

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

January 17, 1940

Darling,

Being plenty tired tonight I'm going to make this brief. I got your letter today, and to take up the things in it first, may I say that I was terribly sorry to hear that you had such a hard trip back. And to think that you should consider me worth such a sacrifice as to risk such a trip home and back in such weather. I don't think I appreciate you nearly enough. But, darling, it's only because I do love you so much and I just go on being happy about the whole thing and just seem to take everything and you for granted. But someday I'll start showing you how much I appreciate you and everything you've done to make me so happy. Just wait.

Just as you say, dear, I think there was an awfully lot of satisfaction in having had that brief chat with Dad Sunday. I knew that for the past several weeks you have felt a bit uncomfortable about the whole thing, and I think that that relieved the situation.

So Monday was a hectic day. Isn't that always the case after a hectic night, and personally I would consider that ride Sunday night a hectic night. However on earth you managed to hold up thru that quiz Monday night is beyond me. You'd better watch out or it'll get you down.

Which reminds of one of the main things I wanted to tell you. Did you know that Kay was very sick? Doctor called it a nervous breakdown. This morning I rode to work with Margaret Guy and she was telling me how strange it all came about. It seems that it happened Sunday on the way home from church. And strange as this sounds, it started with a paralysis of the right side of her face & her throat. She couldn't swallow and she couldn't get her breath. Then she started to shake until her folks were frantic practically. They called the doctor immediately and he gave her a hypo and later some dope before she would ever let herself go to sleep because she was afraid she wouldn't wake up.

Kay worries dreadfully over her job & the work that doesn't get done; and they work her to death.

Margaret & Jean Kay and everybody said they weren't a bit surprised when doctor said it was a nervous breakdown. She's due to stay down a good week or two.

Now rather than start another page I'd best say so long. Lovingly yours
me.

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

12 Midnight
January 19th 20th

Dearest Hank,

Having spent my time from 7 to 11 tonight with mimeographing 600 bulletins and 600 copies of a 9-page financial report, I'm getting a late start on my letter writing. But by getting this written tonight I can get it to you for Monday, so here goes.

First of all - from now on instead of going to Florida when it gets cold I'll just come Detroit. Your thermometers registering 7° above would certainly be warm weather in comparison to our 15° below yesterday (and staying that way practically all day) and our 13° below today till the middle of the morning, when it moved up to 8° below and to zero in the afternoon. That sounds exaggerated and impossible doesn't it? But honestly that's the truth. All the rural schools were closed yesterday, and all the schools closed here today. There were downtown temps.

Now for some better news. Tonight Father Lanier said he wanted to show me something. It proved to be 4 different pictures - just the size of the section marked off with pencil above. One of the Blessed Virgin with the inscription "Mary, conceived

without sin, Pray for us who have recourse to thee" printed under the picture which is in an oval inside the frame. Another of the Sacred Heart with the inscription "I will bless every home which has a picture of my burning heart exposed and honored". The third was a picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help with the inscription "Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Pray for us". The fourth was of a child saying its prayers with a very sweet childish little prayer inscribed. They were all lovely pictures, daintily colored, with the pictures themselves in ovals, all with silver frames and all matching. He asked me which I liked best and said I could have the one I liked best. The baby one was awfully sweet but much better for a small child, and the picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help didn't do justice to the subject; I didn't like it very well. But then I was stumped. I liked the Blessed Virgin with the ejaculation; and by the way it is indulgenced 100 days; but I also thought the one of the Sacred Heart would be very fitting for our home. So without giving me a chance to decide Father insisted I take both. I refused at first but he insisted that they would be his contribution to our new home, and that he really wanted me to take them. So I can't wait to show them to you. Do remind me of it.

He had a very brief staff meeting again tonight by means of which Miss Smith, our manager till Feb. 1, informed us that while she naturally couldn't guarantee anything of the sort, that she was practically positive that all our jobs were safe and that none of us would be laid off, and for Heavens sake please, all of us, stop being jittery about it. She really got very vehement in her assertions ^{on} that subject and that that was the last time she would pay any attention to it; That if we wouldn't take her word for it there was not much more she could do and if we wanted to go on worrying & fretting then we could just take the consequences. (There are a few people who have been rather upset & jittery about it.) Not me either you know how I worried about it at first but not for long.

I'm glad to hear that your yearly reports are over for awhile. Now you probably will be able to have it a little bit easier on the job end of your life if not on the school and studies end of it, not? You'll probably be relieved to get your exams over too now, won't you?

About the money situation - forget it. Josh, - considers everything of yours as mine, so everything of mine is at your disposal.

Heck, what's a few cents between lovers?

So Larry's getting the bag too now. That doesn't surprise anybody, does it? Remember the night I told you he asked me what I'd think if he and Dorothy beat our time? I don't remember just what the occasion was but I remember that I told him "It suits me - more power to you". Then he said, "Well, maybe we won't beat you, but -".

I talked to Naomi about that lodge on Lake Michigan again today. It's the Michilinda Lodge, Whitehall, Michigan, just a few miles north of Muskegon, and right on the lake. She said the reason it was so cheap when they were there was because they went in pre-season at pre-season rates. She said that after July 4th they have much higher rates. They went on June 24th so June 22nd certainly could be considered pre season. She also said that they are famous for their wonderful food; that they ^{had} had the same cook for I don't know how many years. She said it was very secluded and that after the 4th we would probably have difficulty even getting reservations because they have steady customers who come back year after year. Goodnight dear - more first thing in the morning XXX/AM.

He looked up the place on the map and according to the mileage scale it is just 125 or 130 miles from here. She is going to give me the owner's name and she advises me to write her for more information and rates. It's off the highway with only one little sign to find it by, and right down on the lake. She said there is riding and a dance hall near by but not with the lodge. Then the lodge has shuffle-boards, golf, tennis, swimming, bicycle riding, croquet, etc. nice lounging rooms, and generally a place for fun, peace, rest, & enjoyment. She just roves about the place, and she has been all over the south and Florida, too, so this place must be quite alright if it made such an impression. She also recommended Mammoth Cave and Thereabouts; and another recommendation was Turkey Run. I think Mammoth Cave is a bit too far for this trip, and too would make a good vacation sometime later when we could here more time and stop at Mildred. Turkey Run sounds good too. I'd loved Turkey Run.

Anyhow you can see what I did on our 13° below zero day when business was dull — Talk about honeymoons. So Naomi is going to give us this lodge owner's

name and if you would like to write her
I'll send it to you - what do you say?

Yes, darling, I thoroughly agree with
you about taking every precaution against
"pranksters". Not that we both can't take
it but we don't like overdoses. I have
an idea about playing safe with your car
and our bags. Let's pack everything
all ready to go on our trip, lock our bags
well, and lock them in the car the day
before and lock our car in Naomi's
garage. (He has an empty double garage) We
won't need to worry about having transportation
on Friday evening or Saturday am. That
can all be pre-arranged. Then when we get
ready to go we can have somebody at the
house posted to go home then have them
take us to our car. Naomi really can keep a
secret, and doesn't like tricks on brides + grooms
too well herself ever tho she really can take a
joke, so that would be a good risk. And as far
as getting away with other people is concerned - it worked
out beautifully with Fred + Jimmy. Remember in Jerry +
Joe's case they took out their spare plays and all, and
when they finally did let them go in peace it was so
much later that it probably took their trip into the
night. Now I must rush this to the Post office
with the messenger boy who just got here. I'll write again
over Sunday if possible. Bye, darling, Lovingly
Collie.

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

January 22, 1940

Dearest Frank,

Yes, today is our monthiversary isn't it. My but that month went fast. The months will probably fly from now on too.

So tonight is exam night. Good luck and I'm praying for you. I'll bet you'll be glad when all these exams are over with won't you? But gosh, you need not worry if only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the exam grade counts because you've got such good daily grades to hold up your "score"

Tonight while you are plugging away at school, I'll be playing bingo at school - Sodality Social Meeting.

Aunt Hilda was over all yesterday afternoon and evening - playing Euchre. I just loafed away the day, and tried to be sociable (when I wasn't busy catching up on sleep.) She asked about you.

Saturday afternoon I did some shopping for my Tronsseau. It's such a thrill. Then went home and baked a chocolate cake. It was good too. I thought of you and wished you were here to taste it. Now

Don't you dare say "I wouldn't dare take such a chance just before exams"

Tonight when I came home from work I found Dad sick in bed. He was feeling bad yesterday - chilled and feverish all day and night but today he's been in bed all day, with a fever. Just a good case of the flu, but it is so easy for it to turn into pneumonia, and pneumonia is just our worst fear ever for him. But he's taking good care of himself, and Mom is taking good care of him so I hope he'll pull out of it quickly.

Busy as you are and you still have time to think back to our good old Players' Club. No, they haven't given up productions. The next is scheduled for after Easter, I believe, with "Early to Bed and Early to Rise". At last meeting a committee was appointed to draw up a constitution which will be read at next meeting. This Thursday is a social meeting to which all interested members are invited. Then the club is going onto a good business basis, with formal meetings, etc. A real reorganization is in the making. I hope all goes well. As for Mrs. Schwarz - everybody told her off at last meeting after which she apologized and said she had noticed that wasn't liked and figured it best to withdraw. The members

3. told her why that was true and asked her to remain, but didn't coax her. I doubt if she will show up any more.

Speaking of "Home with the Wind" — it comes to South Bend on Feb 10th at \$1 and \$1.50 rates.

No, there haven't been any further changes at the office; and Miss Smith seems fairly certain that there won't be any further deductions, we shall see.

Honey, I wish I could get a bit of your school ambition into the four school-boys here. Believe it or not — Dick, Regina, & Albert all have exams tomorrow and we've been trying for the past hour to get them to study, but they just can't be bothered. They think exams are just so much fun. Little rascal Albert just wanted to know what exams were.

Well, dear, I must catch the next streetcar, in ten minutes for Sodolity meeting.
So Toodle luvva

With lots of love,
(but no houses on the lots)

Vallette

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

Wednesday night

Darling,

Just a few words that I'm going to try to get to you before Friday afternoon. In fact I think I'll special it the first thing in the morning.

So you had a nice time and a good dinner at Milto & Elvira's - I'm glad you did, and as you said, I'm sure you too that you needed the diversion badly.

I had such good intentions of writing you real often - if possible every night - in order to give you a little diversion with all your studies, but I guess your best intentions are always the ones that fall through the fastest. This week has been like old times for business at the office and while I've done a lot of thinking about you, plans, etc. I just simply haven't had the time to put them on paper for you. I am stacking them up for the weekend, tho. As it stands I believe you are still

planning on coming this weekend -
I hope nothing changes those plans
'cause I'm waiting for you.

Till then - dear -

All my love

C.lette.

Colette R. Gerstbauer
1201 Lincolnway West
Mishawaka, Indiana

Monday P.M.

Dearest Frank,

Hoping that this letter finds you safe and sound back in Detroit, and me right here where I've been for the past 22 years, only tonight something seems to be missing - a somebody that has been right here at my side for the past 3 nights and is now much missed - I've got it, it's you.

Today has been just the usual Monday but somehow I've got a lot of news for you that I didn't have last night.

First of all, I got out of going to Kokomo Saturday. A few people had to stay in the office to carry on the business and I finally talked B. Smith into letting me be one of them. So the switchboard operator, 2 men, and I will hold down the fort. Which means I'll be able to save myself between two and five dollars, a whole day and half a night. I'll also be able to get the St. Blaise Blessing Saturday night which I would otherwise have to miss.

Secondly, did you know that Notre Dame had a fire in the west wing of the Administration Building's basement Sunday morning. The paper

says there is an estimated damage of \$10,000. The fire seems to have broken out in the underground tunnel which conducted the steam and electric wires from the Ad Building to the various other buildings. Quoting the newspaper: "The fire was restricted to one washroom; there the flooring caved in after the supports burned away. Smoke and water did the greatest damage." "Six fire companies battled two hours" It all happened while we were at Highmass.

Third, I asked Naomi for that name again, and it is Miss Tower - address c/o Michilinda Lodge, Whitehall, Michigan. I suggest you write "Please forward" on the envelope since we know she won't be at the Lodge now. Another suggestion - since it is supposed to be such an exclusive place, in that she depends on the same crowd yearly for the majority of her business, I suggest you mention that Mr. & Mrs. James F. Hurtle recommended the place, it might help, and it's OK with the Hurtles.

Fourth, several of the girls were talking about a trip to Lake Michigan yesterday. I thought "Lake Michigan in January! why". They said it makes the most beautiful scenery. That Switzerland itself has nothing on Lake Michigan and its surrounding hills when the lake is frozen. They said the water froze in peaks, perfect little, very rough mountains on the beach; and that the lake froze up in waves - just as the water in summer looks like a mass of

blue hooks, curves, and waves, so it looks now except that it is all white. You can walk on the lake except that it is so rough that you have to be heavily padded all over to risk a jaunt on it. They said the traffic was jammed; that it was as bad, if not worse than in midsummer & July 4th. Also that the surrounding hills, covered with white and with black trees sticking out of them, looked twice as steep and unbelievably beautiful. I had never thought about Lake Michigan in the winter before - I just never thought that that "tank full of water" might freeze too. I do think it would be lovely to see now though, don't you?

Fifth, remember my mentioning this Civil Service competitive exam for male typist & stenos Saturday (no Friday it was) night? Well I was all wrong; I was thinking of another salary scale at the time. This one is

4 exams in one Jr. Clerk Typist \$1260 to start;
Sr. Clerk Typist \$1440 to start; Jr. Steno \$1440 to start;
Sr. Steno. \$1620 to start. Jerry Canfield is taking the exam and Jim Cruise is also interested in it.

Darling I got the prettiest spoon in the mail today! Sawyers Baker Boy soda crackers come with a coupon ^{which} ~~with~~ along with 25¢ you can get a spoon. It's

Wm. Rogers Co. silver; Endorsed by
International Silversmiths. I sent in one
coupon last week and got the spoon today.
They are called President's spoons and
come one for each president - I got Geo. Washington
and it has his picture and dates in the handle
along with his name, and in the bowl it has
a picture of Mount Vernon engraved. It's
quite pretty and 4 or 8 of them would
make a nice set for extra spoons. I'm going
to get Lincoln next time.

As usual we forgot something. I was
going to show you my picture from Father's house.
But, darling, it was just so nice having
you here that I couldn't be bothered trying
to think about such things as pictures -
beautiful as they are, and anyhow you'll see
them someday.

Honey, I had such a grand weekend.
Just no way of expressing myself only
that I do love you so much and always
will. And now I must say goodbye
for another day or two.

Lots of love

Colette

INDIANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

AFFILIATED WITH

UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

2 P.M. Wednesday

Darling,

I got your letter yesterday and the one today and it is so sweet of you to write me so often. It helps to keep me going down here.

Last night I worked late and then went to an extra long choir practice and was just too tired when I got home to write the letter I had planned on writing. And now I find that tonight at 6:30 we have a very important district meeting. Two of our main heads from Indianapolis are conducting it and everybody is in hot water out of curiosity. He hasn't the faintest idea of what it's all about. However, it's starting at the unearthly hour of 6:30. Why, I can't imagine; and the manager said that a good idea of the earliest time we get out of it will be midnight.

So, since I probably won't get to write to you tonight, I wanted to scratch off at least a few lines to you today so that you would at least know that I'm still alive. Then if I don't get to write tonight I shall do so tomorrow night.

A very close estimate of the phone calls I had to make this morning is 90! along with the regular run of business - interviewing, etc. Now this afternoon with the exception of the regular interviewing, etc., I have nothing to do (much!) only about 40 more calls to make, exactly 47 letters to write - all quite long ones, and the manager is waiting for me to come up and we are going to try to set up some form letters to cover the majority of my letter writing for me. There will have to be at least eight different forms and I'll have to set them all up, compose them and then she is going to go over them with me and try to get some forms to help me out here. Then I've got 3 monthly reports to re-check and then type up; and the books expense account to figure + type, so I'll probably be lucky if I can get half way through in time to even go to the meeting. But I'll always manage to squeeze in a ten minute letter to you so here it comes with all my love - Colette.