

Letter #21

Thursday
May 24, 1945

Dear Frank,

Well, a couple of days has gone by since I last attacked a piece of paper in an attempt to interest you in home life and the joys of owning your own (dish) washing machine. In the interim, nothing of very great importance has happened so it's the same old story of life with soot on the side via the N.Y. N.H. & H. R.R.

Which leads me to the interesting topic of the odd and very different people you are bound to come in contact with as a daily commuter. Being an old hand at this business of commuting, - (I've been barely catching trains for all of 23 days now!) -I can look with disdain upon these miserable people who discover they're on the wrong train or who are left muttering and stamping about behind the closed gates as the 6:08 Express pulls out. That's in the evening.-- No matter which car you find a seat in, there are always the same types and flavors of people surrounding you (me) and surprisingly, they are all seated in their proper places.-Like a standard box of assorted chocolates!

Some how or other it seems that the occasional service man must be particularly addicted to the constant state of uncertainty in which he finds himself these days; for invariably he is to be found riding backwards on the slightly smaller seat at the front of the car, -or could it be that he thinks he'd better keep an eye on these shifty civilians. Come to think of it, that's the way we sat on our way up to Rye last year! How about that? --And he's always on the "shady" side of car too! Good night- What have I uncovered here! This bears looking into, be gorrah!

As I'm usually placed in the fourth row, left, on the aisle, I don't have very much of a view of the rest of the car, but I've passed most of the people in the rear on my way down to this seat. At the very end of the car, opposite the water cooler, there's a quartet of various shaded blondes discussing the latest plays and the man-power shortage between bits of gossip concerning a certain ex-WAVE and why they haven't seen her since she came home three weeks ago. These are the Spice drops in the assortment.

Rightnext to me, near the window with the evening sun pouring in on the folded copy of The New York World Telegram on his lap, is a nodding, grey headed, business man, probably a lawyer. His commutation ticket is for Greenwich, I hope he doesn't wind up in Stamford. I guess he'd be classified as an old reliable caramel.

Here and there on the opposite side of the car are more caramels talking over the best way to plant tomatos or what would have happened if old J.B. had made his mind up soon enough about that Western Electric deal. There are more pairs of spice drops too. The peanut clusters are represented by a group of school boys on

their way home for the week end, cutting up as boys will.

That's in the evening. In the morning it's a little bit different, that's when you come across the Odd people I spoke about. For instance there's an "old dame" that gets the 7:53 at New Rochelle. Everyone on the train watches for her and wonders who she's going to bawl out this morning. Usually it's the conductor for telling everyone that there were seats four cars back yesterday when he knew they were at least six cars back. Or else she waits till we hit Grand Central and then pounces upon some poor unsuspecting male who's lighting up his cigarette before leaving the car. I think I mentioned the ritual of putting on her make-up in a previous letter, didn't I? It's really something to watch, I've never seen anybody work so hard and get so little results. Her little puff flies hither and yon, from place to place on her face and doesn't leave a trace.

There's also anspry lad of near 75 who sits near the window reading the Christian Science Monitor all the way from Marmaroneck to G.C.T. without glancing to left, to right or above. I wonder what would happen if someone started reading over his shoulder. I guess he'd just let them go on reading or turn the page just for spite.

And then there's me. I don't doubt that the straw sailor hat I've been wearing on the back of my head has caused a few people to wonder what kind of a person I am to go around startling folks with such foolish hat. The boss says I look drunk with it on the back and just silly with it on the front where it belongs. I think I'd rather look drunk than silly. Anything but Silly!

Well, darling, that's all I can think of to tell you about my travels. You tell me about yours now.

Your mom called about an hour ago and read me your letter of May 2. Maybe there's one home for me.

Right now I've got to go to lunch so I'll say so long -and dont think too badly of me for looking drunk after all that's only one man's opinion. I'm sure yours would be different -or else.

All my love, always
Peg xxx