

Rua de São João da Mata, 119, 12
Lisboa, Portugal
March 8, 1948

Dearest Mother,

Let me at least make a beginning on this letter. Betty is having a lesson now but my turn comes in a few minutes. We are now having many private lessons, for which the teachers come to the house. We find we are making much more progress by changing our schedule around a bit. So when you are still sleeping I go to class Sr. Pinto Ribeiro's house for a lesson, nine o'clock in the morning, every day during the week except Saturday and Sunday. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays we have teachers come here at ten-thirty to give an hour's lesson to Betty, and another hour's lesson to me. In the afternoon other teachers come, and we finally stop at five-thirty. This sort of schedule leaves us somewhat free on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Wednesdays and Thursdays we have an extra hour or two of lessons, but as we have arranged our work now, it is much more easy to study. In line with our schedule of today I go for a lesson in about five minutes. I say "go", but only to another room in this house.

The Steeds have moved to another apartment, and we are much more quiet here than we were. Two boys who are full of life can make plenty of noise, and keep us busy taking care of them. Four children in the house kept us all engaged a big part of our day. The menfolks didn't realize this as quickly as the women, but the women talked it over and decided that we would all find more time for study if the families separated. Of course the Steeds are nowhere near as advanced as we are and we could not speak much Portuguese together. Too, it is difficult for people who do not know the language to try to speak correctly with one another. We would be using the wrong things all the time and either correcting one another wrongly, if we tried to be mutually helpful, or we would be speaking in a wrong manner so much that it would become a habit, and then we would not be able as easily to learn the right way of speaking. The agreement to separate was mutual. We were doing fairly well getting along with one another.

Well, back to the subject of the weather again. Our weather here now seems like late spring in Maine and Massachusetts. We can expect a few more storms, rain and thunder showers during these March and April days, which seems quite like New England, but the weather is warming up rapidly now, and it has become necessary for me to begin wearing my colored glasses again because the sun's rays are so much more blinding than they were two weeks ago. Mostly certainly here the women who like to show off their Easter finery can do so in beautiful weather. No worrying about a sudden snow squall coming up and spoiling all of one's plans. Of course I think that that sort of planning shouldn't be uppermost in one's mind, but at the same time I don't like to think of everyone who wants to wear a new suit on Easter feeling that the day was completely ruined because of a shower. I'm confident that the ministers of our churches preach better sermons on Easter to people who are feeling happy, and the people get something more out of that sermon, though ~~they~~ they may be dressed in the finest plumage.

Speaking of plumage, I hope to have to show sometime a good picture of a peacock of the Jardim Zoológico with the big fan of a tail spread out to the fullest. I believe this must be the mating season. Several of the birds in the cages were spreading their tail feathers to the fullest last Saturday when we took