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Title	[Typed letter signed], 1948 March 10, Pully, Vaud, Switzerland [to] Viola
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Date	1948 March 10
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CHEMIN DES PLATEIRES 9A
PULLY
VAUD

Téléphone: Pully (021) 325 26
10th March 1948

My dear Viola,

I come back from London to find the most lovely scarf and your letter of Feb 1st waiting for me, all possible thanks. No, I wasn't as it were in New York. It is a long story. I went out to Jamaica on a British plane, and we were nearly lost off Bermuda, they have now stopped flights as the route we flew was found not to be safe. So we were allowed to transfer to come back via New York but we were allowed no dollars and only a transit visa, which visa is the time the immigration official considers is the minimum time to arrive one port, cross, and leave by another. Well, we left Jamaica with a temperature of 94 Fahrenheit and flew to Miami where they told us New York had a blizzard. Strictly speaking, the official letting us in (you see, we had paid our return fares in sterling and this was all due to the fact we could not get back by the route we had come and it was all a courtesy as it were of the air lines) should have given us three days, one day to New York, and next day out. Mercifully he gave us five. We got straight up the same evening to Washington but there we were grounded. They repaid us the bit of flight we could not make on to New York in dollars which gave us each about twenty dollars. Finally we got on by train but we were booked out the next day and were terrified ~~we~~ we should miss the plane for how would we have paid our fares home? It took us hours to get from the station to the airway terminal but we ~~manid~~ just made it. The airways terminal told us to stand by but they believed the planes would be grounded. They were. I rang up a friend having by that time practically no dollars left and she nobly put me up for the night. We stayed grounded the next day but I was not allowed to leave the terminal for more than half an hour at a time as they wanted to get us off if possible and the next day we went. I saw nothing, no friends, other than the one who took me in for the night and one ~~near~~, and I couldn't get in touch with anyone. Strictly speaking on a transit visa you are leggally only supposed to cross by plane or train and leave at once as you only pay a fraction of ordinary visa cost and dont have to produce the usual papers etc. I'd have loved to stay longer and see all friends but with the present dollar sterling wall it just wasn't possible.

Yes, I read a lot of books about early history in India, and the south was nearly always under the domination of another race - at once time Persian was spoken over almost all of India. It is a very sad business. At least whilst the English were there people could travel from north to south in safety, now they cant. A Swiss who has just returned and is quite objective, fears that they will have war for thirty years. Trouble is, whilst the English were there, the Indians could unite in hating them but when the English are gone, then all the different tribes struggle against each other. It may be better in the long run but conditions there now are terrible.

I had to go over to England for a fortnight to report on the business side of my Indies trip. It was grim and almost a sentence of death to the old, but in a few ways I thought things were a tiny bit better. It is not so bad for workers between eighteen and fifty. The old get no extras, and if they live alone, they ~~manid~~ just starve on their rations. Workers get an off the ration meal at their factories if on approved work, that is export or for the government. It is very difficult with children, they get milk but no other extras and espec^{ally} hard for those young.

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Still there was just a bit more in the shops though I dont know how families manage for clothes. Everybody has worn out their reserves and you get enough only to have a dress every other year. One dress, nothing else. Shoes are the trouble, many go about even in winter in home made sandals.

Here all clothes and all foods now except bread and cereals are free and can be bought anywhere in what quantities one likes. The last to go was butter, it was freed a month ago but people are so used by now to being careful that I saw in the paper this morning it had gone up very little in consumption since rationing was lifted, to a point the prices keep things rationed for the cost of living has trebled here since the war began.

It is like spring at present, hot, sunny, and flowers coming out everywhere.

I am truly delighted with my lovely scarf - it was very kind indeed of you to send it to me. Hilda has showed me the picture of the baby, she looks most intelligent and so gay. A great joy to you I am sure.

All my love and I am truly sorry that that blizzard prevented a meeting. I asked about busses out, but was told they were stopped by the snow and also I must not leave, as they did not know when our plane would take off. I was with about a dozen other English, all from Jamaica.

All my love,

Bryher

EXTRA STRONG

ALBIS FZS