

Shanghai  
c/o American Express Co.,  
14, Kiukiang Road.  
May 6th, 1929

Dearest Florence:

Well, dearest Florence, it seems you have not received my letter sent you from Manchuria. And I see by your letter that you have not received a copy of my book. I sent my publisher (through Ernestine Evans) a list of the names of people who were to get free copies of my book as soon as it appeared. Your name was one of the very first on the list. I first sent your old address, then when you changed, I wrote them and gave them your new address.

The book has been out for two months and I have not yet received one copy here. So when the author does not receive one, I hope that you do not feel that I have betrayed you by not having one sent you. If by this time you have not got one, I would request you to telephone Ernestine Evans at once, and ask her to give you a copy at once. If there is a cost, please see that it is put to my account. I get a large discount. Read her this part of my letter. Amongst others who were to receive free copies of my book were Gilbert Roe, Ernest, Ellen Kama, etc. I have seen a number of reviews of my book; the best and most thoughtful is that of Prof. Lovett's in the "New Republic". The Chicago Tribune reviewer was terrified by it; the review is filled with the words "terrifying", "shocking",--and she or he shows that he has absolutely no idea of the desperate struggle of the poor. He ~~says~~ says that a sense of humour, a smile, etc., would have made "life" do something for me. Those people all thing "Life" is a big fat American millionaire giving out things. Smile at the guy and he gives you money and makes things easier. Then that reviewer says that I "wrecked" the life of Ernest. Think of it! He was a kid of 24 when I left him and then he got married, had a child by his wife, and lived happily every after. I would have wrecked his life had I stayed with him. And he mine. All these bourgeois reviewers are burdened with the Christian ideas of things being "good" or "bad"--the old idea of good and evil. Not once do they stop to know that things just are, that they just happen, that there may be cause and effect but not good and evil.

By this time your baby has arrived and is many weeks old. Write me of the child. Is it a boy or a girl. What is the name. And what is it like? Is it as wonderful as Heloise. I don't know how to punctuate the word.

I've just come to Shanghai from Nanking, where I've been for two months hob-nobbing with the most low brow set of men I have met in all China. Not a brain and not an idea of the revolution. Sometimes my throat closed up. Here I am in the heart of imperialism in this poverty-stricken land. I've just arrived and am not at all well; suffering from head-aches. When I'm feeling better and am rested up a bit, I'll write you a letter worth while. Pardon that his is also vegetarian.

Your letter to me is very interesting. I am deeply interested in your plans for the future, and in the fact that you have passed through the period of desiring to do a thousand little things that comes with the care of children. You speak of being 34 and there is a ring in it of maturity in earnest. I am older than you by a little and some way or other I never grow up in spots in my being. I feel so damned young and it always seems to me so strange that I am in the middle of thirty, and that before many years I'll be forty. I realise that only when I look in the mirror at a new line, or when I look at my passport. There is such an awful gap between my feelings and my age. My mind, however, is very much upset out here, and I have for six or eight weeks laboured with the inability to write.

Write me what your plans are for a psychological service, for parents and children. It will be interesting and I think if you start it you will have lasting joy in it.

I'm here for a day or two living with a girl from the Philippines. Out here is Asia--that is clear. It's different than in books, this mingling of all the East from India to Japan in Shanghai.

I'm writing a series of short stories for the "Frankfurter Zeitung". Have written four since I came. If I can only once get sound finances under my feet, I intend to have a set of all my pictures enlarged on soft paper and send them to you. But I can't manage it now because I'm making not half of my expenses so far. I'm a fool about contracts, and I made a contract that has bound me hand and foot but left the "F. Zt. free to publish only what they wish, and to pay for only the things they publish. And so they are not publishing very much. Then I am being not to send those same articles to any place else on the globe! It is a horrible mistake. But I was so anxious to come that I would have come under any condition.

Love, dearest Florence

Reginald