

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

August 1, 1939

Dearest Frank,

Guess what happened. You addressed your letter of the 28th to 219 N. Michigan St. which happens to be a parking lot, and since Collie is far from popular around these parts the U.S. Government boys were unable to locate me, and I didn't get the letter till Tuesday, today. According to the outside of the envelope they tried some boy number & then decided to try the Employment Service, so here is your answer. I hope not as abrupt a one as that one that I rushed off this A.M.

Starting from the beginning. In the second paragraph you said something and then decided to skip it, making me very curious, and I don't want to skip it. You speak of your "first anticipated date with me" and I don't understand.

I insist you explain. I shall demand an explanation when you get here unless I get one before.

Just as you say you approve of my keeping our happy secrets under our hats, except for some that mother gets in on, so I approve of your opinion on not rushing into an official engagement. We must be careful not to jump into things too fast. So you left the cat out of the bag?

Well, I'm glad. So far I think I'll start collecting more cats to be left out of bags.

Don't you dare mention selling the car, darling; that car has seen you, and will see us; through many a rainy day that ever money won't be able to make bright. And besides we may need to sell it a whole lot worse at a later date than now. We'll always have to keep four eyes open for emergencies. As you say, if the money hadn't been in the travels and cars, it probably would have been gone with the banks. So don't think of selling the car unless it becomes necessary.

(After all, sweet, we may want to take junior over to Belle Island to see the monkeys some day and it's a long way without a car.)

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Mishawaka, Indiana

As for your insurance situation. Let's let that wait till you get here. You seem to be well protected. I also consider it a wonderful asset, especially while one is young, but you'd never guess it for as much attention as I've paid to insurance.

It seems so funny to be writing about the things that we have recently instead of saying them. Do you find it harder or easier to write than to say it in person? I, frankly, find it a million times harder. I mean planning + figuring the way we've been doing.

I'm planning on leaving the office at 5 on Friday, Aug. 5, not to return till 8 am August 14. By the ^{time} Friday comes, they'll probably be tickled to see me leave. I'm practically worthless already from sheer anticipation of next week, which looks awfully big, bright, and sunny to me in spite of

the fact that the calendar says unsettled for every day of that week, but I don't believe the thing anyhow.

What's more, in pulling out my pen to write this letter, I dropped my purse mirror and smashed it to "smithereens". So we couldn't look for the bad luck anytime now, provided we were superstitious.

So, hoping to see you soon, I'd better turn in
now

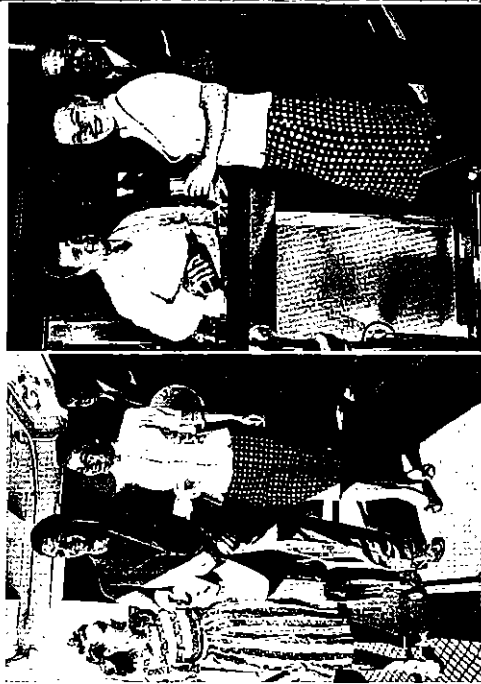
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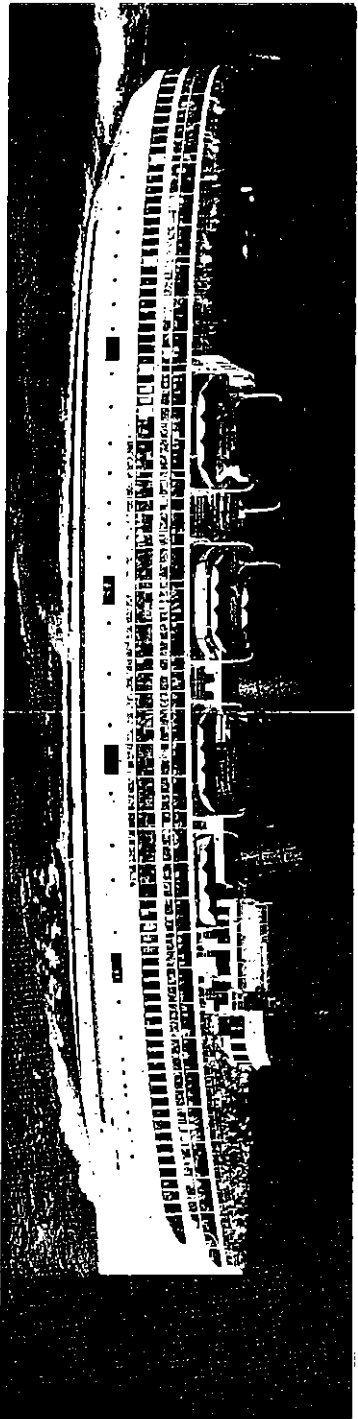
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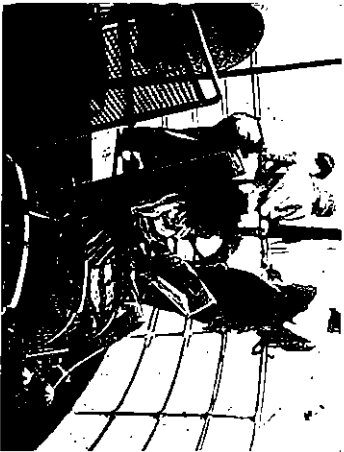
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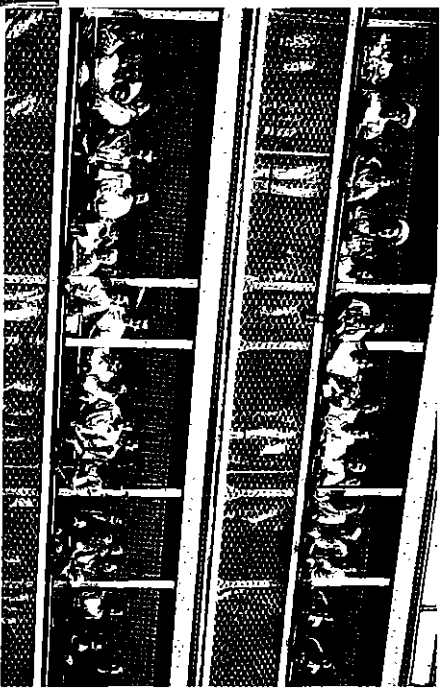
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Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana yet

August 15, 1939.

Dearest Hank,

Three peeks you may have of the sweetest baby in the world (so far). Aren't these pictures of Marty just precious? I couldn't wait to show them to you; but you must send them right back because hardly anybody around here has seen them yet. They were taken just a week or two before we visited there in April but they weren't developed yet then.

Mother got home at 9:30 Sunday night with a sprained ankle!! She got it just before she boarded the train so she didn't let Mild + Jimmy know about it but got on anyhow. She only had to transfer once & then only a few feet between trains & Dad was there to help her off the train at "South Bend" she didn't see any point in letting the "kids" in on it. She still can't walk on it and it will probably be the rest of the week

before she'll be able to use it at all. Such luck as she does have! Otherwise I guess she had a lovely trip from what we here about it.

He finally got the car seat covers put in.

They are an asset to the chariot, without a doubt.

Larry + Ray are right outside the house here with Fat. They're sitting out on the lawn chewing the rag. A while ago I went out and told Larry to try to keep the plans rolling for the Detroit trip and he said "Indeed I shall. In fact I'll talk to Fritz about it tomorrow again." So I'll keep you posted as the plans materialize. In 100% for it.

Guess what. I bought a beautiful set of knives:

7 of them. Everything from butcher knives on down to paring knives — lovely stainless steel ones with natural wood handles, etc. A \$3.25 set + paid \$1.60 for them.

Just couldn't resist them. But here's the jing. Imagine

this. I bought them from my former Bendix employee George Weber! Believe it or not, his present occupation is a selling job. Selling knives, & he seems to be doing remarkably well at it. He was in the office today + practically

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every girl there bought a set. They really are too nice to resist. Remind me to show them to you.

So much for the relatives + friends, + back to you + me. It looks like you + Elvira are having a pretty hard time getting together. Whenever Milt is home you are gone + whenever you are there then Milt has to be away. However you will probably have seen them again by the time you get this.

Honey there is a picture that you have been looking at wrong. You say you practically forced me to go out those nights, my dear, if I hadn't had you to fall back on in the evenings I couldn't have stood it for a day. I needed that getting away in the evenings, that complete change from the day's work, that complete relaxation, that fun, and gaiety which I had, thanks to you. And you are right as two bugs in a rug about doing our yad-ing about now while

we can, I thoroughly agree with you.

From here on you will have to excuse any greasy fingerprints you find on these sheets, on account of I got hungry. Result: Nice crisp crackers, deep yellow cheese, and a dark blue glass full of ice cold milk, here on the stand beside me. Crunch, crunch, and is it good. By the way, I like to eat crackers in bed. How about you.

12 o'clock, and I'd better get back to sensible writing. Thanks loads for the compass on my cooking. I can't imagine your getting by without indigestion, but maybe you are holding out on me, or maybe I was letting you by easy. No, I like to cook for you; and it will be a lot more fun yet cooking in smaller quantities. There were 10 of us Sunday. As for a garden I think it would be grand to have a garden, just a small one to start with, & we could both work it. I've worked in gardens lots of times & even in fields. It would be a great help and would add a delightful touch to Home Sweet Home. However we can't have everything; at least not to start out.

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As for our vacation, I'm enclosing a folder that some salesman gave me at the office today. I've been hearing about this excursion from here, there & everywhere and I think it would be a bite of heaven to be able to make it with you. They say the trip is wonderful & that it is 4 hours well spent at 75¢ a ticket. I think it would be fun, but that's for you to think over. Regarding a trip, I really had no thoughts on that matter at all. Except maybe for Frankfurt, and since Mom was just there I don't know about that. Also Milke has been ill for about two weeks slight, but annoying. A sort of flu that is going all over the city, and nobody seems to be able to do anything about it.

Surely you know by now that traveling, far or near, rates very high with me, but I have no suggestions regarding it now. Let me hear yours. I really can't think of any suggestions for the week now. Do you have any? All I know is that I'll be free

here at home and I want to really fill up the week & enjoy it as a good healthy vacation, and be with you as much as possible! In fact I could have a perfect vacation just "laying on the lawn in the back yard from Sat. thru the week till Tuesday, if you would be there too. And that's so just because I hate you so much. Believe it or not.

Now, as you said, "The hour is getting later every minute" (It's 12:35!) I really should hit the hay. I've been up since 6:10. Went to 7 o'clock Mass. I hope you didn't forget the Holy Day. But then, I know you didn't, so I'm not worrying.

Don't forget to send ~~my~~ ^{the} pictures back, as they are Mom's & I'll get shot if I lose them for her. You know Grandmothers.

I really must say goodbye now & here's a kiss for you - X.

Most lovingly

Colette.

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

August 17, 1939

Dear Hankard,

Just a few words in the hopes that you will get this on Saturday.

Did you know about this Zeiger-Burley wedding? Isn't Mildred some relative of yours? And how come the Protestant wedding? The last question I'm not really asking an answer on.

Also did you know that Jack Dunlap is in Detroit? I rode home on the street car last night with Martha Alberger & she was telling me about it. I guess he has been there only a short time and doesn't seem to know anyone there at all. She says he is living there now with his father, Frank Dunlap, in his very beautiful apartment at 9373 E. Jefferson. I think she said it was on the Grand River. She said it was just a block or two east (or west?) of the bridge to Belle Isle. You ought to look him up sometime. He'd probably be tickled to death to hear from a home-towner. Martha says the phone ^{number} is under Frank Dunlap. And by the way, he might be a good prospect for a passenger on some of your trips home, in case you'd be interested in one.

Did you know Wayne Good? He married

Kathleen Klein just about 2 months ago. Before he married he lived with his mother on the corner of 4th & Harrison, just one block south of us, that's the only way I know the Gooda. But, this afternoon his mother (here on Harrison) dropped dead very suddenly. It was a big shock to the neighborhood, although they weren't very well known here in the neighborhood because they have only been here about a year.

I went on a shopping spree last night to get some fall clothes, so I have to go back on my beans diet. Today was Dollar Day in South Bend, so I made use of their bargains last night to get first choice.

I have another suggestion for our vacation. Interested? Here goes. Yesterday Noomi & I were talking about the House of David and she said she had never been there either. Well, Jim (her husband) comes home for his vacation on August 24th thru Labor Day. And we thought it would be fun to make up a car load or even two and perhaps on Sat. Sun. or Monday we could go up for the afternoon & then land there in the evening; really make a day of it. I think that at an amusement park like that the more the merrier. What do you think? Darling, I do hope you won't hesitate for a minute

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to speak up with your ayes + no's. Because I wouldn't mention them if I didn't think you would. And what's more I want to hear of any suggestions you have, cause I might like yours better than mine. So give them to me unbiased.

It's high time now that I get to bed. I hope I'll have a letter waiting for me at the office tomorrow. (Just as though I didn't hope that every night.) The only bad thing is that I'm going field visiting in the morning and I don't hope to get to the office before 11 or so.

The orchestra ^{from Lombardo's} on the radio just started playing "You meet the Nicest People in Your Dreams". I'm going to rush to bed. Toodle oo.

With all my love
Collie.

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Monday, 21st

Dearest Frank in all the world,

You called it a blue Monday. I haven't seen a blues one in a long time. It is dark & dreary, with a very cold wind, just like fall. However you were right as two rabbits (and there was no conceit involved at all) when you said you hoped the letter would take off a tinge of the blue in blue Monday. So it did, and a big tinge too.

Suppose I should have started out by apologizing for the business stationery, but my personal stationery is at home, and besides I don't think this is the first time, and I doubt if it will be the last time that I do it. So I guess that makes it an apology without a firm purpose of amendment. Eh what?

You know you were just three jumps ahead of me when we talked about the lake cruise & the trip to the House of David. I was just too dense to think of putting them both on for the same day, and I had written that second letter suggesting the House of David party before I got yours. So — now what? should we make it one day or two.

Your idea of a picnic is a "swell" one. I thought of that too, but I guess didn't mention it. Speaking of picnics, I've some good news for you. —

As you probably know, the Player's Club picnic was planned for Aug. 27th. But, last week the committee met at Joe's (B.) & changed the date to September 10th, just so you would be able to come. Isn't that grand? So maybe you ought to save that Sunday, don'tcha think so? It looks like you & I are going to have to get a date book & line up the time between Sept. 1 and 12th. I found out about the change of date last Saturday, and was just dying to write you about it.

My dear, I'm dreadfully ashamed of myself. You asked me for my opinion on the purchasing of your new tires and I failed you!!! And, believe it or not, I had a suggestion and meant to write it but didn't. As my father would say, I'm "a fine oil can". Here was my suggestion (believe it or not); that, if possible, why not plank down the money, or as much as possible of it, and do away with the worry of stringing along with payments. You need them, so get them before something happens that might put you in a worse boat than before. The only thing is I'm beginning to think you are a mind reader. Because I know I forgot to put that in my last letter; and then you wrote that you did just that. Then too, I'm no authority on tires but we've had cars & trucks in the family long enough to have heard a lot about them, and \$18 as you say, does sound like a bargain.

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I know you will be relieved that that purchase is over with and you are far better off in the long run.

I was just interrupted by a call that has left me quivering. You can probably tell that by the writing of these last three lines. Mom called to tell me that Uncle Eugene, as we call him, (he is Jim Shamo's uncle, his mother's brother & lives with her. Eugene Roshleder, you probably know him) anyhow last night about 6:30 Marion & Bill Schalliol, went over to Mother Shamo's, and after letting themselves in, found the house "gassed" and Uncle Eugene dead. Suicide. The doctor said he had been dead 2 hours already. He waited till Mother Shamo went away Sunday afternoon, & Fred Mulcahy, their roomer, was out when it happened. They say he has been ailing for some time, & I suppose his dependence on Mother Shamo probably worried him somewhat. He was always a very quiet, retiring person, almost a hermit as far as non-members of the family were concerned. It will be a terrible thing for Mrs. Shamo to take, & Jim & Millie and the others all loved him so much too. It was indeed a shock.

Then as though that wasn't enough of a tragedy, Mr. Trace, my department head & immediate boss, rushed home this noon to find that his

nine month old baby had been hurt while playing in her play-pen late this morning (Monday) and has been in a coma and having convulsions ever since. (it is now a quarter of four) The doctors & hospital people cant seem to define the trouble but it is evidently an injury of some sort to the lower part of the brain, and they say her eyes cant be focused and that she is in a pitiful condition. They are making tests still, but have no definite info yet. Of all tough lucks!! You know when I started this I said that I had not seen a blues Monday in a long time and it seems like that is true for more than one person around here. As for the weather its still dark & dreary and it rained today, in fact it has done everything but snow & shine.

So I got yipped on my knives. The very box had an embossed in color price marked on it of \$3.25. Did yours have 7 knives in it? If yours is the same set maybe one or the other of us will have an opportunity to get rid of a set, as a shower gift or something. You see if we got rid of a set then we couldn't have any duels, and I don't want any duels. Otherwise well both keep them and then I'll be sure to buy one set till the other is used up. That's the system, not?

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Darling, I shall report to work in five minutes
as maid at 16213 Griggs, Detroit, Michigan. I
refuse to furnish references, and insist on doing
as I please. I won't have a boss and I'll make
your bed only when I feel like it.

(Sheer nonsense)

I've heaps more to talk about, and
more of your letters to answer, but it's past
5 and my ride is waiting I'll continue
tomorrow.

So long
with love
Collie.

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August 23rd.

Dearest Frank,

I promised to write last night, yes. But I have a good enough excuse for not doing so. Here's my secret, too. I've been playing golf for the last week and a half, and last night I played from 6 till a little after 8. I planned on writing after that but one certain man on the golf course took care of that for me by driving his golf ball into the back of my right shoulder on a good 200 drive, at least. It didn't hurt me too much though because I was able to play 4 holes after it happened. However it was too sore to write till now. I said I'd been playing golf; I really mean that I've been playing at it, or trying to play it. I didn't tell you before because I didn't know whether I would be able to do any good at it, or like it as much as I have always thought I would. However, while I do love it, I'll never turn into a golf fanatic so don't worry, I'll still cook breakfast. What's more I can't afford to be a golf fiend. Another sport I love but haven't broken down for as yet, is riding. Love horses, always have. Ever since we used to ride Uncle Leo's pony, years ago. Can't you just see me bouncing atop a Shetland Ah me. Don't laugh too hard.

How are you and Hortense getting along up there by now? Since she doesn't have the baby to care for anymore, nor to cook for, I think you ought to take advantage of your landlord's absence, stay at home, with a maid to cook for you.

Speaking of cooking, do you know that I had completely forgotten that we owned a menu-master until you mentioned it in your letter? No, it doesn't belong to me, it's Mom's thing, so I could have used it, she never does. But I never gave it a thought, and if there is anything I don't do well it's plan a meal; I simply never can think up things to serve. Every now & then it's not so bad, but when it's three meals a day it's hard to think of different dishes. That's where you come in at. It wouldn't only be a good idea to line up the dishes we like, it would be almost necessary for you to. As for me, I like just about everything except "egg plant" and "liverwurst", and canned berries. Have you ever heard of such a concoction? And (I almost forgot) egg foo young. However, I have a lot to learn about your likes & dislikes in the food & culinary line. So won't you start advising me at once?

You certainly were right when you said it was hard to write letters (personal ones) at the office. I started this one this morning shortly after I got home. Wrote the first page and didn't get back to it till after lunch around 1. Then I got busy here again.

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till now and it's three o'clock.

You say the "Wizard of Oz" is starting in Detroit on Thursday. We're not too far behind the big city then because it starts on Saturday in South Bend. It should be very good. I want to see it.

The kind, how would you like to make our trip to the "House of David" a little more? There are two very nice people who would just love to go along. Thelma Powell, a pretty young lady from the office here, and Charles Wendel (no, not Jewish), he is one of Naomi's brothers. I know you'll like them both. I'm anxious to have you know Jim too. He is very much like Jim Shamo, and a perfect nut. Naomi suggests we all go in one car, and says we should go in their car. They have a big '39 Pontiac. Another thing though; if we do plan on this "party" the only days we would all be able to go (and then I'm not sure about you) are Sunday and Monday (Labor Day) Sunday being the best day. Now how about you? After all you were the original instigator of the idea of going to the House of David and I've carried it all to High Heaven and you haven't been given any consideration in the matter. I ought to be shot. You might have had all kinds of plans for that week-end. So don't hesitate to object to any or all that I've said on the matter.

I mentioned Jim Shamo on the other side. He was home yesterday, this morning and late Monday night. He came for Uncle Eugene's fun . . . Believe it or not I didn't get to see him or have one word with him. He always came down to the house during the day when I was in there. I feel terrible that I didn't get to see him. But again that's my luck. Did I ever tell you that they had moved into a home? Their new address is: Aspen Street, . . . Heights, Frankfort, Ky.

Yes, from no pack on my feet. It took just one week to go away. Just so she doesn't pull your stunt of spraining it again in another week.

Here's a cute cartoon if you don't mind getting it second-handed. Jim just sent it to Naomi. It seems like I've mentioned Naomi an awful lot in this letter, I hope you don't mind.

And now I simply must get some work in. Take it easy, and rest the days, cause I'm getting awfully lonesome in spite of managing to keep busy. Bye now

With
all

my
love

Collie

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

Aug. 31, day before pay day.

Dearest Mr. Hoerning!!!

I'm a much better mood today but I'm so dreadfully full of reproaches for myself for not having decently answered any of your beautiful letters. However, I've filed everything in the round file above my shoulders and will start in on them tomorrow night. Since there is so much to catch up on, and I know I can't cover them all now, I'm not going to start on any of the points. After failing to keep up my correspondence all week, you are undoubtedly wondering about me, and probably will punish me by not being at all generous with your letters in return. Please don't ever, darling, on account of that, or these letters have been my bread & butter to live on, and my whole strength to keep going on. Frankly, this week has been like double toothpicks, and if it keeps up, I'll have to work Saturday morning, otherwise I'm going to throw up my hands at 3 P.M. Friday and forget that I have ever heard of an I.S.F.S. till the 12th.

It was so wonderful to find a letter at home last night on top of the one at the office in the morning. In the lobby room

I feel that it's just a wonderful world.
and I simply can't wait till tomorrow
night.

You know that I have practically
had to force myself to get nerve enough
to write you again after that "awful"
three cents worth of blues that I wrote
Sunday night. Could I have recalled that
letter from the mailman, I'm certain I would
have done so. Every now & then Mom has
to say to Jim or Dad or somebody at home:
"She's alright; it's just love". Is that what
it does to you? Makes you crazy like me?
I honestly feel as tho' I haven't done a sane
sensible thing in three weeks, and I know
I haven't written a sane, sensible thing in that
time. But I'll get over it.

At any rate I must stop this
non-sensical rambling. I just simply
can't write anything (as you've noticed) so I'm
saving it all up till I see you. That
will be around 10 Friday night, not?

I'll expect you when you get there. So take
it easy and if you don't make it by 10 you
know I'll wait.

So Long, Honey, I must get to work, again.

Most lovingly,

Colette