Nanking, Jan 9, 1938.

Dearest:-

Yesterday I was able to get a wire to the Consulate General in Shanghai asking them to inquire from Ann, school & Boynton (Red) whereabouts & plans of you and Bobby. I have no other word than your letter of Dec 16 - 37 from Yichin Yichin, which said you expected to reach 3 or about Jan 3-3, but was not clear about Bobby or whether you planned to stay or visit. I'll be glad to have you back, but don't see any possibility of travel. Either way under present military controls and conditions. Not even a foreign diplomat could get here till 3 days ago, or then only under limitations. To journalists, some hints to us that we cannot leave. All this as well from duties here & actual lack of transport. Here is far from real safety here as yet though. I suppose the mathematical chances of shooting and rape are not very great. But we don't know what may be the next step, as there is no precise effort to straighten up here, and war activities hold officers' attention.

Tomorrow it is possible that a U.S. Navy tug from Panay salvage may take this for Consulate direct, without censorship. I am writing on an old notebook with a fraction of a shadless lamp. We may have electricity soon. Japanese offices and recently Hospital have had it irregularly three months. They shot 4/3 of the 51 technical men of the plant, & change they were good employees. So now can't run it. All this on top of bombing.

A little further on lower level. Not a store in Nanking. All thoroughly plundered, mostly by squads & soldiers with trucks. Nearly all burned. Soon on smaller streets. Hardly anyone lives outside the zone. From Yang Shang Khan to Nan Chung, along the normally busy little street next wall, I saw three flying persons. Two buildings in Kweishih, our boy's school, were burned also Kiang Tien Chieh (Methodist) Church. Practically all cars (total 20) stolen from Brit. & Am. Embassies; anti to Johnson's & Ger. Ambassador's houses; burning too. Embassy all by soldiers only.

Our house had lost: Victrola records; some bedding, not much was there to steal; some table linen & clothing; probably a good many small things; front rooming; some Chinese pictures; a little food. Stuff all dumped out & pawed over several times, and have been able to salvage only a little yet. Some prospect of compensation. One of our familiar exchange compound families are in great position. The teacher (Steward) Wang had relatives in the anti's quarters. They have all been decent, helpful & honest, so far as I can see. War's wife & children have been in Nanning, saying they can see. War's wife & children have been in Nanning, saying they can see. War's wife & children have been in Nanning, saying they can see.
bedding, money, watches, bicycles. I had taken to a portable silver, my father's watch, Chavannes, & the Renaissance books. Did not know where else to draw a line. Mattresses put in locked & sealed room (which soldiers broke of course), are largely intact. My typewriter, most of my winter clothes, some bedding here — much in Shanghai trunk.

Bombing & shelling were bad for three days, but much less than the terror after entry. My closest calls were from violent shrapnel soldiers. Am sending you some copies of reports.

If you are in Shanghai communication will be quicker and possibly easier when some kind of travel is open. Military tram takes 3 days on irregular schedule. Army shows no interest in commercial openings, even for food. City fared about as well as possible, unless some brains turn this way. Life hardly exists outside the walls, & little outside the Zone.

Now Shanghai & Ninghai Road are the most exposed in town, with two of thousands in good weather. I am very sorry for the distress over the famine, and hope there will be no further strain of that kind.

Just now there is no physical danger, but there is much struggle over spies, delation, & so on, in which the hjemmen refugees and staffs seem to be a main arena. I get about one heavy jolt per day; yesterday violently shoved out of an office for trying to save the life of a useful interpreter who had stood with us thru threats & bribes. Today discover one spy or probable second in our main buildings. News has taken turns with me for sleeping in Severance Hall. We have guards at main gate, but they are troublesome & not over-effective.

I love you dearly, Lilliath, and will be most glad when we can have a home again.

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