blowing the fountain of spray high into the air, and into the narrow little Triton Street—the wretched artery that joins the two Romes—with its crowd of carriages and carts and people moving slowly, and then to the right along the Due Macelli, and so to the sunny Piazza di Spagna. Later in the afternoon while sitting in my rooms, Jonkheer Jan came to see me, looking the same as ever, thin, tall, and blonde, and stayed on till I was sure he would be late for his dinner. Do you remember how he would come in late to see you, always in a hurry, with smiles and excuses and profuse apologies, twisting his ring around his finger?

The British secretaries have gone to Frascati in a body to stay till repairs have been made on the Embassy. So I went out there “to dine and sleep” as they call it in England, and enjoyed the little outing very much. This morning I took an early train and came down the hillside, between the groves of grotesque olive trees and across the endless rolling Campagna half hidden in mauve-colored mist, with its unholy charm, its lonely skeletons of towers and procession of aqueducts, the great graveyard of the mighty Past.

How I should like to be in Leicestershire with you, though. You know I feel like saying that the trip through the Trossachs, the visits to Holland House and Knole Park, and the other things which you haven’t been able to do this year, we can do some time together! I am almost afraid to add, “Can’t we, shan’t we?” for fear you may answer back at once “Indeed no! What *are* you talking about?”

Isn’t the way they do things in England funny? The conventions are amusing for a time—and pleasant too,—then they become chill and monotonous, like the endless green hedges and woods and parks of lovely England. But one gets tired, after seeing them day after day, year after year, and I used to ache for a patch of American landscape with its sunburnt yellow corn, its brown earth, its zigzag snake fences of the south, and its whitewashed shanties with the real good old-fashioned negro loafing about in tattered trousers and coat.

I have just received an amusing letter from Checkers in which he says; “Give up the diplomatic service, old boy. Come to America and go into business with me. You’ll be as good at it as a gold fish, for you’ve been around the globe; you’ll make money cabbage, for you’ve got a head.”

Who knows, I may.

POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire,
October.

“Bye baby bunting—papa’s gone a-hunting!” But I am letting the cat, or rather the fox out of the bag.

You know we’re staying with friends at Kibworth. A carriage met us at the station and brought us to Carlton Curlieu Hall, a fascinating old house, part of it built in the fifteenth century and part Elizabethan, with a garden, great trees, and a little pond. Near by are the stables with nine hunters, and farther away is an old church with its vicarage, and the village—a few low houses of red brick, some with thatched roofs.

I had the bed-room Oliver Cromwell slept in the night before the battle of Naseby. Most of these old houses have a ghost, but Oliver, I’m sorry to say, didn’t appear.

We are having a ripping time. The Honorable Violet somebody or other is here, among others. She is lady-in-waiting to the Queen, and a very charming person. But I don’t know nearly so many Lords and Dukes and things as you do. I used to detest such people, being an American, but I find I have changed my mind. What few I have seen have been perfectly delightful.

Well, the meet yesterday was just like some hunting-pictures we have at home, with maybe two hundred people, the women and children mostly on ponies, or driving two-wheeled carts. Then came the ride to cover, and the drawing. The field was made up of all classes, statesmen, parsons, peers, and farmers,—all the way from the Duchess of Hamilton, homely in a brown habit and riding as hard as a man, to a horse-dealer.

It was quite windy, and most of them said to each other as they passed, “Good morning. It’s a beastly windy day!”

The hounds rushed in and out of the covers in the hope of finding a fox, and the huntsmen hallooed and blew their horns. There wasn’t any fox in the first

cover, but at last one was discovered in the open, and so the pack went scurrying, the huntsmen after them, and the whips. To my surprise, instead of going straight over a hedge into the next field, most of the men went galloping off toward a gate. I didn't know before that it was bad form to jump unnecessarily. Quite different in America.

Helter-skelter through the back yards and gardens of the little cottages we rode, scattering chickens and pigs and children right and left, while the village people stood in their doorways and watched the hunters stream past.

Then there was a check—the fox had hidden in one of the barnyards, and the huntsmen, hounds, and all the small boys searched for him, while everybody else stood round or walked about in the square in front of the Bull Head Inn. Soon there was a halloo—the fox had been found hiding in a hay mow. He was driven out, "broken up" and the carcass given to the dogs, who yelped and barked and fought for the pieces. The brush was given to me.

Now you can't say I haven't written you a long letter, dear old A. D.,—but it was such a wonderful day that I just had to tell you all about it.

POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire,
October.

Now for a confession! There are two young men here at the house party. One is big and homely and loose-jointed but a good sort, while the other is dark and very handsome and goes to Oxford. He gave me his picture and asked if he couldn't have mine for his watch. I told him I was surprised that he didn't have a girl's photograph for his already. Before I knew it, he had opened my watch and seen you. I didn't know exactly what to do, so I said you were my older brother. He swallowed it all down seriously, and in fact remarked that he thought I looked very much like you. I feel immensely flattered and only wish it were true.

But I am not going to write you any more sweet letters. It isn't because I have changed one bit in my feelings toward you, but because variety is the spice of life, and if you have too many nice things written to you, you won't appreciate them, and I have been good for a long time now. Besides, you say you are not coming to Paris and I am very cross.

Aunt sends her best wishes and says, "Men are April when they woo, and December when they wed." I'm afraid that is true to life—don't you think so?

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
October.

Oh, little Polly the Pagan, you say that variety is the spice of life and accordingly you won't write any more sweet letters for a time, so I must hurry to tell you that spice is one of the things forbidden in the diet of my cure, and so I know you won't force me to take any. You must, you *must* write me real love letters, or something fatal may happen to me.

Do you wish me to stop writing pretty things to you, now that you have stopped writing them to me? Because, if that is the case, I—I can't do it! So you see, I plan to keep on pestering you day after day, and you may say, oh, well, as long as it makes him happy, let him continue. The Frenchwoman's philosophy is that woman's greatest happiness is in making man happy. She may not really care for him, but she will pretend to, if it makes his heart glad. That is pretty good philosophy. Since you are soon to be in fair France, you should consider the French point of view!

As for your Aunt's quotation, "Men are April when they woo, December when they wed," why, that is easily explained. It means that fires burn more hotly in the cold month and more steadily than in flowery April.

Peppi and I had all yesterday evening together, and a very pleasant time of it, too. I went over to his studio and found him. He made a delightful picture, frowzy-haired but handsome in his bright blue blouse, with his pallet in his hand, and his pet white goose following him about, lifting her yellow beak to be fed, and spreading her snowy wings. He explained he had purchased her for her feathery plumage to help him in a picture he was painting of an angel. We dined at the Cambrinus in the garden with colored lights where it was cool and pretty. And then afterwards I took him to the circus. We meet there almost every night. It is an epidemic here.

Oh, a most excellent circus that puts on a lot of style! The band blared out the same old music, marches for the athletes to come stalking in by and polkas to mark time for the horses, and a really most beautiful creature, she looks a little like Mona Lisa, performed on the trapeze—it was great, great fun.

As I can't go up to Paris, isn't it possible for you to sail home by way of Naples so I can get a glimpse of you?

POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire,
October.

On coming back from a drive today, dear, we saw some gypsies camped by the roadside, so we stopped and gave them the remains of our picnic luncheon. They invited us into their tents and told our fortunes. An old gypsy declared the cards said a gray-eyed woman with a mysterious smile might give me trouble and that a handsome man in the south would disappoint me. Now what do you think of that?

Say to Peppi that I hope he is not falling in love with that trapeze girl for Aunt wouldn't like it. But how about you?

You ask if I want you to stop writing sweet things to me,—why, of course, I don't. Every girl likes love letters. But you needn't feel obliged to, you know. We have a few days with the Prince in Paris, then sail for home, sweet home.

Would we go home by way of Italy, you ask! Well, I don't plan to run all over the country after a certain young man. If he wants to see me, he can come to Paris, and if he doesn't, he needn't! Now I can see you laugh, but I don't care!

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
October.

I beg to thank you, dear Miss Polly, for your gypsy fortune-telling letter. Did the old gypsy mention by chance a blond Russian Prince? It was most kind of you to think of me at all, so far away in hot Rome, and indeed your letter brought a cool, refreshing air to temper the *sirocco* and hot sun here.

It has been a trying summer in Rome, and if it hadn't been for some happy excursions I have been able to make to Florence and Venice and into the country and to the circus, I fear I should have found it unbearable.

Pray forgive my thanking you for your long and very sensible letter and for becoming almost confidential, and believe me, with my very cordial regards to your aunt and brother, and my compliments, very sincerely yours. *Why do you let the Prince join you in Paris, I'd like to know?*

(Br-r-r-! Your letter made me shiver!)

TELEGRAM: POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire, October.

Can’t you stand a little teasing?

TELEGRAM: A. D. TO POLLY

Rome, October.

Not from you. Besides, letters are too short and you have been flirting. What’s more, you are meeting the Prince in Paris. That is what I don’t like.

TELEGRAM: POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire, October.

What can you expect when I haven’t seen you all these months?

TELEGRAM: A. D. TO POLLY

Rome, October.

More than I am getting.

TELEGRAM: POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire, October.

Aren’t you unreasonable?

TELEGRAM: A. D. TO POLLY

Rome, October.

I think not, under the circumstances.

TELEGRAM: POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire, October.

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TELEGRAM: A. D. TO POLLY

Rome, October.

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TELEGRAM: POLLY TO A. D.

Leicestershire, October.

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PART III
UNCERTAINTY

CABLE FROM A. D.

Rome,
November. Three weeks later.

Will you marry me? Uncertainty in our relations troubling me deeply. Where do I stand? Heaven or Hell?

CABLE FROM POLLY

New York,
November.

Call it Heaven.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
November.

I do call it Heaven, or I would if only you were here. As it is, the doors are locked, for you are my golden key to happiness, to Paradise itself. It seems ages since your last letter came. Don’t play with me again, will you, dearest? Although your letters this summer have been so sweet, I know what a little Pagan you are. Sometimes I wonder if you have any conscience at all about me. If you have, I’ve not as yet discovered it, but—my heart is in your keeping. Mona Lisa has disappeared from my life.

Of course your Aunt is set on your marrying the Prince. That has been plain all along,—how did he behave in Paris?—but you, my darling, *who* could have guessed whether or not you were ready to make up your mind to settle down? So

I delayed asking you to marry me—in so many words. But now that we have quarrelled, I long to make up and have everything settled. There is no peace left your lover till he knows that you love him, once and always. This letter is serious because, beneath it all, I am serious.

Your letters have been the key-notes to my days, and when they have seemed confidential and affectionate, I have been very happy, and when they have been less enthusiastic, I have been troubled and cast down. So, they have enabled me to measure my own disposition. What I wish to write you is this; that everything I ever told you or have written you, was the truth.

I realize more and more as time goes on, and on, that my love goes back farther into the past than I had dared to acknowledge to myself.

One day, you appeared in Rome and were stopping at your sunny Palazzo. Over I went to see—your Aunt, of course. I recall so vividly just where you stood in the little room, how you came frankly forward to meet me, and how I made my call, with the Prince, whom I met on the street just outside your door.

Then at your apartment and out in society, I saw you often; when you came to dine with me, I determined just to be nice to you,—I know I was flirting with Lisa,—but I had a sort of pride that you should enjoy your stay in Rome, and wished to add what I could to it. I thought your Aunt would be gratified, and frankly, I liked you. I allowed myself to think that much.

Then came moments, Polly dear, when I felt a thrill, a glow, that I couldn’t explain. Can I ever forget that evening when we were together in the Coliseum, while the moon swam in the sky, and the great black chasm of the excavations yawned below us, while the shadowy ruins towered around and above us. I treasure in my heart the memory of the rollicking fun of the escapade at the Carnival Ball, the Veglione, with its confidences, and the privilege, too, of that drive from the Duchess of Sermoneta’s, through the narrow streets, across the bridge, when I saw you home, and those afternoons and evenings in the little room in the roof garden, one after another. Each seemed more wonderful and more complete to me, till that last night before you went away to Sorrento, when I first spoke words of love. I was overwhelmed and staggered, my pulses beat with a new strange gladness till I could scarcely see you. How I got back to my rooms, I have forgotten.

I had determined not to make love to you in Rome, but I couldn’t help it, I couldn’t help speaking as I did. Then came romantic days at Sorrento and Florence and those enchanting dream moments in Venice. Were they real, ah, tell me, were they true?

It is months now, dear, since we met in Venice. What perfect hours we had there! So completely happy. I can feel you near me, next to me, while far away,

mysteriously, I seem even yet to hear the music and the love songs.

“And of all the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colors caught.”

How bewitching you were! How unspeakably lovely the last evening was, and how I treasure every little confidence you made me, as we glided along over the placid lagoon, while about us rose the palaces, the campanile, the churches, balconies, and arches, reflected below in the mirroring waters. I could put out my hand and take yours, and turn and look into the wonder of your eyes, my Polly! Some days are immortal, the memory of them can never die. We may pass away, but still the thought of those moments will live forever, for they are divine and heavenly.

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
November.

My A. D. Well, you are in a way mine now, aren’t you? How I hated all those horrid telegrams we sent each other, and what a long time I have gone without a letter from you.

I do know what I want! It’s you, you, but oh, things are so hard when it comes to facing down Aunt. It is not any open opposition—that would be something definite that I could fight, but she simply assumes that I don’t mean it when I say I am engaged, and sits bland and smiling, and pretty soon, makes a remark about Boris.

A. D., if you won’t come over soon to look after me, you’ve just got to take the risks. Don’t forget I’m a little Pagan, who does enjoy things, even the Prince. Come home and settle here at once if you love me as much as you say you do. I am so happy you sent the cable, because you are the only person in the world I love. So we are really engaged now and going to be married soon and live happily ever after?

You want to know what I did those few days in Paris? Well, by jinks, we were off on a shopping rampage most of the time. I went to Worth’s and ordered some pretty clothes—the prevailing colors this year are the hummingbird’s.

How did the Prince behave in Paris? On the whole very attentive, but once

in a while just a bit difficult to manage. He brought with him a magnificent Russian wolf hound, who was very well-trained and would obey no one but his master. One day Boris invited us all to his apartment in the hotel to luncheon, but Aunt had such a bad headache that she left in the midst of it, taking Checkers along to see her safely back. He was going to return for me since we had more galleries to inspect. As soon as the lift with them in it had disappeared, Boris closed the door and smiled meaningly and when I asked him to open it, he shook his head. I started to open it myself when the wolf hound, who was lying before it, growled. First I thought it was a joke, but when I saw the queer look in my host's eyes, a cold creepy feeling of fear came over me.

"Once before you were in my power," he said, "in the stateroom on the *Cleopatra*. I, a fool, let you go. Now I got dog, no fool any more."

Backing away from him, I laughed, hysterically, "I came here to eat and not to make love."

"Did you?" he inquired, putting his face down close to mine and taking hold of my shoulders.

I stared straight back at him, saying, "I am not afraid either of you or your old dog." At that moment, thank heaven, the door opened and in came the waiter. I dashed out and downstairs, Boris following me and protesting that he was only trying to make a little fun, but I am not sure. Aunt says I made a fuss over nothing, and insisted that we all go together to the circus with him that night, but you may be sure I hung onto Checkers pretty closely. However, the Prince pointed out to me the girl on the trapeze, the same one you had admired in Rome. She was very beautiful—I am a little jealous for she looked like Mona.

Boris and I rode several times together and one day jumped our horses in the Bois, much to the amusement of a female seminary that was passing. I had a fine time and thought how the people at home would laugh if they could see me—such a change was my smart riding habit from my old duds at the farm, and with a Prince. Then the other day he took me to the Luxembourg gallery to look at a curious sculpture of the sphinx—the head of a beautiful woman on the body of a lioness, with a man in her clutches, just their lips touching, everything thrown away for that one kiss. It made me think of some verses I read the other day,

"Inviolate and immobile, she does not rise, she does not stir,
For silver moons are naught to her, and naught to her the suns that reel.
Come forth, my lovely seneschal! So somnolent, so statuesque!
Come forth, you exquisite grotesque! Half woman and half animal!
And did you talk with Thoth and did you hear the horn-mooned Io weep?

And know the painted kings who sleep beneath the wedge-shaped pyramid?
Lift up your large black satin eyes which are like cushions where one sinks,
Fawn at my feet, fantastic Sphinx! and sing me all your memories!
A thousand weary centuries are thine while I have scarcely seen
Some twenty summers cast their green for Autumn's gaudy liveries."

The Prince said he believed I was somewhat like her. I told him indignantly I wasn't, but maybe I am ... and he tells me I *was* the cause of the duel!

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
November.

The top o' the marnin' to ye, Polly Darlin'! It would be very inappropriate, wouldn't it, if this came to you by evening delivery? At any rate it is the top o' the marnin' here in Rome, and I am pretending you are right next to me, my kitten-sphinx, and I'm greeting you with a morning kiss in token of our peace, or is it an armistice? Your letter makes me happy and yet your remarks about the Prince trouble me. There is, however, one clear way out of your difficulties, and that is to make our engagement known at once to everyone. I do not want to urge the point too strongly, but doesn't it seem that circumstances have combined to make an announcement desirable?

Putting aside all consideration of what people may say or think, I feel it would be franker, more dignified, more true to yourself, to others, to me, that the relation between us should be told. All kinds of complications will arise if we keep it secret. Do not act hastily on receiving this. Think it over carefully. Oh, I love you, Polly, with my whole soul! But I can't come home at once; my friend Charlton is now seriously ill and Embassy matters are tied up. Under the circumstances, I am glad you left Paris when you did. Did Boris see you off?

How bustling and busy your getting away from the hotel must have been,—the drive to the station through the gay streets, the excitement at the train, the helter-skelter of passengers and porters with their bags, baggage, boxes, baskets, and rugs. Then the steamer, the good-byes, the buzz of the engine, the splash of water and a realization at last that you were homeward bound!

It will seem odd to hear about Rome now that you are in America, about the streets yellow with flooding sunshine, and crowded with carts from the

Campagna, and cabbies on their rattletrap carriages cracking their whips and crying “ah!” in deep guttural tones at their horses, instead of saying “Whoa!” or “Gee up!” in the proper American way.

Early one afternoon Charlton and I started out in an ancient cab and a decrepit horse to go to the Piazza San Pietro, or perish in the attempt. I had the enthusiasm and he the perseverance. Indeed we took turns in exhibiting these qualities, for there came a time when he was enthusiastic and I persevered. There were moments when the old horse went so slowly that we thought he would never get there, but the driver used the whip encouragingly. Finally we reached St. Peter’s, surrounded by its huge colonnade, with its splashing fountains, went up the broad terrace steps and beneath the great *loggia*, and into the overwhelming interior with its vast distance, out of all proportion to anything else in the world.

Inside the people were kissing the toe of St. Peter, while crowds walked about and men were hammering away until the whole place resounded with the work of putting up tribunes for some ceremonies. But a great shaft of yellow sunshine came streaming down from the dome, making the gloom golden, and above the hum of voices could be heard the Pope’s angel chanting beautifully.

When I came out and looked over toward your palace and saw the tops of the plants of the garden on the terrace, I could not resist going in to see Peppi. You know he has lately taken your old apartment, in memory of your Aunt, I suppose. Up the stairway we climbed till we came to the door and rang. There was a great rattling of chains and unbolting of locks; the door finally opened and we were told he was home. He asked us to take pot luck with him, so we went up first on the terrace and examined the roses, some poor weedy sunflowers, and a few little pansies that looked pleadingly up at me while I stood in the corner of the terrace where you stood that last night, Polly.

The sky was glorious; the sun had gone down and St. Peter’s and the huge pile of the Vatican, with only here and there a twinkling light in the darkness of the massive building, loomed up in silhouette against a heaven of delicate brown which shaded into pale green. Above us in a pure vault of blue, the crescent moon floated, all silver, while in the opposite horizon, over the Alban Mountains and the Appenines, great banks of clouds rolled up, black and threatening beneath, reflecting the afterglow above, while forked lightning played ceaselessly through them. Later the façade of the cathedral became outlined in lights, although the dome was left in blackness, and all the Borgo was hung with paper lanterns and was very gay and bright. But I felt lonely without you.

D. V., it will not be long before I reach home! Already I can see the beautiful bay, the boats passing and repassing, and the arrival of Quarantine and

Custom officials. The great city—greater New York—faintly appearing through the morning mist, and the huge buildings towering above the fog, like a city in the clouds. We pass the statue, the busy ferry boats hurry beneath our great bow and—ah, Polly, I must confess my eyes are tearful with the excitement and happiness of the thought. My great anxiety to be with you should carry the ship more quickly, though alas, in this practical age, it depends more on the quality of the coal than on the burning anxiety of a lover.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Paris,
December.

I followed you to Paris and showed you nightly and by day in the restaurants and the Bois, and all the places of fashion, and everybody he look with eyes of admiration at you and at me glances of envy. When you smile with me, then I was for a moment happy. But though you smile, you do not stay—you go away to America. You are like pretty floating milkweed, you touch here and there in your travels. The wind (your Aunt) blow you from place to place.

In sables from Siberia I would dress you and jewels from the Urals, and take you to the opera at Moscow. We would travel in the East, and you are so clever, you would help me in my secret missions. We would decipher riddles and gather secret news. You would fascinate the great ones of the earth, and they would tell you tales of State that would help the great cause. What would you say, *ma petite*? Be my Princess and let me carry you to my castle in the mountains; it is a little savage among the Tartars, but I hope the hummingbird find it in her heart to make her nest there with me some day.

Soon I meet you in America and we talk again.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
December.

Your cable telling me of your willingness to announce our engagement was

received with inexpressible happiness. I did not realize that making known our secret would bring such a new joy into my life. It almost makes me burst from sheer felicity when people say pleasant things. Dear old Checkers sent me an engagement book because, he wrote, I was engaged! Beaming, round-faced Pan bustled in, with his red fez on one side, and his fingers strung with all his jewelled rings, to talk about you and my wonderful luck. He got as excited as I did, and we both rattled on at the same time. Then we went out to dinner and had a bottle of champagne. Up he got to drink our healths,—can't you see him?—reciting,

"May your joys be as deep as the ocean,
Your sorrows as light as its foam!"

But poor Charlton! I went in to tell him of our engagement and he gave me the warmest congratulations. He doesn't seem any better. Indeed, Polly, I doubt if he is ever going to get well. I shall hurry homewards as soon as possible, but I can't leave him now. Pay no attention to your Aunt's obstacles, my dear, if they threaten our love for each other, will you? Surely, surely, you will be true.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Moscow,
December.

Ah, the pleasure to have been with you in Paris! I think about it every night and wish to have you near.

You say to me once, write about my country,—Russia, oh my Russia, hail! You think only of bombs and Nihilists in *la Russie*, but we have many good things, museums best in the world, artistes most fine, ballet splendid, and Slavic music, ah, it make the blood stir. When I go to opera, and lover makes love to his lady, then I think of—you. Do you think of Boris walking the streets of Moscow, where roofs are green as malachite and strange domes grow in the sky like vegetables? Learn our history, about Ivan the Terrible, about Peter the Great, and Catherine the great lover. Read, too, our literature, Turgeniev, close to the heart, Pushkin, melancholy poet, and Artzibasheff ironical. No! Me I read them to you some day with a tremble of the voice and then you will surely fall in love with a Muscovite.

Your Aunt she write me come to New York. Perhaps you make me American when I come over. Why you not say me come yourself? I remind me of the proverb, “A thousand raps on the door but no salute or invitation from within.” Your American diplomat he amuse himself very well in Rome. As you know, he went often to the circus, to see pretty girl there who look like your enemy, the lady of the gray eyes. That the reason he not come to Paris, I think. He not want to see you both there at one time.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
December.

Behold me at my desk! I couldn’t bear this place, my own, if it had not, on every hand, remembrances of you. Here in this very office, you have sat. The last day or two in Florence, whither Embassy affairs took me, brought thronging memories of our hours together there. This morning as the train crawled across the Campagna in the weird twilight of the moon just before dawn, I gazed out of the window and watched the ruins rise out of the uncanny plain like tombstones of a dead civilization,—spectres of decay and times long past. Think of all the lovers they have looked on since first the aqueducts went marching off to the hills in gigantic strides.

My precious, when the gray dawn was just breaking, I entered the Grand Hotel, and then thought of you again, of the night I first called you, Pollykins, by your own little name, right there in the doorway. Don’t be disappointed in my letters, if from time to time they tell only somebody’s feelings, and forget to mention what is happening. Now you alone are my life. But write and let me know how *you* feel.

POLLY TO A. D.

Black Horse Farm on the Hudson,
December.

Here we are at the Farm, Aunt, Checkers, and I. Although our engagement

may be announced in Rome, my stern relative says we must wait until we're settled a bit before announcing it in New York. I was going to give a luncheon and tell everyone, but she suddenly dashed away into the country with me in her wake, flying like Alice through the Looking Glass after the Mad Queen.

You would like this place, dear,—an old Colonial house of brick with wings and white trimmings, surrounded by great elms overlooking the Hudson. The furniture is Chippendale, queer ancient panoramic wall paper makes a background for some delightful eighteenth-century prints, and fireplaces ablaze with logs are in every room. I've been secretly wondering if we couldn't have our honeymoon here. Do you fancy the idea, dearest?

There is still a sheet of paper left right under my nose, staring up as much as to say, "Why don't you use me? Why not write more to your secretary?" Well, it will have to be in pencil, for to use ink will mean going down stairs where there are still people dashing about; while up in my bedroom I am quite alone except for John Sullivan, our bull pup.

Isn't it perfectly pathetic to be left all solitary this long cold winter with the only boy I love so far away?

P. S. Is Charlton really so ill that you do not like to leave him? No other reason? You wrote that Mona Lisa had disappeared from your life. Are you sure she has no successor?

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
December.

Your letter came yesterday telling of your visit to Black Horse Farm, and as for spending our honeymoon there, it would be a bit out of Paradise! But don't, Polly, don't, I beg of you, put off announcing your engagement in New York. Think of the position it puts me in; as you know, Rome is all agog with it. Ask your Aunt frankly why she is so hesitant. Apparently she liked me, and she offered no objections in Europe to what she must have known was coming. In any case she cannot force you to accept the attentions of the Prince.

I wish, dearest, you might have been at the diplomatic reception at the Court, at the Quirinal, the other evening. How sweet you would have looked in your Court dress! I was overwhelmed, absolutely overwhelmed by congratulations and good wishes. Even the ministers and chiefs of missions

seemed to know of my great happiness and took the occasion to say nice things. The world does indeed love a lover. When I reached my apartment I danced the Highland fling with two umbrellas crossed together for swords, and felt like sliding down the banisters, too!

At Court the reception is always a very fine function; first to rattle through the entrance of the palace, across the court to the foot of the broad staircase where the big *portiers* in red liveries salute and bow, then up the brilliantly-lighted, crimson-carpeted staircase to the huge *antecamera* hung with tapestries, a vast chamber where a company of splendid *corazzieri* in gleaming helmets and cuirasses stand at attention and salute each Ambassador.

The reception-room is magnificent, and there the diplomats in their uniforms, gaudy with all sorts of tinsel plaques, stars, crescents, and gold embroidery, stand about till the approach of the Royalties is announced. Then they bustle into line according to precedence—a procession that reaches around the room, each Ambassador with his staff behind him. Thereupon the King and Queen arrive! They bow; we all bow. His Majesty shakes hands with the Ambassadors, and makes conversation. One by one, the secretaries step forward and are addressed, while the Queen speaks only to the Chiefs of Missions. Meanwhile the Ladies-in-waiting stand in a row arranged opposite; so do we all remain for over an hour and a half.

In conversation with Pan this evening he let it slip out that the Prince was going to America before long on a secret mission. I have no idea what he is up to. Don’t delay, my sweetheart, in announcing our engagement—write me that you love me.

P. S. Really I do not know where Mona Lisa has gone, and I am interested in nobody but you, dear.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Moscow,
December.

A silver plate I send you for bread and cellar for salt, so do Russians give to the Tsar, the Little Father, in token of homage. As the Cossacks say, “Feed the mouth, the eyes will not be bashful.” I make you gifts, in other words, and you will be ashamed not to look on me with kindness. Often I dream of your eyes, blue as lapis lazuli from the Urals.

From Rome comes news,—you engaged to American diplomat. I cannot believe serious—tell me not true. Lady from Virginia say once, often American girls engage to two, three men all same time—is it so? It may be. Turks and Chinese have several wifes, and lady Laplanders, they have several husbands, *n'est ce pas?* Is it you write no more because you really serious engage? Your Aunt she say why no, of course; you not know your own mind. Peppi say she wish title for you. But I still wait that little Hummingbird welcome me to New York.

POLLY TO A. D.

Black Horse Farm,
Christmas Morning.

This morning, dearest, what should arrive but the most beautiful roses in the world from you, and in the toe of my Xmas stocking, I found a heavenly diamond engagement-ring! How can I ever thank you enough? Polly is very proud and happy to wear it. Did Gilet put the little cuff links I sent in your sock, or perhaps you didn't hang one up in the chimney?

A. D., I love you madly—yes, I do, you can't know, you never will know how much. Every day I want to be with you. Whenever I have a good time I say to myself, "I wish my dear 'Dip' were here to enjoy it, too." America seems pretty empty with someone I love in beautiful Italy.

Aunt wants news of Peppi, says she hasn't heard from him lately. The Prince sent me a lovely present, and wants to know if you and I are seriously engaged.

I wish I could have seen you do the sword-dance! It takes a lot of courage to tackle Aunt and get her to go back with us to New York and tell of the engagement of a proud little Pagan to a dear diplomat. Your father sent me a sweet letter from California.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,

Christmas Day.

In my dreams last night were all sorts of Christmas things—home and mistletoe and you under it, my love. On my breakfast-tray this morning lay your lovely cuff-links. A thousand thanks,—I shall wear them every day.

The Christmas decorations at church were holly and palms. The greens were dotted with oranges and apples, the high pillars wreathed with ivy, the chancel and altar banked with flowers, for the Reverend Nevin is very artistic in his arrangement of such things. I was so full of gratitude and thanksgiving, so placidly content that even when an awkward worshipper knocked my silk hat (Gilet's shining pride) on the floor and rumpled and broke it, I didn't mutter, or even think a wicked thing!

I said a little prayer for you, Polly dear. Then I hurried home, for there were so many things to attend to,—as Checkers would remark, "Merry Christmas, but not a dish washed!"

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
December 31.

Tell your Aunt that Peppi is looking better but still far from well. He will not stay in bed and take care of himself, but keeps on painting and painting behind locked doors. The endless rains this autumn have been bad for him, though he seems gay and talks a lot—calls me the birdcage, because I have caught the Hummingbird. For me the place is full of memories of you—the terrace, the sitting-room with the corner where you used to make tea, and where I would sit, falling deeper and deeper in love, hour by hour.

This is the last day of the dear old year, a year blessed as no other can be, for therein have I met my Polly, known her, loved her. Ah, old year, you have been good to me passing belief! How many moments of supreme happiness have you given me, days of bliss with my beloved, nights of anxiety away from her, moments of doubt and fear, moments of heavenly exaltation.

Think of the mystery of the years! I was born the Lord knows when; you flew right down from heaven, and we loved so on this old earth. The last words I shall ever write in this year are—I love you, Polly!

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
December 31.

It is seven o'clock here and I somehow feel that you are thinking of me—in Rome it must be midnight, the beginning of the New Year. If we could only hold hands for just one little minute, it would make me so happy. An hour ago I sent you a cable, so you'll get my message with your breakfast.

There's just a moment left in which to write a line before dressing for dinner. Then comes a ball to which I shall wear a frock all little fluttering iridescent draperies, suggesting an airy hummingbird. Sybil is spending the night here—it is months since I last saw her in Rome. She is just as pretty and lively as ever, smoking cigarettes all the time and using the same exaggerated language, —that you're the handsomest man that ever existed, that I'm "the luckiest girl in Heaven or Hell." She's much excited over our betrothal and hopes we may live a million years and have a thousand children!

Sybil went with me to ask Aunt to put an announcement in the papers, to which my autocratic relative replied that she would see. Do you suppose your Polly will have any partners now that she is engaged? For rumors are leaking out, of course. Partners or no partners, if Aunt doesn't, I'll put it in the papers myself, I will!

You wouldn't believe it of me, would you, but I'm growing positively sentimental. Half the time I live in a dream with you, dear, thinking of you, wanting so much to please you, wondering what you would like me to do. The little forget-me-not enclosed, carries a kiss.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
New Year's Day.

I love you with all my heart! These are the first words that I write in the new year—just as you were the first thought in my mind as the bells chimed out midnight. God guard us, my own, during the coming months, and grant us His blessing!

New Year's Eve, the municipality sends a band to serenade the Embassies, a pretty custom, but I wandered over to your Palazzo instead, to Peppi's where

we had a little supper and drank toasts to the old year and the new one, to you and your Aunt. “Here’s to the ladies,” sighed P.—“God bless ’em! We can’t do anything with ’em, and we can’t do anything without ’em.”

At breakfast Gilet walked in on me with your cable of greetings in his hand, so you see how timely it arrived. Thank you, my Sweetheart, for the dear message which began our New Year. This morning is brilliant and a *bersaglieri* regiment has just gone past on a quick-step with feathers waving, and the band of *carabinieri* playing a lively air. The movement and the music are entrancing but all is incomplete without you.

Later.

I have passed the afternoon very quietly, for the news of Charlton’s death today has shocked me so. Poor old fellow! Accordingly I only left a few cards officially and then went and sat a long time in the Church of the Jesuits where vespers were being sung. The building was outlined with candles, the effect fine, solemn and religious. The aisles were thronged with people while organ-music and singing rose and fell. Then I hurried back to my fireside, through the narrow crowded streets, across the Corso with its endless files of carriages, for the dread chill of Rome came on, and the men and women wrapped their cloaks about them.

Now that poor Charlton is gone, I am sending in my resignation to the President. I have decided to go into business, for a very good offer has turned up that I hope you will approve. Moreover, the Ambassador himself dispatched his own resignation yesterday. Mine will follow close upon its heels “to take effect at the earliest convenience of the Department of State,” and I added “an earnest request to be relieved of my duties at the first opportunity as private matters of an anxious and urgent nature call me home.”

If the Department either loves me much or hates me much, it will let me off promptly. My feelings wouldn’t be hurt if a cablegram should come marked *urgent*, and stating, “Your resignation accepted with pleasure, and to take effect *at once*,” the last two words underlined. I’d knock over the tables and chairs, slam the doors, and go home so quickly that one wouldn’t have time to say “Jack Robinson!” Then I would cry, “Gilet! Gilet! Where in thunder are you, Gilet? Pack my things, throw them in helter skelter, pellmell, all in a heap. It doesn’t matter—nothing matters, for we are going home! Hip-hip-hurrah!” I am all excited at the mere thought. And if anyone wondered at this indecent haste (“Haste which mars all decency of act”), I’d say, “I am going back to my love,” and they would never blame me.

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
January.

Your photograph is beside me, and I have kissed it so many times today and every day that it would be quite worn out if it weren't for the glass in front. The separation has made my love for you grow stronger and finer, and shows me clearly that it is you and you only I love and want. The weeks since we became engaged have found me very happy in the knowledge that there was someone who would always take care of me, someone whom I would look up to and respect. I am behaving so well for me that soon I shall no longer be known as Polly the Pagan.

I was very sorry to hear of Lord Ronald Charlton's death, for I know you must miss him greatly. So you have sent in your resignation. Splendid! I shall expect you shortly. Cable me when you leave.

Auntie says I ought not to announce my engagement here until you can set a definite date to return. Won't you do that for me?

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
January.

Fi, fo, fum! I should indeed like to be at "hum." The days are becoming longer, and so I find my only happiness in thinking that before they begin to shorten again, I shall have come to you, my angel, to love and to hold and to cherish you forever. But meantime my letters are blue because I am blue, and I am a deep cerulean because you are so far off. Why, being away from you is enough to make me turn into a box of indigo. Blue indeed—I am Black!

To console myself I read and re-read your letters and daydream about the future. Yes, I shall come and as soon as the State Department will let me. It won't be long now—not long, though I cannot as yet set a date. I think May would be the prettiest time of the whole year to be married in, and then go (as you suggest) to Black Horse Farm, though nobody must know; afterwards we'll cruise slowly South down through the Spanish Main, across the Equator, skirting the coast of Guiana, past Brazil. We'll round the Horn together and see if we can find the Enchanted Isles and other heavenly ineffable places. What do you think

of this plan, my darling?

Meantime, I have only your picture, as you have mine. In case you may like to see the arrangement of my habitation, I have sketched it for you. The little cross is where my altar is placed, the point to which your devotee turns, not twice or thrice or four times a day, as do the Mahometans toward their place of worship, but constantly in prayer and thanksgiving. Your photograph is my Mecca and you are my little Pagan goddess, part nymph, part naughty elfin sprite, and part some winged flitting creature out of a fairy mythology not as yet discovered. But here in this room you are my Lares and Penates—you are my Love.

Last night I said goodbye to your picture, and went off to the Court Ball, where I saw many of our fair compatriots. It was a fine sight. It makes me think of what Mr. Dooley said, “at coort rayciptions th’ Ambassadure iv England wore th’ gorgeous unyform iv his station, th’ Ambassadure iv France jingled with medals, th’ American Ambassadure looked like a detictive at a fancy ball.” Three sides of the great room were lined with rows of people who all bowed and curtseyed as the King and Queen entered, while the orchestra played the Royal March. The Queen danced in the Quadrille of Honor, and after that the music struck up the first waltz and the moment arrived when, it may interest you to know, I opened the Ball!

The Grand Master of Ceremonies asked me to dance with his daughter, and so, bang! out in front of all the people I walked on my trembling legs, bowed to her Majesty, and went across and asked the signorina. Round and round the room we spun while all gazed upon us; at last some others took the floor and the ball was on! It was about the most trying thing that I have ever done; in fact we almost danced down the King and the wife of the Prime Minister, and a few other dignitaries who stood in our parabolic way. After things got started, I tried to dance with all the American girls present but it was warm work. The Queen and Mona Lisa, who has come back to Rome, to Peppi’s intense joy—but don’t tell your aunt—were probably the two most remarkable women there, both beautifully dressed, and they looked at each other, as ladies will. My last Court Ball!

But my troubles are not over, for our Ambassador and his wife are to receive the King and Queen; so I have that to arrange. The legend is that the Queen has expressed a desire to go to the United States Embassy. It is going to make a lot of work, of course, for Their Majesties very seldom do this thing, though Embassies are, as you know, among the few places which may entertain them. It should be a fine function—the palace of our Ambassador is so magnificent—and I hope it may be well done, though the preparation must needs

be tremendous. Only certain people can be asked, and great state maintained. Oh, my darling, if you were only here to enjoy it!

A thousand invisible fibres are drawing me towards you ever and always. But Polly, I am beginning to be uneasy. I had hoped surely to go when the Ambassador left Rome, but now he says very emphatically that it is my duty to stay here until a new secretary comes, and that is the reason I have not heard from the State Department. I am, oh, so disappointed. Trust me! Believe in me! Don't let this separation, this uncertainty bring about any misunderstanding between us, no matter how slight. I have fought off a feeling of foreboding all day. Love me, dearest, always.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Moscow,
February.

For America I start, though to Rome I must go on the way. I am flattered that you say you read our Russian authors. But read a little French poetry, too, some very beautiful but destructive to the morals. My little blond rose, though very young, knows how to fish for hearts—the Parisian need not teach her that, for she has already caught many.

I have not written to you for days because you tell me you are engaged, but if so, why is it American Diplomat he not go to you soon like me? Is it a pretty divorcée holds him yet, as you say "with the come hither eye?" She is much *éprise* of him, I hear. But I should not tell you this. That she has returned to Rome many weeks ago, you know already, yes? I kiss your hand.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Last night our Embassy Ball took place and the King and Queen came. It was quite stately, the Palace is so spacious and imposing and the Royalties were very gracious. At the last minute while we stood waiting for the royal carriages

to be announced, the French Ambassadress arrived, saying that her lord had suddenly been taken ill with (literally) *un mal à l'estomac*. So the plans for the *Quadrille d'honneur*, which had been arranged with all sorts of finality during the days beforehand, had to be done over, and alas! by me. However, the invited guests had arrived, and the sheep separated from the goats. The Ambassador and Ambassadress walked down to the front door, beneath the vast entrance, while others of the official family stood at the head of the staircase. A red carpet was rolled out to the carriage and I had to go ahead and act as a sort of grand master of ceremonies. The Queen and the Ambassador, the King and the Ambassadress, followed by the Diplomatic Corps, moved down between the lines of curtseying people to the ball-room where a throne on a raised dais had been placed.

Gilet was stationed near the door so that I was able to signal to him and start the band playing the Royal March, followed by a few bars of the Star Spangled Banner. All stood until the Queen sat down. Then came the Royal Quadrille, as at the Court Ball, and the waltzes and "dancing in the barn" which Her Majesty wanted to see. At last Royalty made a move, and they were escorted to the little salon where a small table with two places had been set for the Queen and the Ambassadress, and a small buffet at one side for the ladies of the court. The King stood and drank a glass of wine with the Ambassador. Back again to the ballroom—I thought they would never go, but at last they departed, the host and hostess going down the stairs with Their Majesties between the banks of flowers to the carriage.

Then the great dining-hall with its lofty ceiling and glittering lights concealed in towering palm trees, was opened, for it was not etiquette to serve the guests with supper while the King and Queen remained. In a little while it looked as if a plague of locusts had passed over the land. There was nothing left but bones and crumbs and glasses and empty bottles. I never before felt so glad when a thing was over! It has been a good deal of a strain for all of us.

This morning I feel like a boy just out of school. Although I only got to bed at dawn, my forty winks have rejuvenated me, and I am as chipper as can be. The echoes of the ball are very enthusiastic. It appears now that the other embassies are trying to get Their Majesties to go to them.

What do you think I am doing these afternoons? Why, riding horseback like a little man! It took me days to find a respectable (looking) horse, but at last I found at Ferini's, near the Borghese villa, a nice chestnut with two white stockings and a good deal of style when she frisks about. Peppi calls her Mona Lisa. So, in the afternoons, early or late, according to the amount of work I have to do, I may be seen sallying forth, and an hour later, returning, the horse fresh and without a hair unturned, but the rider pretty well done up.

But oh how I want to leave it all and come flying to you! Remember me courteously to your Aunt. Does she still think of Peppi?

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
February.

Every night I read your letters over and over. You are my love and my sweetheart and I adore you. I can hardly believe such happiness is coming to me, for there never was anyone so dear in all the world, there never has been, there never will be. Your friends have been so kind to me and your father has sent me such nice letters.

Oh by the way, whom are you riding horseback with? Mona Lisa? Ahem, and the horse is called after her. So the grass widow is back in Rome, and Peppi, you say, is cocking his eye at her? I think Aunt is too busy with her charities lately to remember about her handsome artist with his wild hair. She no longer wears floppy artistic gowns, she really likes titles, and is getting quite excited over Prince Boris' coming.

Now, A. D., I've got some news for you. Aunt just wouldn't formally announce our engagement, so I did! Yes, my dear! I sent a notice myself to the papers, chuckling as I wrote it. Now it's up to you. The only thing for you to do, I warn you, is to come over as quickly as you can and carry off your Pagan Polly, provided you still want her.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
February.

Here I am at the office, receiving company in the mildest manner, trying to soothe my dissatisfied countrymen, and do impossibilities of one sort and another. I have already had several visitors this morning. One was a young man who has had the cheerful but fruitful experience of being buncoed out of several thousand francs at Naples and is accordingly needy. I helped him out of the store

of my wisdom and out of the store of my bank account, and he has departed wiser if somewhat sadder.

Last night Jan and I went again to Peppi's studio. It seemed as if you were really in the terrace room—you seemed to pervade the place with its old tapestries and sketches, its rugs and easels and paints and books of photographs, and the northern window letting in a flood of moonlight. And there your shadow sat, while Jan played the piano delightfully, gavottes, mazurkas, ballets.

I have adopted a plan which makes me the happiest of men. I carry the last letter which I receive from you in my pocket until the next one comes, and so I am never disappointed in not having a missive from you. It is a splendid scheme, for then I always have something to read. I shan't want to give up the one I received today, though, when the next one comes, for it is so nice. But then, the next one may be still nicer.

POLLY TO A. D.

Black Horse Farm,
March.

At the farm again. It is lonely up here without you. The winter with its drifting snow was fine, but now that is melting. The roads are muddy and make such hard pulling for the horses that Checkers is hitching up four while I write, and I plan to drive them.

How you would laugh if you could see me; I am the funniest looking object —huge rubber boots, a queer-looking short skirt with half a yard of tear down the side made by the bull pup, (he is the dearest thing, though) an old brown jacket very much the worse for wear, a Scotch tam, and Checker's furry gloves —you know what I mean, the lovely pussy ones. Now we are off!

Later, a postscript.

This afternoon Checkers and I had a horseback ride and I can sympathize with you after your Campagna rides, for I don't feel as spry as I might. Though, after all, you have Mona Lisa with you to while away the time, and I?—Well, Boris is coming to America soon, so you'd better be on your best behavior. It is midnight and I have hopped into bed and spilt the ink; it's high time I stopped writing and went to sleep and to dream of—well, of one of you, anyway.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

Mon ange, I am in Rome again, but will soon be in America with you. American Secretary like me no more because I follow after you; he go the other way, if possible, and I look in sky as if observing interesting eclipse. It make me very angry—wish to pull his nose—my heart is inky as the devil's pit.

Your Aunt, she likes me, at least. The Carthorse she calls herself, but not of your family surely, for you are like wild Arab colt. I try without success to tempt you with sweets and with fresh dates of the desert, but you not let me put on bridle. After Paris, my heart have big hole. Now I run after you to America to try mend the hole.

You can be princess if you wish, and live in a country that will some day soon be master of the world.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

Your letters, dear, from the farm bring the fine country air with them. I can see the still cold moonlight on the pure white snow and hear the ringing of the sleigh bells, I can see the old house, the fire crackling up the chimney, and the cozy room with the old prints, the warmth and geniality. Thank you, dear, for the picture.

But your mood changed, didn't it, darling, when you got back from your ride? I am sure your Aunt dropped some little bit of gossip, possibly something the Prince or Peppi may have written, though I feared he had quite forgotten her. He's too deeply in love with Mona Lisa now to act like a sensible person, and whatever he says is colored by his insane jealousy of every other man in Rome who even looks on his divinity. But I'm coming home, Polly. I'll do anything to get away. I know you want to live in America and so do I.

Last night was the ball at the Austrian Embassy to which came the King and Queen. In a word—and a slang word at that—it wasn't a patch on our Embassy Ball. Their palace, for one thing, doesn't compare with ours, and then, notwithstanding all the etiquette and fuss of the Austrians, all their

punctiliousness, it didn't go off so smoothly. The fact is, it wasn't so well done, and out of this I privately found much gratification. The American function had been a great success, while the reception of last night was rather a commonplace affair.

I stood around and watched the Austrian secretaries work—five or six of them to do what I alone had done, and I delighted in seeing them run about, and look sheepish or important, according to their natures, as they did the more or less foolish things the occasion demanded. As soon as their Majesties had gone, I departed, so got to bed at a comparatively early hour. They had a cotillion afterwards which we had the good sense not to undertake. Rather a funny thing was the fact that a class of Americans who hadn't been asked to our ball were invited to this one!

I took a ride on my chestnut horse this afternoon—yes, the one Peppi dubbed Mona Lisa. But don't you worry about the real lady Lisa—she—well, she just helps to pass the time away. Today as we started out, great banks of clouds toward the East had gathered, casting shadows on the hills, and these advanced till a glorious double rainbow arched across the Campagna. It was all so beautiful that we innocently rode right into the storm and were drenched in a pelting rain.

The Embassy is humming with people calling, making inquiries, asking for passports, demanding everything from a room in the best hotel to a good store where an American can buy a pair of suspenders, and a thousand and one other requests. Then the Ambassador is getting ready to go away, so all is topsy-turvey. As soon as he goes, I shall begin to pack my boxes—a few books and pictures; and then some evening when the new secretary gets here, I shall quietly go to the station, take the train, and ride rattling across the uncanny old Campagna for the last time, and say goodbye to old Rome, goodbye! I follow your pesky Prince!

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
March.

Here I am, twenty-one years old and everything to make me happy except two little things. One is I don't like to have that grass-widow with her gray cat's eyes again in Rome. She's much too smartly dressed, and calculating, too, yes,

she is, A. D. She just goes after what she wants, then if it's not obtainable, takes whatever else is handy. She may be amusing, but even if you and Peppi do rave about her looks, I don't think she's a bit pretty.

And this is the other thing. Aunt has inserted a denial of our engagement, after the nice announcement I had put in the paper. That's why we darted up to the Black Horse Farm last week. To get me away so I shouldn't see it contradicted in the Sunday papers. But Sybil did and sent it to me. What shall I do next?

I'm grateful anyway for the dearest sweetheart in the world; that's more than anyone else has! This morning the sun shining brightly into my room awoke me, and the day has turned out glorious, not a cloud in the sky. Don't you hope our wedding-day will be like this? Louisa decorated the breakfast table and on it were some birthday gifts—a pair of pretty bedroom slippers, a work-bag from Grandmother (Ahem, I sew so much!) and a pretty cardcase from Aunt, and a little silver coffee pot, just big enough for two, from Checkers. Aunt sniffed when Checkers explained elaborately the two it was meant for. I believe she is still actually set on my becoming a Princess.

And then! There lay two letters and a cable—all three from you. They got torn open first, even before I untied the great box that contained your roses. I put away the letters till I could take them off to my lair, to read and re-read secretly —such dear letters and such lovely flowers. I'd like to kiss you and tell you so this very minute, but you're leagues and leagues away, so there's something lacking to my birthday after all.

After breakfast there was business to be attended to. Now I'm of age, Aunt is no longer my guardian. (Do you suppose she's heaving a sigh of relief?) So forth I sallied into town with our business man, Mr. French—we went in a cab—quite improper, don't you think? And at such an early hour! Well, we got to the office and were closeted together for ages and ages while he talked and talked and read and read again papers and documents, I signing them above and below and around about until my wrist ached. Then a man with a red stamp came in to help officiate till finally we got them all fixed up. After that Mr. French took me to a safe where there was a little tin box; here we put the precious papers with my John Hancock all over them, and after he had given me two keys, he left me. And what do you suppose I did? Having for the first time a little money of my own, I went to a jeweller and bought a very pretty ring—for Sybil. Now are you disappointed? Never mind. Something else was bought for somebody I won't mention.

On coming home I found, well! ! ! There are no words enthusiastic enough to thank you for the glorious great pearl on a chain to go about my neck. But you

know that these few poor inadequate thanks come from my heart, and hidden somewhere in them are endless devotion and perfect faithfulness to you.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

I enclose some photographs of the “meets” on the Campagna—of the pack and the huntsmen and tent, and a group of onlookers—the princess of San Faustino, the last Orsini, and Prince Solofra who seems to be scratching his head and meditating on the past glories of the great feudal families. Also one of your friends, Gonzaga, with the Countess he is going to marry.

There is an attempt being made to revive the Carnival fêtes—the races in the Corso—but the Veglione won’t be so much fun as last year, I know. Every moment of that night together is unforgettable. Poor erratic Pittsburgo, how you did tease him! And dear old Checkers! There’ll never again be anything so funny as he was in that round masque with its fixed grin, dancing about on the floor of the Costanzi. But now it isn’t carnival for me. Who could feel gay when his love is not here? So I am only an observer, while others sport and play the fool, more or less amusingly.

The Corso has been crowded, and many of the balconies draped with bright carpets, and wreathed with flowers. Through the throngs there moved an irregular succession of fantastic figures, men on horseback, dressed in red and yellow, heralds, groups of historic patriots and warriors, and even Marcus Aurelius so ingeniously imitated that he appeared exactly like the statue on the Capitol, which is supposed to have left its pedestal and come down to enjoy the mirth. Then there was a “char” with Venus—to whom as the Goddess of love, I took off my hat and bowed,—drawn by tinsel cupids and snowy pigeons tugging away at the ends of stiff wires. There were sacrificial chariots, too, and floats of hanging gardens, and still more Roman statues,—

“Priests and prophets of the ages,
Vestals, augurs, pontiffs, mages,
Brazen-belted, scarlet-shrouded,
All their altars incense-clouded,
Roman wealth of aeons massing
Now in golden pageant passing.”

The people threw flowers and confetti and everything else they could lay their hands on. Between certain hours there was complete license, and a mask could hit or kiss or be as wild as he pleased. (You know, dear, there *is* a certain kind of kissing I do not disapprove of.)

Yesterday, too, was gay with crowds of people in the streets, for it was the King’s birthday, and I was awakened by the music of marching bands, in time to see from my window the Persian Ambassador starting to call on the King at the Quirinal. The gala carriages made a fine show with their caparisoned horses, the three liveried footmen behind and bewigged coachman stuck up in front. This important Embassy had traveled all the way from Persia to tell the King that a new Shah had come to the throne, a bit of news we had learned by telegraph months ago,—but such are the ways of monarchs. I wonder when the Ambassador will arrive from America to announce the accession of the new Administration! The evening found me dining at the Foreign Office in honor of His Majesty’s birthday. It was a very splendid and stately affair, the diplomats and officials all in uniforms of gold lace, cocked hats, with swords and fine feathers, my simple, unadorned black coat being the only one at the table. (However, the servants were dressed like me, though to be sure, even some of them were decorated!) It was a dinner of fifty, long and ceremonious, and afterwards we all stood about while I watched the Greek and Turk dodging each other, and taking turns in talking excitably to their fellow guests. Tomorrow they will probably be at each other’s throats.

The Ambassadorial family has just left, with a good many people to see them off, chiefly officials. I put some flowers in their compartment, as I did when my darling Polly left Rome. I had hoped to be able to leave with them, but, as I wrote you, I must wait until a new Ambassador, or his Secretary, arrives before I can turn over the affairs and leave. Oh, Polly, I am so sorry for this further delay. You know how disappointed I am, and you will be patient with me, won’t you, dear?

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

Dushenka moya, you do not know what these little words mean? Then you cannot forbid that I call you that. Long time I am coming but had much work to do. Now my passage at last is engage, and the boat that bring me I hope she fly. So I fascinated you with my mysterious tales, your letter says? Then shall I tell you more when we meet, about the enchanted Princess with the beautiful golden hair, yes?

Ah, my poor little Hummingbird, I hear your young Diplomat he is staying in Rome; there is no need, but then, oh la la! Always the gray-eyed lady of Da Vinci is with him, and they tell me that every day they go off into the Campagna and ride and ride and come back very cheerful. I am angry for you. When I come, will you receive me kindly like the true friend who will always remain your obedient Boris?

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
March.

Thank Heaven your clever old Ambassador has finally departed, but I am very cross that you didn't come with him. Why wait for another Secretary? Can't someone else turn over those ridiculous "affairs?" If you still linger in Rome, I shall complain to the Cruelty to Children Society, because your staying there is making me pine away. Besides, it may be months before your successor arrives. It isn't by any chance Mona Lisa who is keeping you? That day in Rome when she tore up your picture, she said she would make trouble. Hateful thing, I wish she were in Jericho or Halifax or anywhere except in Rome!

When do you think you'll get back? Ever? And what about the date of the wedding? Do you prefer the autumn? Put it off if you want to, or shall we give it up entirely?

You might write me a little gossip. Do you see anything of Boris these days, for I believe he's been making Rome a flying visit? Don't you like him any more? I do. Does he still carry his fascinating Persian cane? Aunt thought he was on his way to America, but like someone else, he seems to care more about

remaining in Rome than journeying towards me. But now he writes he is starting.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
March.

As to the date of the wedding, of course it rests with you, dear, to fix it. It should be, if possible, a week or so after I get home but as for waiting until autumn, I should die! Why not May—that time of year would be lovely at the farm? My plan would be to make a festive little program of pre-nuptial events and a small wedding in church and then you and I would go away and leave everybody in the midst of it all.

But my Polly will arrange everything quite perfectly, I'm sure. A poor man, who is an awkward creature at best, is simply disorganized when it comes to a wedding—and that wedding his own, whew! Nevertheless, we're talking about it, and just that alone makes me want to dance another of my celebrated Highland flings. Make it May, and near the latter part. I simply cannot fail to be relieved of my work in time to reach home by that date.

Your letter hurt me. Nothing but duty keeps me in Rome, and you must learn to trust me, and not tease and provoke me, because this separation is quite as hard for me as it is for you. Your Prince is here again, but is becoming impossible. I have seen little of him and would like to see even less. Pan, dear Pan who never has a hard word for anyone, much less for one of his own colleagues, tells me he is the most malicious man he knows, that he likes trouble and does the most abominable things. Even the Russians at his own Embassy seem to be watching him closely. He couldn't do much to trouble us, could he, dear? Has he been writing, to you often, I wonder? And what about? Tell me.

Polly, I write you everything! The other night, just Turkish Pan and artist Peppi and Madame Mona Lisa came to a little dinner in my rooms. While we were talking of not drinking, (I had planned to stop during Lent) I said, with you in my mind, there were of course some toasts I couldn't resist. Quick as a wink Peppi lifted his glass with "To Mona Lisa!" I was furious, but had to drink it. Dear kind bejewelled Pan then raised his and said "Miss Polly."

Of course Gilet had to refill my glass which he did with evident delight, for he does not like a dry Lent. But to the second toast I drank heel taps, you may be

sure. Then my lady Lisa took an imitation pansy from her dress, saying she knew that Miss Polly gave me fresh ones, but while yours would fade, hers would last forever and bestowed it upon me. Peppi, to my great amusement, looked daggers —he was just like an angry spaniel with his fuzzy hair,—so I made a great show of sentiment in accepting the flower.

Will you forgive me? not for breaking my Lenten sacrifice, for alas! what is that to my little Pagan? You wouldn't give up your tiny glass unless you took it to pour a libation to some heathen god of mischief. Forgive me for the first toast I drank, that's all.

There is one thing also I must speak of. I have seen the gold St. Mark lion I gave you on the Prince's chain. I am sure it was the one, because it had ruby eyes. Although we have not been speaking, I went deliberately up to him and asked him where he got it. He looked confused and said something about having picked it up in Paris. Then I remarked, "I think some pretty American girl gave it to you." He laughed and replied, "Maybe, who knows?" And Peppi tells me today that he has already sailed for New York. Will you kindly tell me why you gave it to him?

Just what does this mean? The more I think of my lion, the more indignant I am. To pay you back, I am going really to flirt with Mona. I give you fair warning. What do you think of that?

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

New York,
March.
Telegram.

Oh how happy I am to think I shall see you once again. Shall be with you tomorrow.

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
March.

I’m getting desperate. It is impossible to write you how I feel or why, but I’m so alone except for Checkers. He said today, “Why young ’un, you’re getting restless,” and so I am. The Prince arrives tomorrow—Aunt still continues to be queer about our engagement. So you think I really gave the lion to the Prince? And you are flirting with the dangerous Mona Lisa. Oh, everything seems topsy turvey!

POLLY TO A. D.

Cable.
New York,
April 1st.

Breaking my engagement for reasons you can no doubt surmise.

PART IV
THE PRINCE IN PURSUIT

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
April 1st.

On entering my room I saw a cable lying on my desk and eagerly sprang forward, tore it open, only to stagger back and sink into a chair, for it said, “Breaking my engagement for reasons you can no doubt surmise.” Your name was signed.

I have gone over everything. Perhaps you thought I was really flirting with the divorcée—perhaps the Prince has been at the bottom of this—maybe you have felt unduly wounded at my delay in returning, which you must know is not my fault.

Exactly what I intended to do I am not sure, but in my excitement I telephoned Lisa. She said, “Come over at once,” and I went. She knows absolutely no reason for your action, and begged my forgiveness if she had unwittingly caused trouble between us. Thank Heaven there is one loyal woman. Oh! Polly my Pagan, is it the Prince?

A. D. TO POLLY

Cable from Rome,
Evening, April 1.

Another cable was brought me late tonight. “April Fool!” it read. Thank God. Polly, don’t do that again.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
April 2d.

Your dear cablegram came this morning begging my forgiveness. You have it, dearest, absolutely. Evidently somebody's little conscience troubled her about her naughty message of April first. You'll get, I fear, a pretty sharp letter which ought not, however, to offend you. Anyway the last cable made me happy, and yet another, telling me that the Senate had confirmed the nomination of the new Ambassador, made me happier still and my heart lighter than it had been for weeks. At least, someone is coming now.

But we're doing the only thing to be done under the circumstances, and my Polly, I know, expects every man to do his duty, doesn't she? I shall be home by May, you can be sure, even if I have to resort to the desperate measure of deserting my post. But that would be a hard step to take.

Yesterday I went about a bit—that is, this earthly shell of mine did, while my heart and soul were with you, dear—first to take luncheon with Peppi and to look at his curious copies of old masters. Do you know, he has even taken to painting them on wood, exactly like the fifteenth century—and his own Mona Lisa is uncannily like the one in the Louvre. I told him so and he looked queerly at me. Some had been boxed for sending and whose name do you think was blackly lettered on them? The Prince's—and the address somewhere down on New York's east side. Curious, isn't it?

I didn't stay long, being too distracted (my nerves are so strung up, they make me the worst company in the world). So I wandered home through the beautiful sunny streets, down past the foot of the Spanish steps where we used to meet, past the fountain and the flower-sellers. Write soon, won't you?

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
April.

Truly you lost no time in hurrying to your Mona Lisa with my cablegram. Moreover, there's a little doubt in your letter when you ask, "Is it the Prince?" Can you blame me if—well, I'll leave the rest unwritten. In the meantime, Aunt is going to take Checkers, Sybil and me to Louisville for the races, and then to Canada, just for a brief camping trip. She says it's to cheer me up, for I showed her your letter and she's much annoyed with you. Indeed it raised the poor

thing's hopes that I was making the April Fool joke a reality. It did come rather near to being serious. The Prince joins us at Louisville. Strange about those pictures. I guess I'll watch him.

Do you still think I really gave Boris your lion? Well, only to show you how wrong you are about me, I will tell you that I did lose it in Paris, but not until your letter came, did I have any idea the Prince had it. I suppose he must have picked it up, and I am not at all sure he even knew that it was mine. Now aren't you ashamed?

I'm going right on, however, with preparations for the wedding in spite of Aunt's denials. A few presents are arriving, for I put a bold face on to my friends and say we are engaged and you are coming soon. We have a vase, a tea-set, a great silver bowl; so far that's about all. My old beaux are sending things, all except Boris, who seems to think his constant presence is the one thing to bestow. I am working on the wedding list,—it seems endless, and Aunt sniffs incredulously when she sees me at it.

How long I've sat over this letter I don't know, just dreaming of you and thinking of Venice so many months ago. Now it is Spring and warm and lovely; the flowers are in bloom and you are not here. Will any of my dreams come true, I wonder?

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
April.

Sweetheart, on coming home I found a letter from the new Secretary who is leaving Washington for Rome even before the Ambassador. I am going to pack up at once and be ready to start as soon as he arrives. Now you can settle on some date towards the end of May for the wedding.

Hurrah! Gilet shall go around and get my bills in to pay them, the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker. There must be some official cards printed with a little p.p.c. in the lower left-hand corner ready to leave. I must look up the dates of sailings of the ships for home, say goodbye, give a lot of tips to porters, ushers, chambermaids, *sommeliers*, and go to the station and so to you!

Peppi, who, I believe, is more and more hopelessly in love every day with the lady Lisa, got up a party for her, and invited some painters, sculptors, a few Dips and their wives, all to drive out for tea at the excavation of the Villa Olivia.

We met at the foot of our Spanish Steps, and drove through the Porto del Populo across the Campagna, along the valley of the Tiber by Città Castellana, to the Villa standing on a hill. After our tea and little cakes, we romped through a wild Virginia reel. I danced with Mona while Peppi, sick with jealousy, stared sombrely at me as if he wished to tuck a *stiletto* beneath my fifth rib. It was a relief to come away, though, for the lady's gray eyes glittered when she asked me what further news you had deigned to give me regarding your flirtation with the Prince. I trust my Polly.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

Washington,
April.

You ask me what I do—and what I think of North America? I busy and do much work, travel and not think of any girls but you. Men I see in street, without mustache, wear glasses, have dentist fill mouth with gold, rush about madly and speak, "What say?" and "Sure!" and "Do tell," wear celluloid collar and ready-made suit and hang big cigar from corner of mouth and—spit! Excuse my funs, dear.

People are lavish if you are Prince, turn somersaults on top of each other to entertain you, but of foreigners suspicious more or less. All American women have too much freedom and know too well how to flirt, and too pretty they are for the heart of a man. Most of the men are uneducate in art and languages and such things; they only know business and politics.

Many buildings are handsome like in Paris and Berlin, but the cities rising into the sky are astounding, abominable. The country and the mountains so very beautiful, they are create to be a home for you, my little wild bird.

Perhaps you not like me say such things but you ask me. I travel now again from place to place. Your army is small, and your big guns burst by each fire. Soon I will be with you at Louisville. Please tell your Aunt that I kiss her hand, and your little hands, I kiss both.

POLLY TO A. D.

Louisville, Ky.,
April.

Such a wonderful trip as we have had on the train! We are now in the land of the clayeaters, moonshine, and mountain feuds, in the region of blue grass, fast horses, and pretty women. Every man is a colonel and every woman a cousin. Our days are filled with hearty handshakes and racy stories, our mouths cooled with mint juleps in silver frosted cups, and our appetites satisfied with beaten biscuits and other delicious Southern dishes.

Sports from all over the country have gathered here for the great Derby—forty thousand or more were at the races—such a mixed crowd, men in checked suits, painted ladies, blacks, whites, all together. First we watched them making bets, then we strolled into the paddock to see the race-horses being led round and round in an enclosed ring, covered with blankets so that only their beautiful heads and bandaged legs could be seen. Each one had his pony or stable companion, as he is called. We hung over the railing and I did love it. Such a variety of names the horses had—By Golly, Up Shot, Bungo Buck. The great race we watched from a box in the grand stand. There was much excitement, cheering, clapping, and money changing hands. On came the horses round the track, faster and faster, till Speed Limit unexpectedly won the race, leaving some people very sad and others wildly hilarious.

Checkers has won—not money on the races—but something else. And what? A girl! Guess if you can—Sybil! ! ! And she is the dearest girl in the world. Checkers is in kingdom come; he declares, “She’s as pretty as a pair of pink boots and as enticing as a glass of Kentucky moonshine. I can go to the races and lose; I can pick a horse with nothing but a mane and a tail; can’t pick a clown in a circus, but I can pick a blue-eyed doll all right!”

How did he ever do it? Why, those two scamps pretended, just to amuse each other and everybody else, to have a mock engagement—Checkers called it a “trial hitch.” He says it worked like magic and they’re onto it for all time and that you must give him “the glad hand.” But oh, how unexpected for the rest of us—they’ve known each other for years. Seeing them so happy together makes me very lonely, A. D. I am glad to hear the new secretary has started over.

The house where we are staying is quite beautiful—of gray stone built in the château style, surrounded by formal gardens and terraces with fountains and statues. Mrs. Courtney serves mint juleps every afternoon in the gallery where superb tapestries hang on the walls, and the enormous stone fireplace has logs as big as trees burning in it. The German Ambassador, an old friend of Boris’, by the way, is here, and also some racing swells.

Boris and I took a walk in the garden today and he pretended to tell me the

story of his life, how his father was a Russian, his mother a German countess,—how he had lived in St. Petersburg till his father died,—how (and then he became vague), he wandered from place to place, but perhaps you know all this. He is passionately fond of horses, “me much Cossack” he said, whereupon I proposed a ride.

My mare pulled a good deal and Boris tightened the bit, but as we galloped along, both our mounts became excited and went faster and faster. Nearing a sharp corner, I sang out a warning to the Prince who was just behind. Then, suddenly his horse stumbled and fell. My mare stopped for I turned off the road into a brook. Looking back, I saw Boris lying on the ground very still, the horse standing by.

The terrifying thought swept over me that he had been killed and it was my fault, but he was only stunned and his face considerably cut and scratched. Though pretty well knocked out, Boris was game enough to mount again, so back we rode. He is going to wear a scar, but says it is nothing to the wound I have made on a more vital organ. Rather neat, don’t you think so? Of course I have to be extra sweet to him on account of the accident.

We had great fun at dinner, just a series of jokes and laughs. Afterwards Mrs. Courtney went to the piano and we danced and danced till the clock struck twelve. The whole house is like fairyland, it is so wonderful, and oh, there’s a winding secret stairway that is very mysterious. I can’t make out where it comes from or where it goes, but in one place Mrs. Courtney can suddenly emerge into the library by slipping back a concealed panel. The Prince is greatly intrigued with it; I surprised him as he was trying to make a diagram of its wanderings.

Aunt is still adamant against our marriage. She says I’m to wait till we return to New York before even talking wedding or dreaming of setting a date. But she doesn’t know what I’ve done! And that is, I’ve despatched you a cablegram, suggesting the thirty-first of May, tra-la! And added Checkers’ news. No more tonight, for I’m sleepy, dear.

A. D. TO POLLY

Rome,
April.

I had been in bed some time, Polly my love, dozing and dreaming of you, when I heard the door in the salon open and someone knocking about in the

dark, so I called out to know who it was. The half-asleep *portier* said, “Two telegrams, signor.” Up I got; up the light went, too. Eagerly the yellow envelopes were torn open. One was yours, “Hurry up! Come soon. How about May 31?”

For a moment I stood dazed, overwhelmed by the thought—my wedding day! Then suddenly the realization in a great flood of happiness came over me. Oh, indeed, I’ll hurry!

And the other cable? Aha! That was from my successor, the new Secretary. He has already arrived in London and stopping there for a few days’ business.

Checkers and Sybil have my congratulations. They certainly have sprung a surprise.

POLLY TO A. D.

New York,
May.

Just back from Louisville and staying here for a couple of days before starting for Canada. I am chuckling to myself and wondering how the Prince and Aunt will like it, for they’ve never been camping before. And I’m chuckling about something else, too. As soon as your letter came, I ordered the invitations engraved, writing on from Louisville to the stationer’s. Aunt has continued blandly obstinate, and deep down in her heart she is still intending that this trip will give Boris his best chance to make me change my mind—but we will see. I asked her if we could be married as soon as you came back. She tightened up her mouth with a crisp, “No!” Nevertheless, she can’t stop me; I’m of age.

Then what do you think we did, Sybil, Checkers, and I? We went to our Rector—your father’s old friend, you know he thinks everything of your family—and he said he’d perform the ceremony. So we’ve secured the church. We ordered the music and decorations—crimson azaleas. Just an hour ago while Aunt was wrestling with a few last details regarding the trip, Checkers took a traveling bag, filled it with the invitations I had been surreptitiously addressing, and we went out and mailed them, dancing around the mail-box till passers-by thought we were utter lunatics.

Oh, A. D., do for goodness’ sake come home! I am so tired of waiting, it seems as if it was impossible to stand it much longer. Don’t you hope and pray we will live happily together? I wish we were married now, that it was done, for in a way I do dread it. All I want is that we may go far off into some little nook

in the woods by ourselves away from people.

Forgive this dismal letter but somehow everything makes me sad tonight. Boris upsets me, I don't know why. But I won't be so any more after you arrive. Do hurry.

But there's one more thing, A. D., before this letter closes. The Rector said I must tell Aunt our plans, and I promised to. I did try, without any success, however. As we shall be traveling, she won't see the acceptances for some time. When I think of the inevitable interview, I shake in my shoes. You'll come dashing in, though, won't you, and rescue me?

POLLY KEEPS A JOURNAL LETTER FOR A. D.

Island Lake,
Algonquin Park,
Canada.

No nice fat Embassy letter was waiting for me at the hotel, I am sorry to say, but Aunt says we shall have time enough to get mail after the camping-trip, so there was nothing forwarded for any of us. I am going to keep this note-book with me and make a kind of diary, so as to jot down everything that happens.

A glorious morning; we started off with guides, tents, and canoes, and paddled through Cache Pond to Island Lake, our first camp, with only two short carries. Boris insisted on having me and a guide in his canoe. I won't say I haven't been flirting, but when my conscience pricks me, I think of Mona Lisa in Rome with you, and go at it again. Now aren't you sorry?

The events have begun. We struck a nice little run of rapids, and just when we got to the deepest part, the canoe slewed, hit a rock, and then over it went, and we with it. The next thing I knew, someone was dragging me up, blinking, choking, spluttering. I opened my eyes to behold my rescuer, the Prince! Don't you think, A. D., I should be properly grateful to him? He saved my life—without an instant's hesitation, Aunt says. So you see you owe your future wife's very existence to him. I've *got* to be sweet to him, haven't I?

It is now near the end of our first day in the wilderness. I do nothing but think how good it will be to see you again. I would like so much to be in New York to greet you on the dock, but instead I'm paddling with the Prince.

First day's remarks by the party:

Sybil: "Oh! Ah! Heaven!"

Checkers: “Bully!”

Prince: “Bozhe moi!” (Whatever that means.)

Aunty: “This box has got soap! Not eggs!”

Polly: “I’m game for the next event!”

For supper we had beans, flapjacks, and tea. For beds, fir balsam.

I think that Aunt and Boris prefer the comforts of home. The Prince certainly has her ear, and when I surprise them in one of their long and confidential interviews, they act like a couple of arch-conspirators. But he is very nice just now and it is my last chance for a fling, isn’t it?

We had a carry to Lake Kootchie, the second day, then a long portage and four miles of paddling to the end of Big Smoke this morning, and ended the day at Lake Bear. Checkers and Boris played cards on making camp, and after gambling for a while, it looked as if the Prince saw things were not going his way, so he stopped to arrange his fishing tackle. Checkers screwed up his eyebrows at me and winked.

For supper—pea-soup, fish, and prunes.

Second Day’s remarks:

Sybil: “The loons are so jolly. I want to take one home.”

Checkers: “Every minute I like it better.”

Aunt: “The beds are so hard—sno-r-r-r-r-oh!”

Prince (gazing soulfully at me): “To rescue beautiful ladies—ah, it is heaven.”

Confession: I let the Prince kiss my hand. After all, he saved my life, you know. You weren’t here and I had to have somebody kiss it.

Breaking camp at seven-thirty a short but pretty portage brought us to the three Bonnecherre and then to Lake Rod and Gun where we are now tenting. Butter-ball ducks flew by on the way, and we saw a few partridges and deer, but not much big game, for moose are farther north. Last night was an eventful one; wolves howled, the wind blew, the rain descended. Suddenly our tent fell down amid loud cries for help. Boris came to our rescue, but tripped over a rope and stood on his head from whence issued a flood of Russian. Which, if I could have

understood it, would probably have paralyzed me for a week. Later a muskrat came and ate up all our chocolate.

Third Day's remarks at supper:

Aunt: "Oh, but I'm so tired! I didn't sleep a wink last night."

Checkers: "I'm hungry! I'd like to be the muskrat."

Sybil: (Holding his hand under cover of her poncho) "I'm a frozen dog, but I'm having the time of my life."

Prince (*sotto voce*): "Only forty-eight hours more."

Polly: "Can't be too few for me."

Later.

A. D., I've made an awful mistake! I was too good to the Prince and he took advantage of it. In fact he was pretty naughty. You see he thought we were quite alone this afternoon, the others had gone fishing, and before I knew what he was doing, he entered my tent and had me in his arms, kissing my hair, my eyes, my mouth. I screamed and one of the guides ran in. Boris cursed him for interfering, so I simply asked the man to remain. There was nothing for the Prince to do but walk out. Then the guide looked at me funnily and said that the canoe didn't tip over that time in the wind, that Boris had hired him to upset it, the spot being fairly shallow and perfectly safe. Apparently our Russian wanted to get the credit of an heroic rescue. So you were right after all. He's not to be trusted.

Also, there is a very queer thing that your little Sherlock Holmes has just discovered. He's had letters come to him over another name, not in the least like his own. They fell out of his pocket when he was struggling with me. I picked them up—one was marked up in the corner with the name of some antique dealer. Can Boris be selling Peppi's pictures? Is that the mysterious "business" that takes him from one big city to another? When you get back to Washington, ask about him at the Russian Embassy. Oh give me a good straight American man, say I!

We're about a hundred miles north of Toronto now. One day more and then we leave for home.

Fourth Day. A gray mist and an early start. I insisted on going in Checkers' canoe. Boris and I are not speaking. Our two mile portage led to Rock Lake. Saw a bear and caught some trout and bass for supper. Railway in sight. To celebrate our last meal we indulged in a bonfire, had soup and a welsh rarebit, and

gambled late into the night by the light of candles stuck into broken bottles.

Fourth Day's Remarks:

Aunt: "Fiddlesticks! What's all this trouble about?"

Checkers: "Bow wow."

Sybil: "Meow, meow."

Polly: (Silence.)

Prince: (More silence.)

Fifth Day. This morning the tents came down, fishing tackle was put away, clothes shoved into the duffle bags for the last time. We paddled across the lake to the hotel. Closing remarks by the Party:

Aunt: "Camp generally becomes passably comfortable just as one nears the end of the trip."

Prince: "How I love the railway."

Sybil: "At the end of the last carry, still carrying on!"

Checkers: "Prince Tripp tripped up—a spring trip! Polly's eyes have been opened."

Polly: "They've never been entirely shut. I only winked occasionally."

These journal notes I am sending you with my love, care of the State Department, Washington.

A. D. TO POLLY

En Route,
May.

Goodbye, Rome! I'm on the train at last, speeding away from the Eternal City.

When I came home to dress for my farewell Roman dinner last evening, there was a note on the table from the Doyen of the Ambassadors stating that the King would receive at twenty-one hours and thirty minutes. I hurriedly calculated this would be half-past ten, so calmly went off to dine with some of my old pals, a sort of goodbye party, thinking there would be plenty of time. Suddenly I had a lucid moment and realized that twenty-one thirty meant half-

past nine! I looked at my watch—just twenty-eight minutes past. Whew, but I flew—took a cab and galloped at full speed to the Quirinal, rushed up the great staircase past the astonished lackeys, through the guard room into the State Reception Rooms, got there, terribly out of breath, but—on the minute!

It was a pretty sight, the Royal Circle in the Salon of the Mirrors. We stood in a row,—"we few, we happy few, we band of brothers"—while the King and Queen went as usual to each and talked. When he came to me, I told him I was going home to be married, and got so enthusiastic in telling how happy I was, how anxious and eager, how it was the only thing which made me willing to leave His Majesty's Court that he got roused, too, and said really very pleasant things, and shook me by the hand with a hearty good wish and good-bye, and strutted away most amicably. To the Queen, also, I insisted on talking of my felicity, and she said she had heard of it and wished us well. So! A Royal Pair approves our wedding, if not an Aunt. You might point that out to your title-loving guardian; perhaps she will think a little more kindly of me.

Today before I left the Embassy, my successor arrived, and to him I handed all the lire that were left, and papers and so forth. The office had been thoroughly cleaned and dusted, a new carpet put down, and new window-curtains put up. I showed him everything I could think of, shook him by the hand, and just caught my train.

Now we are climbing the Italian Alps, which are wonderfully beautiful in the afternoon sun, and in a little while we shall pass through the tunnel of Mt. Cenis and out of Italy. Every day will bring me nearer to you, dear Polly, and twenty thousand times more happy. Dearest, a few weeks more, and we shall begin the first of our married life, and you—my wife!

A telegram was handed me on the train just now which quite takes my breath away, though its news does not surprise me as much as it will you. Peppi and his little divorcée, gray eyes, Mona Lisa smile, and all, were married today in Rome, with only Gonzaga, Pan, and Jonkheer Jan at the wedding!

My dear, I am going to tell you something. The lady came to my rooms quite unexpectedly the other day, and asked for tea, which Gilet made for her, and then she just sat and looked at me with her inscrutable smile and her mysterious eyes. Finally she got up and went over and looked at your photograph for a long while, then turned and said, "Your little Polly is very sweet, even if she doesn't like me. Is it true that you return for your wedding soon?"

"Quite true," I replied.

"We've been very good friends, you and I," she went on, "and I am sorry to have you go. Goodbye." She gave me her hand which I kissed, for there were

tears on her lashes, and I followed her down to put her in the cab. She said with that usual cryptic look of hers, “I’ve made up my mind to something this afternoon. Don’t be surprised when you get word of it. Farewell.”

The man cracked his whip and off she went.

But still, there remains some mystery about her and about Peppi to be unravelled yet. The two are married, so far, so good, but where does the Prince come in? Surely he and she were conspiring about something. She evidently wanted you to marry him, and she may have thought then that I could be more devoted to her, who knows? Then, too, there were those paintings, the copies of old masters, all packed and addressed to Boris in New York. Peppi I trust, Lisa I pity, but your Muscovite I believe is a rascal. Won’t we have a lot to talk over? And think, too, dear, from now on I’ll be traveling every hour toward you.

A. D. TO POLLY

London,
May.

This is the last way station, dearest, on my journey to New York and you. I delight in these stages, the jump from Rome to Paris—Paris to London—and London to Home!

The crossing from Paris was wretched, a great gale blowing up the channel, but at least we were able to make it, which wasn’t the case every day this week. England hasn’t changed much since my last visit. I am always amused on landing to find everything exactly the same—the same weather, the same incomprehensible accent and manner of talking, the same points of view, the newspapers harping on the same subjects, the same items in the society columns—everything so conventional.

We were landed in the same old uncomfortable manner at Folkestone, while the same crowds of mannish-looking women with great buns of hair stood in line and stared, and men in knickerbockers and mackintoshes stood sturdily in the wet gale and smoked bull-dog pipes, just as pictures in “Punch” show they did a generation ago. Then in the same cold compartment carriages we came speeding across the same country, past the same roof tops, into the same Charing Cross station. And behold, the atmosphere was made up of the same smoke and fog I learned to know so well, and the lights burned dimly as of old.

The change from gay, well-lighted Paris, all en fête, to London, sombre,

melancholy, was just as great as ever, and just as complete. And how small great but little Rome seems beside these huge, up-to-date cities! I feel lost in them, and am terrified at the crossings of the streets, and, like an elderly country woman, I pass most of my time on the “Islands” in Piccadilly.

I have visited many of my former haunts, gone to the Embassy, seen many old friends, and feel quite jollied up. I even went to a tea yesterday, where some men and women stood around unintroduced, in the delightfully awkward way which Du Maurier, alas, will no longer draw. The evening found me dining at Prince’s Restaurant and later going on to the Palace Varieties, where again I saw the pretty circus rider, and although a certain person thought much of the performance, yet he thought a great deal more of—you!

This morning I walked out—the London haze was pearly gray and opalescent and a lozenge sun was in the sky, a beautiful day for London—and I went down to the foot of Curzon Street and through Lansdowne passage, and there, yes, there was my old friend the cock-eyed sweeper, standing by his little pile of dust. I gave him a shilling in my delight at seeing him again, and with his broom. Have you kept my broom, I wonder?

It is still cold in London, and I try to keep warm with a foolish little fire in a tiny grate. It is dismal enough, too, for candle light. The British are afraid of “over heating,” as they call it—which means really that they are careful of their coal. But then, one is “stoking up” all day long in this climate, a heavy breakfast, a heavier luncheon, the heaviest of dinners, with tea and toast and muffins in the afternoon, and a supper at night.

Last night I had a dream which, although there wasn’t anybody to tell it to before breakfast and so make it come true, I hope may be realized. The only one to confide in, for Gilet was out on business, was the fluffy-haired footman who wasn’t sufficiently sympathetic for me to commune with. But indeed I am not superstitious, and the dream was pleasant enough for me to think over to myself—because it was about you!

Although this letter may go by the same steamer that I sail on, yet I can’t help writing and sending you my love.

POLLY TO A. D.

En route,
May.

A. D., dearest, how exciting it must be for you about now, sighting from the steamer deck that low-lying Long Island shore, Sandy Hook, the channel, and beyond them, the beautiful bay. I can imagine your father going to meet you on the busy, snubnosed, important little tug,—but then, I think of so many things happening, for while we were camping and your letters stopped, “thinks” were all I had to live on.

We are flying at sixty miles an hour, nearer and nearer to you. After days of silence I found your two wonderful letters waiting for me when we got back to civilization. The clerk at the hotel said Aunt had given orders to hold them. I wonder if she did this on purpose, for surely they could have been sent in to us by a guide. The Prince was with me when I made my inquiries; I saw him trying to suppress a smile. But he does not like my ignoring him and he is getting a bit ugly. When I broke the news of Peppi’s marriage to Mona Lisa, both he and Aunt seemed disturbed, and Boris acted quite upset, and as if he had lost an ally. I left them talking it over. He certainly has Aunt hypnotized. My twin wagered he would try for her hand next.

Checkers and Sybil spend their time on the train shamelessly making love and telling me I must begin to inform Aunt about the wedding. I screwed up my courage an hour ago and began, “The Rector says he’ll perform the ceremony, Aunt—” but she broke in with “Whose ceremony?”

“Mine and A. D.’s,” I continued, trying to look determined.

“Humph!” she said, and closed her eyes, pretending to go to sleep.

When she awoke, I tackled her again. “I’ve engaged the church, Aunt,” quoth I.

“What for?” said she.

“For the thirty-first,” I replied blandly while Checkers snickered.

“What are you talking about?” and by now Aunt was truly cross.

“The same thing,” I sighed, “our wedding.”

She muttered something about that ceremony never coming off and departed for the observation car to join the Prince. But she looked worried.

Checkers egged me on to begin again when she re-appeared. “As I was saying, Aunt, when we were interrupted, everything’s all ready, you know. Checkers will give me away. Sybil is to be maid of honor—she’s to wear white lace and carry Lady Battersea roses—and the decorations are to be wine-red azaleas—”

“Not another word!” she snapped, and I drew a long breath and stopped for a few minutes to get ready for the next attack. After a pause, “The thirty-first’s the day, you know,” I observed casually. Aunt blinked.

“The wedding day,” piped up my brother. “Our Polly’s!”

“How about Boris?” she inquired. “You are a little fool not to become a princess.”

I ignored this remark and continued, “Ricci is going to sing and St. Laurent will be at the organ and—” I found I was addressing an empty chair, for my relative had stalked off once more.

The next opportunity another bolt was shot at her. “My wedding dress is ordered, and it’s a beauty! The veil will be four yards—”

“Porter!” shouted Aunt, and as that coffee-colored individual stopped short, she started him on a long explanation of the route ahead of us, while I withdrew, baffled and brooding, to re-read your letters. How am I going to bring my guardian around finally?

Later I began again, “I think the reception at the house after the ceremony should not be very large,” this apropos of nothing, “for by the thirty-first a good many people will have left town, though, of course they’d run up for a wedding like ours,—”

“Are you crazy?” she demanded. “We shan’t be home till the twenty-eighth, and you can’t get your invitations engraved in time, let alone sending them out.”

Checkers and Sybil drew near. “They’re all done and sent!” we chorused.

“I mailed part of them!” proclaimed my brother.

“I, too!” piped up Sybil.

“When was all this?” cried Aunt.

“The day we left New York, so you see, you really can’t do anything about it,” Checkers continued politely.

Aunt turned purple. “I don’t believe a word of it, and I shall not countenance it,” whereupon she stamped her foot. And that’s the situation now, dear.

A. D. TO POLLY

Washington,
May.

Behold me, dear, on my native soil, hungrily awaiting a love letter from you, even though I am a little ahead of my schedule. I didn’t cable, in order to surprise you, but nevertheless I hoped you might guess the steamer from my letters. Father was on hand to greet me but I was disappointed when I dashed up the gang plank not to see you on the wharf and later to learn from your butler at

the house you were still hundreds of miles away. Then I came on to Washington at once to report. All, everybody—customs-officers, collectors, bank-cashiers, down to the smallest clerk in the Department, when I told them the news, congratulated me heartily and added good wishes till I was as happy as I could possibly be without you.

As soon as I hear you have arrived I will take the train to New York and go to the Waldorf. Almost a year ago we began to love each other, though the world did not know, and we kept our secret to ourselves. Don't worry. Everything will be all right. Aunt will have to come round.

POLLY TO A. D.

En route,
May.

Dearest! Hurrah! You have arrived and we have just left Montreal on our way to New York. Apparently Aunt left word for our mail to be forwarded there, for when we got to the hotel, the clerk produced simply a bushel-basketful. Of course you know what they all were,—acceptances for the wedding! It was the last crushing blow. We left her alone with them in her room, heaps in her lap, piles scattered at her feet, and our vanquished relative sitting in their midst like Caius Marius on the ruins of Carthage. A. D., has she definitely succumbed, I wonder?—She remarked I was a stubborn little heathen.

A few minutes ago, just before we crossed the border, the strangest thing happened. Two officials came on board the train and began to go through it, car by car, asking the names of the passengers, staring into their faces, and making hasty rummages in their luggage. When they came near us, the Prince started violently, then sauntered over and sat down beside me without saying a word. His face was like chalk.

I inquired what the trouble was and if they were looking for anyone in particular. They said a foreigner had been discovered doing a very clever bit of rascality—stealing valuable old Masters from the museums in several large cities, and leaving such admirable imitations in their places that the theft hadn't been detected for some time, and no one could tell just how he had been operating. But certain letters had helped furnish clues, and they had reason to think the man was on the train.

Aunt called out, "All these people are in my party. We've been camping,"

and off started the official. As he moved away, he said to his assistant, “No, I don’t believe Kosloff is on this train.” It was my turn to look at the Prince. *Kosloff was the name on his letters!*

After the officials went out, I walked off astounded. Dear A. D., what *should* I have done? He is even worse than we thought, isn’t he?

TELEGRAM TO A. D.

Care of the Department of State,
Washington,
May.

We reach New York the 28th. Plan dinner for wedding party the night of the 30th. Invite ushers. Much love.

POLLY.

PRINCE BORIS TO POLLY

New York,
May.

The last days on the trip you speak little to me.

Yes I have played tricks and upset canoe but my love for you, that is excuse. Why do you refuse to see me? I can to you easily explain the pictures and the name Kosloff. If you intended to—what you call it?—throw me down, why have you and your Aunt so encourage me? I ask you that. Again I shall come to your door and you will grant me yet one conversation. Bah! I am not a fool!

A. D. TO POLLY

Washington,
May.

Your journal notes and letters, my beloved, are before me, and I have alternately boiled with rage at that Russian imposter, and grinned at the thought of your baffled relative. You did exactly right, your judgment was good and my faith in you complete. I am so glad you told me fully about all the suspicious circumstances regarding the Prince, *if* he is a prince. How abominable of him to lay even a finger on you. I should like to throttle him!

I called at the Russian Embassy and asked a few questions regarding the creature, of course saying nothing that could possibly drag you into the affair. The Ambassador was rather guarded, and said he knew very little about him. The Prince had been in Washington, he had not called at the Embassy, but it was known that he had dined more than once at the German Embassy. The Ambassador's attitude was curious and left me wondering if Boris might not be in the pay of some country other than Russia. But we shall see.

Something kept me from speaking about the counterfeit old Masters. And it was well, for on returning to the hotel, I found a letter from Peppi, anxiety in every line of it. Boris had taken some work to America to sell for him on commission—as copies, honestly, he assured Peppi, who believed him. But it was to be a secret, lest the Prince be known to have disgraced his noble blood by descending to trade. Now our artist is plainly worried and wants to be assured there is nothing underhanded being done. Mona Lisa has evidently revealed something, for she was intimate enough with Boris and clever enough to see he was up to some rascality. I wrote our poor friend to have no further dealings with the Russian; that was all I felt I could do. Nice friends we have had!

Now you have told me your troubles, you have relieved your mind and heart of all their anxieties, I hope. You can tell me anything in the world, and find me absolutely true, for I love you with every drop of blood in my body, and I would stake my soul on you.

Postscript: Have received your telegram. I will leave for New York tomorrow, the thirtieth. Have sent invitations to ushers. We shall meet at your house for dinner, and then at noon the next day your life will be in my own safe keeping.

POLLY MAKES A LAST ENTRY IN HER JOURNAL

Early morning, May 31st.

There are only a few hours left before A. D. and I shall be married but I

won’t try to write a word about how wonderfully happy I am, for there is so much to put down! Something most extraordinary happened. The Prince has been bothering me since we reached New York, by calling at the door and sending in the most imperative messages. But I refused flatly to see him, though Aunt maintained that he would explain everything to all of us in a perfectly satisfactory manner. Poor Aunt, she’s a dear, silly, old thing. I believe she’s actually been in love with him all the time herself.

But yesterday, the thirtieth, Boris got the better of me. The butler announced that Sister Beatrice, a nun whom I had known in Rome, wished to see me. So naturally I told him to admit her, and in walked a black-robed figure. Imagine my surprise and anger when under the veil I saw the blue eyes of the Prince. He looked so like a naughty boy that before I knew it, I laughed.

All of a sudden he became intensely serious and said that he had really come to take me away, that he worshiped me, that he knew deep down I loved him, too, that we must take the steamer that evening—the Carpathia—he had reservations engaged—and that we could be married on the boat, and he had everything arranged.

I showed him at once that he had made a mistake and ordered him to go. An ugly vindictive look came over his face and then I realized how desperate he was. He asked me if I thought he was such a fool as to leave me in possession of certain information about himself; moreover he declared he had to have money, that he was at the end of his rope. I replied that I was sorry but could not help him again, that I might have given him over to the officials on the train. Then he said sneeringly I had better go with him, if I put a value on—life, for instance, that he, a Russian, would stop at nothing. I rang the bell and when the butler appeared, Boris saw that he had failed, and said, “You will regret this hour,” and went out. Aunt met him in the hall and after some whispered conversation, he departed. Later she left the house. Nor did she come back the entire evening. My exasperating relative! She had not planned to be at our dinner party, so I wasn’t alarmed, though anything but jolly. Boris’s uncanny threat was echoing in my ear amid all the joyousness and excitement and flowers, ringing of bells and arrival of telegrams of congratulation. When everybody had gone except A. D. and it was very late—we were sitting together in the parlor near the front door,—I heard footsteps, and thinking it must be Aunt returning, I peered out. There was a dark figure that darted hastily up the front steps, apparently left a package and ran swiftly down the street and out of sight. A premonition told me something was wrong and that we were in danger. A. D. dashed out to investigate.

“What’s this?” he said, picking up a box in the vestibule. Inside was a ticking noise like an alarm clock.

“Maybe something the Prince sent,” I gasped. “He threatened to do something desperate.”

“Run!” A. D. shouted and began to strip off the wrappings. Quick as a flash he rushed into the house, out into the pantry, and dropped the package into a pail of water. “A bomb—I’ve fixed it,” he told me, “and it’s as harmless now as a plain box of gunpowder. But it was a close call, the thing was set for one o’clock.” Just as we looked at each other, the hall clock chimed once. A. D. caught me in his arms. I laughed hysterically, and he asked, “Is it to be shown with the other wedding gifts?”

We both went rather shakily into the parlor, but at that very moment, Checkers came in, his face quite pale and sober. “Look what I found in my room!” he said. It was a note from Aunt, saying that Boris and she were going to elope, that she had always loved him and knew they would be happy. “Scandalous!” he declared, “and what are we going to do about it?”

“He’s a worse scoundrel even than I thought,” said A. D.

“Checkers, it’s up to you to stop her. Take a taxicab to the steamship dock as quick as you can get there. Carpathia!” I shouted.

Checkers hurried out of the house while A. D. stayed on to comfort me and talk over the next step we could take in case Checkers was too late, and what people would say about the whole thing. At two o’clock there was no word, and calling up the dock by telephone, we found that the Carpathia had sailed at exactly one-thirty. Then I made A. D. go, and went sorrowfully up to bed, but not to sleep, hoping that nothing had happened to my twin.

Nor did he come back for hours. Finally, when it was almost daylight, there was a tap at my door and Checkers tiptoed in and began, “I found Aunt but she wouldn’t listen to me when I got to the dock. No go! She wouldn’t budge and Boris was pouring out a torrent of Russian that sounded to me like a bunch of fire crackers. The steamer sailed and I stayed on board, still arguing. Finally I told Boris I’d hand him over to the captain on any one of half a dozen charges that would put him behind the bars till he was ninety. He gave me an ugly look and slunk off,—I don’t know where for we didn’t see him again. Fortunately they had not succeeded in getting a clergyman to marry them. At last Aunt consented to return with me on the pilot boat on condition that neither of us would ever mention Boris’s name to her again.”

“Where is she now?” I asked.

“Gone into her room and shut the door. Poor defiant old dame. Polly, she’s ashamed of herself!” And Checkers went off to bed to make up his lost sleep.

I shall try to forget the Prince too if I can, but he’s a strange, fascinating and wicked person. Somehow I feel our paths will touch again some day, and I have

deep down in my heart a pagan yearning to show him up in his real colors.

But that’s the end of it for now. A. D. will be with me soon. We’ll forget our troubles and be happy. Let the Prince go hang, for we love each other.

A. D. TO POLLY

An hour before the wedding.

Polly my darling, just a line of love. What a terrible night! Have heard from Checkers. Thank heaven your Aunt returned. I shall not see you now until you come up the aisle towards me, and I shall never go away from you again. I am all excitement at the thought of the great happiness that is to be mine today. Oh, my dearest, you have become such a part of my life that I feel like rushing to your house for just one more glimpse of you. From now on, I shall cherish you and protect you. Until noon and then....

CONCLUSION

The journal and letters end abruptly here. Were they married? In all probability, Checkers gave Polly away, with the lovely blackhaired Sybil as maid of honor, while Aunt, subdued and chagrined, watched them submissively from her front pew. But yet I should like to hear about it from the little lady of the air raid of that Good Friday night, and I should like to be able to give her love letters back to her.

If the Red Cross badge found in the bag points a correct surmise A. D. must have left the diplomatic service as he intended, and finally entered the Red Cross during the war. The following clipping allows another assumption which is, that lively Polly followed the bent that allowed her to discover the author of the anonymous letter in Rome, Carlo's gardener's daughter, as well as to detect the Prince in his forgeries and thefts, and to develop during the war, into a very clever secret service agent.

This was the clipping from an American paper also found in the bag. "It has been said that in our land we do not use women spies as much as they do in some other countries, but we cannot stop them if they wish to work along this dangerous line, and we can only admire them for what they accomplish. A case has just come to our attention of a beautiful American woman trapping in Paris a clever and long-sought-for spy.

"He was a Russian Prince, well-known in diplomatic circles, though after his father's death, his German mother returned to her native land to bring up her boy and instil German sympathies in him. For a number of years he was obscurely connected with the Turkish Government.

"During the War this popular bachelor Prince had an apartment in Paris. He was supposed to be just over the age limit for the army, so he interested himself and worked for the betterment of the Russian prisoners, being privileged therefore to send material across the border into Germany. No one suspected him, and in the evenings he gave gay little suppers in his quarters, which were well attended and much enjoyed.

"Women of all kinds accepted his hospitality, often bringing their husbands or lovers, generally just back from the front. They gathered in his rooms like bees about a honey-pot and much war news was exchanged or discussed. For some time a leak in high circles was suspected, but it took a pretty American woman, who, it seems, had had earlier reasons to distrust him, to get a

dictagraph installed in his rooms. Soon it was discovered that when indiscreet remarks were dropped in his salon, the burden of them was mysteriously conveyed into Germany through packages of food to Russian prisoners. She surmised this first; later it was proved. The Prince was lunching at a restaurant with the American lady when he was arrested."

So the Polly whom I helped dress at the hotel and who gave me the bag must surely be Polly of the letters but I did not place her in the dark during the air raid although I, too, just a few days before the fatal Good Friday, had been lunching at the same hostelry the very hour the Prince was arrested. Suddenly there was a complete silence in the room. I looked up. All heads were turned toward the table where a blue-eyed man of Slavic type sat facing a fashionably dressed little blonde. The excitement was intense; the scene, dramatic, as if they were holding their pose for a tableau. He still sat there, the gendarmes at his side, his expression unchanging, looking intently at the woman opposite, while she returned his gaze not a whit less steadily. Neither spoke. Suddenly he leaped to his feet and might have gotten away had she not been too quick for him, and had flung herself in front of him. He threw her off roughly but it was too late. The gendarmes slipped on the handcuffs, and the woman followed them out, her lips white with pain and her right arm hanging helplessly by her side.

Then the dining room doors shut behind them and the room buzzed as if invaded by a swarm of flies. I inquired of the head waiter what it was all about, and he answered excitedly, "They have arrested a Russian Prince! The police think he is a spy—but surely there is some mistake." Then he added, "Why, the Prince has been here on and off for years—we know him well!"

"Who is the lady with him?" I inquired.

"I do not know," he answered. "They say she is an American, but she has never been at the restaurant before."

"Is this the first thing of its kind that ever happened here?"

"No, once a few months ago we had an arrest—but this time the police have surely made a mistake." Shrugging his shoulders, he continued, "Our police are sometimes stupid. We shall see the Prince here again in a few days, you may be sure."

But Boris never came back. After reading the letters and surmising who he was, I became greatly interested and tried to trace him through the interminable processes of the law. Everywhere I was baffled by blank stares, and "Pardon, madame," or "We do not recollect this case, madame." Perhaps he was swiftly and secretly executed. Who knows? Surely he was Polly's suitor in the Roman days of years ago. How they renewed their friendship, I cannot surmise. Possibly the little blonde lady may be in hiding for military reasons; perhaps our last

meeting was the hour of her death. But I am left a reluctant legatee of her lover's letters and those written by her gay young self.

ISABEL ANDERSON.

THE LADY FOUND

Dear Friend of Good Friday Night,

Can this book which is now being advertised really be made of extracts from letters that were in my black bag, and that I thrust into the hands of a certain kind person on the night when the German bombing planes were making our hotel a place of peril? I verily believe they are, and shall be so happy to have them again. I will call at the publishers.

I tried without success to find you in the cellar where I crouched with many others that dreadful Good Friday night when the building was struck. The next morning I took an early train for Bordeaux to embark for America, so I never saw any of the advertisements which the book notices say that you inserted in the Paris papers.

When the war was ended, my husband, A. D. of the letters, went to Russia with the American Red Cross, but alas! he has been thrown into prison—perhaps the work of the Prince. The latter was released in Paris through some pressure brought to bear by his influential friends. My husband saw him in Moscow where Boris is at present in high standing with the Soviet authorities. Our government is only just now making an effort to have its citizens released, and I am starting in a few days for Europe, hoping to meet A. D. at the frontier.

I hesitate about asking you to withdraw the book from publication at this late date. Ordinarily I should feel ashamed to have correspondence so personal go before the world, even anonymously. But under these circumstances I feel differently. I should like to see the Prince shown up in his true light. I feel that the American people ought to be warned against their sense of indifference and false security, and more and more publicity given to the true condition of affairs, namely, that their countrymen do not receive the protection of their own government, in Russia, in Mexico, and in other countries, where *de facto* administrations can throw any of their fellow citizens into prison and keep them there months and years with impunity.

Therefore you have my permission to publish the letters, and I sign myself again, as you have been used to seeing me,

POLLY THE PAGAN.

THE END

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