

## PERSONAL LETTERS

October 1, 1935

Dear Esther,

I feel as though I were writing to a stranger. It has been so long since I last saw and heard from you that it would not surprise me in the least to find that you were an old married woman with five or six children, or the busy executive of some large concern. Or perhaps you're still going to school. You must be nearly ready to graduate. It seems only yesterday that we marched across the stage to receive our high school diplomas. Remember how my shoes squeaked? I never walked so far in my life, or so it seemed. But they were happy days.

Since those far-off days I've done a number of things. I went to school a semester, clerked in one of the department stores here, worked for dad, and kept house. I've also managed to work in a few good times. This month I started back to school. My brain had grown so rusty that it fairly creaked. To use an old expression, I've been busier than a cranberry merchant. I am working in the registrar's office for my tuition, attending classes, studying, and having those good times I spoke of.

You would never recognize the family. Joe's a sophomore in high school and has dates. I often wonder if I acted as sophisticated and blase as she seems to be. Junior's nearly ready for junior high, and Betty Jane has been in school almost three years. Johnny entered this fall. Mother cried a little when he started. She said that her last baby was gone. Daddy's hair is growing a trifle gray around the edges, and mother gets plumper every day. Grandmother can still keep up with the youngest of us.

Now that I've told you all about us I think it's time I heard all about you. Does Rose still live in Albany, and is your mother as lovely-looking as she always was? Does Doctor

still poke around people's mouths? And most of all, what are you doing? Did you ever reach the much wanted five feet, two inches? I'm waiting to hear.

Remember me to all.

With love,

Mary Anne.

September 30, 1953.

Dear Howard,

The postmark on your letter was a surprise to all of us, even the postman. It certainly was some jump from Paris to Cairo! I would imagine that the sudden change from the gay night life of Baton Rouge to the stygian darkness of Pharaoh's tomb might overstrain your heart. You must make these changes a little more gradual, my boy. You should also think of Julie, whose face turned ashen upon learning that you were in Egypt. I guess she thinks it is a country of blood-thirsty Mohammedans who would slice off your ears at the slightest provocation. Of course it isn't—is it?

We were sorry to hear of your experience with the camel, but I guess walking isn't so bad if one wears high boots for protection against snakes and sand flees. I suppose you are smoking Old Golds now.

Tell me, have you seen the pyramids yet? If you haven't, would you have your picture taken beside one? Julie wants it to show her friends—something like: I came, I saw, I conquered.

Byron wants you to write more often as he is saving the stamps. Every envelope is torn to shreds the moment it arrives. If your life is threatened at any time, or you find yourself in a jam, just wire me and I'll take the first boat over. In the meantime, I don't forsake Julie for some attractive Egyptian's daughter, and don't ride too many camels.

Your friend,

Bob.