

Nice, August 12th, 1945

My darling Billy,

Here I am once again in Nice where I had the joy of finding one of your letters upon my arrival. I came back to Nice because the show I performed with will go on a long tour, they are going to Casablanca and a lot of other cities and mother doesn't want me to leave. But Billy darling I am happy to be in Nice because it is the only place where I can have the hope of seeing you again. I was happy to see Uncle's dining room again because that is where all my memories are. It was hard to leave where I was working because they did not want to let me go. Think Billy darling that they were preparing for a large variety show for the tour which I was supposed to be the star of. But if I had left with them, I would not have been able to see you again because I have hope that you will get a leave before returning to your beautiful country where you will have the joy of finding your dear family again. But I hope that over there, where you will be so happy, you will not forget me completely and that you will still send me long and kind letters. Mr. Lodin told me that your friend came over to his house and that he had brought him lots of packs of cigarettes.<sup>34</sup> He was very happy and thanks you very deeply. Billy darling, now that I am in Nice, I will redo my old hairstyle again but better because I am going to the hairstylist and I promise to have myself photographed very soon. Billy darling, excuse my spots, I have a bad feather and I want to write you anyways. Billy darling, you asked me if I liked opera, yes I like it enormously and I would want you to be near me this winter so we can go listen to Madame Butterfly together because it is my favorite opera.<sup>35</sup> My darling Billy, will I have the great happiness of seeing you again? I hope from the depths of my heart that it will be so. Should I

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<sup>34</sup>Wartime smoking became a well-known staple of WWII. Evidently, there are many archives from that time period depicting soldiers smoking cigarettes not only because they were continuously supplied to the soldiers but also because they curbed appetite. Cigarettes became a part of the supplies shipped out to the soldiers on the front lines. Despite the clear health hazards of smoking, cigarettes were in high demand. Cigarettes became integrated into military life and have continued their presence. On the battlefield cigarettes became a symbol of pleasure and comfort, it was also used as a form of currency. In the 1940s, tobacco companies ramped up their cigarette production to not only foster a large culture of smoking but also to provide something for the soldiers. Additionally, citizens were even encouraged to send cigarettes to soldiers on the front lines as a show of support.

<sup>35</sup>Madame Butterfly is an opera by Giacomo Puccini, originally premiered in 1904 in Milan. This play was heard every opera season except for during a brief hiatus during WWII from 1942 to 1945 because of the hostilities between the United States and Japan. The story follows U.S. Navel officer Pinkerton and his child bride Butterfly. Pinkerton picks her as a temporary bride, a placeholder for his future and proper American Wife. Butterfly however was looking forward to the marrying an American and converted to Christianity for his sake. The harrowing tale ends in a cowardly Pinkerton unable to face Butterfly and his son which leads to the unfortunate suicide of Butterfly using a seppuku knife. Very telling that this would be Jany's favorite opera.

hope so? I had the happiness of receiving two of your photos that I look at incessantly, all of your photos are in my bedroom. My darling Billy, I have to tell you that I received the flint that I gave to Uncle and he thanks you, if you would allow it Billy darling, the next time that you send some more, I will give one to papa, is that okay? Now in Nice, there are a lot of your friends which makes me happy because maybe you will come back very quickly. Billy darling, now that I am in Nice I have nothing to do so I can thus write you more often. My darling Billy, think of me for the photo of your sister and now Billy darling, now there is no risk that you will go to Japan since it is finished.<sup>36</sup> My darling Billy I leave you for today, I will send you the correction of your letter in French tomorrow. Billy darling receive, from a little French girl that will never forget you, all her love and millions of kisses.

JANY

P.S. Write quickly, mother wrote you on the back of this letter. Billy darling, at this moment the star shines and it tells me that I will see you again. Is this true? Write me again at 48 Lamartine Road

Dear Billy,

We are once again in Nice where I hope that we will have the pleasure of seeing you again soon, in the meantime, I send you all my best regards and my best wishes.

Mado.

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<sup>36</sup>Initially, a plan to invade Japan with American troops was underway in April of 1945. Code-named Operation Downfall, the US was determined to put an end to the war through mass invasion, bombing and blockading. However, because of the Japanese's soldiers determination to not go down without a fight and the success of the atomic bomb tests in the States, the US Armed Forces decided to bomb Japan by dropping two atomic bombs within days of each other on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. With the promise that Allied forces would not occupy Japan, Operation Downfall never came to fruition keeping thousands of soldiers in Europe awaiting demobilisation rather than re-enlistment to fight a war in the Pacific.