

## Contents

January 4, 1941 .....	4
January 7, 1941 .....	5
January 10, 1941 .....	7
January 11, 1941 .....	8
January 12, 1941 .....	9
January 15, 1941 .....	11
January 16, 1941 .....	12
January 20, 1941 .....	13
January 23, 1941 .....	14
August 8, 1941 .....	16
August 7, 1941 .....	18
August 8, 1941 .....	20
August 13, 1941 .....	22
August 15, 1941 .....	24
August 27, 1941 .....	27
August 30, 1941 .....	29
August 28, 1941 .....	31
August 28, 1941 .....	32
September 3, 1941 .....	33
September 6, 1941 .....	35
September 17, 1941 .....	36
September 9, 1941 .....	37
November 27, 1941 .....	38
January 25, 1941 .....	41
January 26, 1941 .....	43
January 29, 1941 .....	44
February 3, 1941 .....	45
February 9, 1941 .....	48
February 9, 1941 .....	50
February 14, 1941 .....	51
February 15, 1941 .....	52
February 17, 1941 .....	53

February 17, 1941 .....	54
February 21, 1941 .....	55
February 26, 1941 .....	57
March 2, 1941 .....	58
March 5, 1941 .....	60
March 7, 1941 .....	62
March 9, 1941 .....	64
April 26, 1941 .....	65
April 29, 1941 .....	67
April 30, 1941 .....	68
May 5, 1941 .....	69
May 11, 1941 .....	70
May 6, 1941 .....	72
May 9, 1941 .....	74
May 14, 1941 .....	76
May 17, 1941 .....	77
May 26, 1941 .....	79
May 29, 1941 .....	81
May 30, 1941 .....	82
June 4, 1941 .....	84
June 5, 1941 .....	86
June 8, 1941.....	88
June 10, 1941 .....	90
June 13, 1941 .....	91
June 15, 1941 .....	93
June 15, 1941 .....	94
June 17, 1941 .....	95
June 21, 1941 .....	97
June 23, 1941 .....	99
June 24, 1941 .....	101
June 28, 1941 .....	102
June 31, 1941 .....	103
July 3, 1941 .....	104
July 7, 1941 .....	106
July 10, 1941 .....	108

August 12, 1941 .....	109
July 14, 1941 .....	111
July 20, 1941 .....	112
July 20, 1941 .....	113
July 27, 1941 .....	114
July 30, 1941 .....	115
August 4, 1941 .....	116

## January 4, 1941

Lia

My Dear: We are more than happy to know that you are so well and carefully taken care of. Mania has recovered from her...I do not exactly know from what...a small gastric indigestion I guess. She was very touched by your letter and in general by your way you were with her at the time of your departure. In fact she is just as well here. Perfectly treated at the hotel where the proprietors are charming and she fills her days easily occupying herself with the children. I do all that is possible to keep her from being too tired but she is as always doing something or making order even when it is absolutely unnecessary.

The weather here is horrible but I think that I prefer a little rheumatism to the terrible heat of last month. The little one (*she*) is almost in perfect health again. Mania has cut her hair much better than the hairdresser's.

The little one (*he*) is very well and in good spirits when he has enough to eat. Otherwise he yells. In general if I leave him where he is and pretend not to hear him as it is only eating that consoles him. But he finds a better audience in Mania who takes care of him and in general has a more tender heart than me.

Alec will not leave for his *ville d'eaux* until about the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month as his friend Roger is absent until that date.

The visit of Gorik went very well. He looked well and seemed pleased. We spent a very sympathetic day together. Also we were very happy with the visit of Philippe. I have to admit that I like Antoinette even though I have had more occasions to see her in a few photos. As usual the 'photo developers' are of a abominable in-exactitude and there is no way of obtaining a tirage as one has ordered it. For this reason the mail destined for the Clipper will have to wait in order to be able include the snapshots of Philippe and Antoinette in the letter to the Pierres. The letter from Irene brought me a lot of pleasure so long as everything works out for them. I will close as Alec has gone as usual to dress Lizok who has just awoken and I have to do the laundry before the ? My love to you, Lia

## January 7, 1941

Alec

My Dear: It is snowing big flakes and it is cold and I worry about the repercussions of the weather in Orange without being able to imagine that they could reach such proportions here. I am not only absolutely distressed and so sorry for you but even, I must admit, worried.! If this takes even greater and graver proportions how will you manage? I am told that nursing homes are warm, and by priority at your ages, doors like these must be hermetically closed. Thinking that you are shivering in the dark while we are neither cold nor hungry gives me at the same time, sincere concerns and a certain guilt. Do not take badly my suggestions that are but the fruit of my desire to find practical solutions for situations as they present themselves. I do not quite understand the meaning of your phrase concerning the small return of money – would you have heard speak of it before our letter? I live in the hope that our situation will really be solved.

This affair makes me think of an anecdote in our family. My mother's step father, a big meglomaniac and mediocre musician, having asked his friend Auer to play on a Stradivarius that he had just acquired and about whose qualities he praised. Upon listening to the sounds that came from the instrument for which he was trying to solicit praise from Auer, this last one answered him “ yes, but you know, the hand is also a bit responsible”. I think that by comparing Moreau to the virtuoso and Gorik to a Stradivarius, I vex neither one nor the other.!

I will pass on your request to Zina but I think that she will not understand your scruples – that particular nicety seems I am sorry to say, to be quite dead judging by the same Gorik who I hope he will limit his cards and typed letters to our generation and write by hand to his grand father or his grand uncle Pierre for example.

Mrs. Curlier asked us to transmit to you a thousand thoughts on your behalf and her hope to see you again this summer. I go to play bridge quite often there and yesterday with her, her daughter in law, the father of this last one and Mr. Pojrog(?), always as dynamic and amusing. We played late, until midnight. My flirt, Mrs. Pomery(?) slept in an armchair, the poor thing, as for Lilia, she was happily in the warm bed with “La Princess Lieven”.

I agree with you about the book by Welles but from time to time he has good ideas and *it is easy reading!*

I do not know whether this snow stifles noise, but it happens that the calm denuded of that special quality and spice that for centuries of catastrophes have taught the Israelites to have on the subject, the articles on Bergson and the concert of Thibault are agreeable news.

The Vigoureux have a tiny white dog about 2 months old, sort of Bonzo that Bousi mistreats but adores and who makes *pipi* a lot. The produce from the farm arrives in small drops and the motorcyclist with cheese comes rarely but things go well anyway.

Last week we went on an adventure to Agen and came back with a thousand rather useless things. That is when one notices how monotonous our life is and how little one needs to be distracted.

We are very sorry for poor Anna – our running water is frozen and one organizes skating rinks by emptying the water a bit everywhere!

We have started to drink wine with our meals – a bottle lasts for 2 days – since Christmas we have drunk nothing very good. That day we had an Haut Brion 3, recommended by Fillet that was really good! Very affectionately, Alec

PS Miss Martier asked me to transmit her wishes to you. She is busy taking care of the children a prisoner of war who have just lost their mother!!'

## January 10, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your letter -we are sending on to Olga those of Irene and Bob. Staying as they are in their home as are most of their friends, is from a certain point of view more normally installed in their existence than we are – for others it must be much harder. Without being envious I would like to know how Bob will be when totally inactive.

I conclude from your letter that it is to Orange that the T & F mail of Anna's that we have, must go. I might have the occasion soon. We are going to rent the one of Mrs. Culier Junior. It is neither Gorik, nor Alec who went to the house to take the things and put them in a trunk and then send them but my aunt Helene helped by Olga Pet. (*Russia patronymic*), my mother's old servant. I do not know exactly where Alex is – he must have left only just one of these last days . Did you read that there were “ family tickets” with 99 (*or qq*) analogous things for the occupied countries?

A number of refugees from Lorraine with absolutely nothing, arrived yesterday in Lavardac!

We received a wonderful package from Tania. Did you write to Lisbon? It is because of Bousi's age and my position as a former prisoner of war that I was able to get the permit to release the package of 5 kilos in Cerbere. Tenderly from the three of us, Lialec

# January 11, 1941

Alec

My Dear: I do not know whether this letter will please you or will add to the your worries. On the other side I would not be surprised that with your broad experience on the subject, you will not have been forewarned. To resume, the joy of the return helped and as you are adult, I think you will not be shocked - as a result of our minimal domicile and the narrowness of our nuptial bed – finally what would happen has happened and a new coin is added and expected, I hope, for my conjugal honor not before the 24<sup>th</sup> of May.

All this joking aside, it hides, as I am sure you do not doubt, a lot of real and profound happiness but also a lot of apprehension and worry, even some remorse, on my side. For Lizok it will surely be a good thing – my experience of being a quasi only and spoiled child , make me sure of this. For my poor Lilinka it will be another test, one she supports with smiling courage that you know her, despite the insupportable and useless annoyances of a hyper sensitive husband.

From a practical point of view, Vallat remains apprehensive but as a result of being horse whipped by me gives good advice and the surgeon Dalmas in Agen – an old intern at the Hospital of Paris, very admired by Stelialin of Cannes, is not sympathetic but seems to be at the top of the clinic that is run by the sisters and is clean. It remains now to find a house with an indispensable garden for this summer. Maybe even eventually with rooms for you and Mania. I hope to find one here where we have amicable relations with the food shops, a thing that is more and more precious.

If there are reproaches to be made by formulaic critics I must be the one to receive them. Lilia with her poise and reason doubts it and specially the imperative accord of her loved ones, Mania included.

That is enough for one letter, no?

We are awaiting your response with a little bit of apprehension like children who have done something quite important and do not know if it is good or bad. And whether the result will be candy or spanking.

Finally we hope that the circumstances of our existence will allow the next one to know you well, with the same reciprocal pleasures as with Lizok. Tenderly, Lialec



## January 12, 1941

Lia

My Dear: It is I who is answering your long letter as I do not at all agree with you on the subject of Gorik's secrecy.

As you know it is Moreau who undertook to take care of recouping as many things as possible for me from *Horkier* so Gorik was acting in no way personally but uniquely as a secretary of the bank. To say as a fact, I repeat, that Gorik took out money is inexact as over all the years that I have known the house, I have always heard you and Fedia that one gave too little initiative to the subalterns and I do not think that my nephew could have given orders.

I consider – as we are speaking of my money and not Alec's, that Gorik should not give any details to his parents on the subject of my affairs. Especially that his information are particularly inexact as the only thing that was *palpable* was to the effective transfer of the liquid money in my account. The remainder of the operation was announced but for the moment there is no way to consider the case closed and as you can imagine I also prefer to have in front of me more than 15,000 francs. I am letting you know that for my accounts the H. are of unequal discretion and even, as you know, all the while in asking Alec for a service, Gorik was not shy in giving him a sealed envelope and in any case it was impossible in reality as Alec was not able to be sure of having the occasion of delivering the letter but knew he could make a verbal commitment and also quite alone as you yourself admitted.

Moreover I wish you to notice that in spite of indiscreet questions I would never have told the H.(Halperins) the amounts on which you could count and my indiscretion was limited to telling them that they didn't have to worry about your coming visit.

What annoys me the most is that you could think this so natural.

I have nothing to hide from anyone but I insist that when there is something to tell I tell it myself and then I am not happy at all when one tells as facts some very problematic operations and that these days we can experience more misfires despite everyone's solicitude.

This reminds me that once, even a few times when Fedia returned from Rue Copernic in very bad state telling you that he had spent 2 hours consoling Sioma who was having a nervous crises about his affairs and he was complaining, as you did yourself and that when it had to do with requests and of services that you could render him, he was not shy to trouble you but he never never informed you of

the real position of his affairs – that sometimes could have lessened your worries and those of Fedia that I knew you took very very very seriously on the subject of the well being of the family.

One must not forget that there are nuances and as much as I always tell you when my affairs take a good turn and I hide only when we are ourselves so worried about our future to the point of making arrangements with Paul – that you know are based on my personal means. Also there is a difference in that you and Paul are my bankers and I have no business affairs with the H(Halperins). Now that is enough on my score but for the good of your grand son, I eagerly advise you to tell him that the business and family, are two separate things.

I have to tell you that if I did not announce to you the possible move in the future of the family as my pleasure on this subject is very mixed as really one feels no solid ground under ones feet and despite your opinion of our light views on this matter I have to say that we do not stop worrying about our precarious situation and are not convinced about what one should undertake and so we prefer for the moment bury ourselves here. You will tell me life is not better anywhere but except for food and rent we have absolutely no expenses.

Even in Orange I would have had to pay attention to my attire but here as you know I really spend nothing for myself or Alec and plus all the expenses of a move for all the things, big and small that one has make in order to run a household with children.

As we are thinking that eventually you will come to spend the beautiful season with us we have started to look for a house – but there is very little to rent here. We have one in view at ? Of friends of the Cuslier (?). We shall see what happens as in no case do we want to spend more than what we are spending now on lodging. In general I find that we have about what we need for the cost and even if we want to spend a few hundred francs more, I think, or rather than less, we will not be able to envisage more modern accommodations. That is more for Mania than for you because she will immediately begin complaining that one cannot take care of a baby in the actual conditions and that, of course, is not quite exact as it will not be the first baby not to have a room with white walls and running water. I kiss you, Lia

## January 15, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you a thousand times for your letters. It was arranged with Gorik that we were going to send him a Postal TSF (*I think that is a radio of some sort*) as soon as we succeed in renting one. But as he is in possession of a new one, we thought that Sioma would like to listen to the news as this one can be connected on a lamp as well as on the iron or the portable stove.

Thank you for the open credit for the next arrival.

As when I arrived here with Lizok who was just 9 months old, I have a lot of things for the layette of the baby. On top of that yesterday, ? thinking I would find things more easily in a big city, I was able to buy the fabric that I needed so there only a few things that I am missing. And as over the last month's time I have been buying the wool at the market and of that also, I should have more than enough.

As for the bed linens, what with those that Bousik has and those that are too little for a big bed we will manage quite well.

I am adding the list of what I have so that Mania can see that I am not exaggerating in saying that there is very little that I need.

If she has the time I will send her from here the list of things to knit with the yarn that I bought expressly for the baby. It is still English if you can believe it. That thanks to Mouks.

## January 16, 1941

Lia

My Dear: While I was absorbed in reading Fedia's letter, Lizok found the one from Aunt Elsa (*Melchior*) to you but was not shy of opening it. I apologize for this accident and I am sending it in another envelope as well as Fedia's that I beg that you return to me as the mail works so badly that that one can barely recall what they include when they allude to things later on. Who can be Karl S.? Felix...could it be that he has been sent to England?

Thank you for the long letter. Sadly this time is less propitious for a calm soul and really one thinks more about ones worries than of agreeable things.

As concerns the house, it is still very problematic as it is not a house that is officially on the market to be rented only that friends of the lady tell us that she envisions doing so. So even before visiting is we are waiting to see if really it is to be had and what the conditions will be.

In any case we will not act hastily. We are even beginning to look seriously but as you know there are very few possibilities here.

This letter from Fedia is in response to your letters written still when you were here. So they are very ancient.

Alec is again a bit worn out and this time he did not do anything imprudent – neither trips – nor excessive bicycling, nor working in the woods – but really I feel not so badly (in Alec's writing). I have my supplement ½ liter of milk here. Tenderly

PS I announced the news to all the family at the same time in order to avoid misunderstandings, as well as to the Asches (Ashkenazy's).

# January 20, 1941

Alec

My Dear (Mon Cher): Thank you for your note – here the days are quasi springlike with sun and no need for heating and that the correspondence from my sister Lucy remains blocked for 24 hours due to the snow on the express Lyon Marseilles seems unbelievable but sadly is true.

Finally Serge has acknowledged receipt of the packages – that makes it the first time since the prisoner of war camp that I see his writing. Sadly, less good news of my aunt – she is suffering from her age that is close to yours - naturally as a result of less food and the cold. We send her packages that do arrive.

I think you must know that Guenia is still in Marseilles, and my friend Alec is also in the neighborhood of Grenoble, alas.

If I do not have this week an answer about a house that we saw but do not know if it is for rent - I have decided to make a trip to Agen and that area which the return of a normal physical condition makes possible. It is idiotic to be so *jittery (nervy)* (*Russian* word), and to be able only to sweep dust, that as you know is excessive here.

Delighted to have, even if indirectly, news of Lily – she is one of the 50 or so cousins whom I met slightly and whom I liked the most, following the formula.

I took an hour's walk with Bousi and there was only a quarter of an hour of “daddy carry”.

I am sending you under separate wrapping the second volume of Wells - that is becoming novel like “man of the world!” You read of the death of Joyce – he was Paul Leon's boss and to whom he dedicated his book!

Lilia did not profit of the indiscretion of her daughter with the letter from Aunt Elsa. No, we knew nothing about Felix M. -

They are not praising the weather in Orange in summer.

And that is all – tenderly, Alec

PS Do you want some Samogyl – some arrived in Lavardac.

## January 23, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for your long letter. For the time being we have not yet received details from the point of view of the location of Roc-Marceau. As the proprietor is presently in Algiers the delay is understandable.

As to the subject of the price that we mentioned: 1<sup>st</sup>. We have included the price of a second servant. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Expenses have gone up a great deal. 3<sup>rd</sup>. One must not forget that to take care of a house is more expensive than for 3 rooms. Think already of the....for example.

Practically speaking 1<sup>st</sup>. The month where you are intended to pay for a hotel for Mania also is more expensive than the fixed price. Here we will be able to have her stay – first for reasons of hygiene that I have already mentioned then because there is enough room. And the main reason because the Vigoureux are happy to reintegrate their own room. In fact we will be able to make some economies if we are able to reduce the fixed price and then in the good season it may be that we will be able to feed everyone less expensively. But do not forget that Alec has to continue his diet and must not allow himself too many ....and that I also cannot take chances not to speak of Mania and of yourself. As concerns daily living expenses -wood that we paid 300 francs for in your time, now costs us 460. Today I bought 2 broccolis, one pound of mandarines, onions and .... and 2 oranges and the whole thing cost 26 francs - I never spent more than around 15 francs before.

But to explain to you that despite the fact that we know that it will be more expensive to make this move, there does not exist any other installation in the area. That for the moment we have not had any difficulty in ... and you can imagine basing yourself on what it costs for a few diapers – those prices can change to any amount just now.

Sadly this is not extraordinary when you look at the price of Swiss francs. Lizok is planning on offering you a jump rope when you arrive here. It is she who invented this and has talked of this for 4 consecutive days.. A doll is reserved for Mania. She says to all Papapa is coming and Mania, in a train here. Papapa happy – Bouzik good. And she adds that you will sleep and Aliou (Olga) in the same room and that you will dress her. When Augustine tries to suggest to her that you are not in the habit of this kind of exercise she starts to cry we leave ....Each time she puts on her socks she says that Mania made them for her. Etc. So as you see you are the principal topic of conversation. Would you remind

Mania to send me the pattern for the baptismal shirt that I sent her as I am waiting for them to cut other pieces of material?

## August 8, 1941

#VII

Thank you for your circular of the 7<sup>th</sup>. I find the note from d'O (Olga?) amiable and certainly sincere. There are still quite a few decent people. I am still waiting that Natasha does what is necessary! Through cross checking we know from her letter a number of things. From our side we do not ask ... moreover since quite a while the packages that are sent are absent – not that it inconveniences us at all! As for Mania ... it seems to me quite difficult because again, visitor permissions and ...seem sad especially around November – well, we will see.

Katia writes that Loulou, Rene's (Monbrison ?) aunt has the same problems that Anna, Mania, Sioma but much more drawn out and it seems even they are even not yet finished.

On the subject of the p.s. I had understood and the fact that Fedia has things under control is the principal consolation - that there are a lot or few and that the trunks are more or less closed with padlocks and locks is less important.

I repeat that only the telegram, from Fedia's friends addressed to Marseilles and the favorable response to my request must precede the payment of the tickets - all the rest follows and I hope with as little delay as possible.

What you say from Tunis is very interesting and I am delighted for Vera's friends.

Excellent news from Antibes where the Ash's (Ashkenasys) and the Philipps are delighted to be together.

My health, thanks to the medicine based on (mucous) muqueuse of pork (sic!) is working very well and I am feeling stronger and the walk to the Gatinski's ... about 8 kilometers from here in the forest of Landes that we took yesterday with Lizok in her chair on the Lilia's bicycle bar as I had rented a pretty poor bike. Radiant weather, aroma of pines and ...and real country that pleased Lilia but to think that we might have to perhaps one day bury ourselves in a similar shanty town made me a bit depressed. Lizok picked mushrooms and in general it was a successful excursion that we took just in time as there was a strong storm in the night and it is raining.

Mania is healing from her insect bites but found three new ones that make her suffer quite a bit.

What the newspapers are saying puts me basically in an excellent humor when

I think of the final result but I am a bit apprehensive of the intermediary period! Tenderly, Lialec



*Change to Lia's writing*

Delighted to have good news of you all. Despite the weather - I think that you will be royally installed in the apartment downstairs at Vera's and that in Bale you will feel absolutely at home. Nothing very interesting here. We are quite impatient to know how Alec's trip will turn out but we have to wait for the return of his friend as he will need his advice.

There, I finish and kiss you all, Lia

## August 7, 1941

Alec

My Dear: (Mon Cher) I am writing on a grey, cold, rainy day that is easier to live with than the heat wave, but is not so agreeable never the less.

First I have to thank you for the royal gift that you offered me as I am having my umbrella, received with our things, recovered with the lovely silk from yours that you left me and it will be (more extraordinary) than any I have ever owned!

Yesterday Allenbach (Mike's doctor) did a strong physical therapy session, I think especially to show his methods to the son in law of Vallat, who is supposed to replace him for 15 days during his vacation and he confirmed that the right food was practically straightened and normal, the left one bends less easily but he is very satisfied with the results.

I received a long letter from Lise de B(essac) from Lisbon where she is waiting for her boat, unable to eat the complete meals that she is served as she is so used to our regime. She was very warmly received every where and her trip through Spain with visits to the Prado and the Escorial were, she says, a real enchantment. I received a note from Catia who is in much higher spirits as Serge is working now in his specialty and his morale is better.

Excellent news from the United States – it seems that there are landscapes as wild and as picturesque as in the Tyrol. Robert Marx wrote to his mother to tell her how much he admired Irene at the defense of her thesis which he attended. It is comforting to know the real sympathy with which she is surrounded.

The more I think about it, I must admit that I am leaning in the direction of the voyage especially because of the children, and naturally if the results of the visit with my friend Roger (Nathan) are satisfactory. Also that from his side, Fedia is not expecting anything (one) at that moment, I will ask him to envisage an intermediary resting stop as is the case for Irene. Never the less all this seems improbable to me and if this doesn't work out, I will be neither surprised nor desperate.

My health is holding and my morale as well, although with some lows, more frequent these days than highs.

I have been told that Renee will probably not be able to stay at her place in her villa, nor Loulou, nor all those who are in the vicinity of Villa Ellonia as there so many new arrivals – ladies and children on vacation, arriving from the village where the twins were born and from nearby.

I have just purchased a pair of very attractive socks with three points on my new card of which 30 are ... and already at our disposal for 21 francs.

My daughter, next to me is washing her hands while discussing with vehemence with Mania whom she adores. This last one, fearing your reproaches, has paid herself two meals at the hotel that were excellent. She looks well and today did not protest about anything except the weather which made me think that she was really happy.

Augustine has finally, after a year, received a card from her sister who lives in Paris, with good news of her parents, which makes me very happy for her.

The young Curlier have sold the radio that they were renting to us and if we do not succeed in renting the one of the Vigoureux, as I have good hope to, I will be deprived of this pass time and Lilia will no longer have her lunch without the interruption of my disappearing next door to the smoking room to listen to the news for a quarter of an hour.

I have begged Natasha to have the Swiss consul give her the necessary voucher (documents) so that you could send her packages – if it is allowed, to include cigarettes. As it has to do with an inhabitant from ? we cannot expect anything before a good month.

Delighted to know you are so well and affectionately taken care of and all our tenderest thoughts to the Verapaul and children. Lialec

PS Question of relatives – except that your father and Ury were brothers, were there other family members between David and Matilde? Oh boy is Anna D. ugly, ugly, ugly enough to cut one's appetite.

# August 8, 1941

#6 Alec

My Dear (Mon Cher) Thank you for your letter and card. I think that you received mine in the meantime telling you that I had your telegram in hand and the thoughts that it suggested.

What you tell me in your card does not surprise me, I am sorry to say. And here is another burden for poor Fedia. I regret a great deal that you telegraphed him as I suppose that the new information will oblige us to send another "night letter" and that annoys us especially in view of the astronomical cost to our bank notes of this kind of sport costs our account. In any case I thank you both for your efforts and hope that when, and if starting, the remainder finds to be one day in order, the question of tickets will not be an obstacle and as you will have had the time to agree about in whose hands of the ? r ? and this last one in Marseilles we will be advised. I am making efforts to think of our voyage as an improbable eventuality in order not to be disappointed.

Mania is well and has a composed expression. Her mood when she does not think of her failed trip is even satisfactory.

Have you received the letter send to the "Victoria" and "Victoria-Schwenzehof" in ignorance of the exact address?

When one does not think of the exchange rate but live in the moment, it is very agreeable in fact to be paying one franc for stamps!

Delighted to know that you are so well in the frame that suits your image much better it than what you exposed yourself to in another place. You 'beard' certainly prefers the ?on the beautiful mountains and the calm of the Swiss lakes to the the *gazogenes* and other less agreeable aspects of the life of today and how I understand this! It makes me think of trip we took with Lilinka on a motor boat on Lake Lemman with orchestra and all that. One imagined oneself in 1900 and it wasn't bad at all.

I will leave the rest of the page to your daughter to please you to date from today? and date me letters.  
Tenderly Alec

(Change to Lia's handwriting)

My Dear: It seems to us that we resent you Fedia's letters. If in the meantime you do not receive them, tell me which ones are missing. In any case I am sending one that is perhaps yours but I am not sure.

Alec is very happy that Serge seems to have a life that is a little less painful. The doctor says he cares for a lot of repatriates who are very stricken.

I will try on a woolen dress. Luckily we didn't buy the material on voucher last month as at this moment one sells nothing of that sort in Agen and I really have nothing to wear as here we didn't count on winter dresses in the month of August.

I close with big kisses, Lia

## August 13, 1941

#VIII Alec

My Dear (Cher): I am so sorry with the news of Volo's illness – we hope not only is it finished but also forgotten!

Peter's letter pleased me very much by what it shows of simplicity, spontaneity and total absence of affectation of any sort – one feels very much that he is writing to inform not to be read.

Delighted that Volo is being spoiled – at least in this chapter Vera is in the same place as we are!

I am so sorry about George's telegram and apologize again for the inconvenience, please give his address to Tony so that he can get into contact with him. Tony received a really nice card from Paul and was very touched.

We have had another letter from Sonia describing very nicely, also naively, as had Tania, her existence in Marseilles. She seems to have to take a short trip to Lyons if she does not pass through on her return to see ? Katia's sister who, as I believe I wrote you, is in quite bad conditions. Their eldest brother at the age of 34, lost his charming wife, which is very sad for him.

Without expecting news on the 16<sup>th</sup> as I am less and less optimistic, I feel, I must admit, I would be pleased for the thing to be sent. I will do my best to arrange, next week, my part in the thing without much hope of a response. The voyage continues to make me smile less, but sadly I want less and less to stay here as you can imagine. The refusal of of Peter by the holiday inn, has nothing to do with my great (violent) desire to move.

Sadly our cow has been sold – I will get the sale amount tomorrow but regret it, all the same. I hope to be able to arrange anyway.

Today is grey and cool and we have Mme. ? . Yesterday Mme. Gatinnsky came to spend the day. It does not show yet and Lilia, as an expert mother, gave her a lot of advice.

Lucy writes that she saw in Megeve, Renee's son Gille with his young wife and baby. The wife is quite typical and ?

Delighted with the good news from Olga to Mania about herself and Ignacio. The Vigoureux have lent us a radio and I listen to it with full attention, so happy to have it after a few days without one.

Other than that, nothing to tell. Only as a piece of curiosity, my friend, the nephew of my old boss who preceded James, dropped his name and no longer has the given name of his father.

In our album we have a photo of you and Vera during a walk you took that she describes to Lia! Keep me posted about what is happening with Irene as I would like, maybe, to repeat it to my friends in Marseilles. I think that they will be interested at least as much as Fedia.

Robert seems delighted with his visit – his bad mood at the beginning was probably due to his fatigue and his health that is less good than he admits – I think.

Ah! Here is the sun that is showing through– it will be good weather! Tenderly, Alex

## August 15, 1941

P.S. As concerns Vallat – his price for the poor is 8 francs per visit and I think that I remember that in the case of Lilia and yourself, his price for you went up to 20 francs as I think that his bill for 16 visits was for more than 320 francs. Could you verify this with your checkbook? The 25 franc bill from Rochetie (?) seem to have impressed you – you return to them after having complained one day of the price of Echenoz(?) for whom you were not a regular patient – for the shots of the little one (she) he took 25 for each one. Even at 5 francs the visit I would say that Anna does not have the will to go elsewhere.

#X

My Dear, Dear Vera and Paul: Alec

Here I am having returned from my trip and am confirming my telegram – in effect, if I was an optimist, I would put higher value on the promise that I have of a favorable answer in about 3 weeks, after my papers, that are actually returned here for a (*complement d'enquete*) an extension of investigation, will be done there. I have serious reasons to think that the departure of the files from here to the Central bureau will take only a few days says. So, without any surprises, I have reason to believe that in 15 days or thereabouts, we will be set in the favorable sense but at that moment - and this is in every bodies opinion and also the practical necessity seeing the way that things are organized in the sense of visas, one cannot delay.

That is why I beg you to telegraph Fedia. It will be necessary that once our passports are in hand I can leave immediately for Marseilles and find ready: a visa and the paid tickets so as to be able to cement without any other delay the ship; have the visa signed (*apposer*) and request for an urgent transit (*transit d'urgence*) – this by the way to avoid the storms of winter in November and December.

David wrote me that the (?) is absolutely informed for the Cuba – one needs a deposit of \$500.00 per person plus \$150.00 of lawyer's fees etc. for a 6 month tourist visa – a deposit that is reimbursed if one leaves in the 6 months. It is a new regulation that one ? and that is so successful that it seems improbable that it will last. That is why if Fedia does not have the assurance that the visas for the United States will be sent to Marseilles really quickly, as we now have our exit visas and that they were so urgently requested, it is necessary that we take advantage of that and despite my repugnance to additional new expenses for an eventual stay in Cuba, I am insisting.



I am counting especially on you, my dear Paul, to clear the situation with Fedia, take the necessary measures for him to keep me informed by phone of what is happening and will happen. I need, I must admit to you, all my courage, cold blood, and the rest of my energy and my health to organize and realize this trip. Every night of insomnia caused by the uncertainty carries a heavy price, sadly and nothing is more painful to me than to work in the night that I am inevitably obliged to accomplish – I bless therefore, every ray of hope (*luer*).

Except for all that, my trip although tiring was rather satisfactory – in addition I did accomplish some errands and they cost me nothing, quite to the contrary, my dear Sacha (Alexander), and that is a consolation for me, a thin one, if you wish, but a consolation never the less. The friends that I saw were all in quite good moods without the result that that didn't have much effect on mine which remain quite mediocre. I had the extraordinary proof of loyalty and effectiveness of the friend who spent the night with us some time ago in Orange.

Augustine is now warned of the possibility of our departure, but she is to go to my niece Molly, she is taking it well. Moreover, these are very annoyed as they had rented a chalet at Megeve and now no longer know if it will be allowed that they live in it. Jean Jacques is, in addition, an orphan of the war and, young as he is and as he takes the annoyances of every day very much to heart and his health reflects that.

There is exactly on this day, a year ago that on a day as beautiful, flaming and resplendent that I came to embrace you all at Port de Bordes. That all this seems already long ago and how much water has run its course mixed with so many tears. I never, I admit it, thought that I would be one day where I am a year ago but what is curious is that the birth of Michel that added at my legal age (ask for explanations legal and technical from Verinette if you wish), opens doors. This last one now weighs 5 kilos 900 and chuckles and is beginning to show dimples – he has blue eyes and is really very sweet. As for his sister, she is more and more of a rascal but I can absolutely not resist her gentleness and her charm when she decides to use them.

For Vera: I have news of Katia (*Berline*) for whom the better mood of Serge is having good effect. The note of congratulations that we received from him is full of calm courage and simplicity and smiling and he only wishes for a little more luck for him than he has had with such simplicity that thinking about our departure and all of that, tightens my throat (heavy heart). Of the most painful tears that will be shed, among others, will be those at our separation from Mania who is holding out well and is really in excellent form and has a morale that we are able to support rather well but for whom I really worry

about the her morale and physical condition that the shock of our departure will cause – have you discussed the possibility with Olga, of a trip, even pro-visionary of a few weeks, there? I do not know if it is possible but if she could accompany us there in order to return afterwards – it would ease the transition. On the other hand, I think that you would have to think about visiting her for a few days somewhere where she could get to from here, in order to help uphold her spirit for the 48 hours that follow our departure. Her own move and the thought of seeing you even for a few hours, will constitute, in my opinion, a diversion capable of dulling the hole of the effects of our departure that I fear. Naturally her trip to Olga's would be even better but the return, pure and simple to Orange, without *Papa*, to Anna, is not a solution. I think that this is possible but inform us in time for us to request her permission and naturally, if possible not for a place too near to you which is difficult to get. Keep us informed so that I can make the requests. If the plan to visit Olga, seems to you and Olga to be possible, have Olga telegraph me of what I have to do and at which consulate.

I lunched upon my return at the Philippe's who come here every Tuesday as it is possible that I must make another short business trip on Wednesday. One is forcing oneself to create other sources of revenue to counter the deductions on our capital, however without much success.

Lilinka is well and in form despite the pinched and thin aspect she has in the portrait by Zina.

Frank, this is for Papa, is leaving one of these days for Toulouse to see about getting the customs clearances and sale of his car.

I am sorry for poor David for whom business is advancing very slowly.

I await now news from Fedia in order to knock with courage at the door of the consulate and to have a believable confirmation so that upon my return to Marseilles, Mr.Seliach(?) will be either have in his possession the final instructions or at least be sure enough of their arrival to manage as if he had them.

I recouped two gold watches that remained with Liaka (Ashkenasy) and am delighted.

Tenderly to all, Alex August 24<sup>th</sup>

## August 27, 1941

XI Lia

My Dear: (Mon Cher) It has been a century that I have not written to you but the days pass and there are always a thousand and one things to do and in addition, without there being a real reason to be so busy.

Thank you for the phrase concerning your letter to Fedia. It is only today that we received the 'circular' so it was very agreeable to be informed of the facts and efforts a few days ahead.

In fact we have no serious reasons not to see our projects materialize – it was confirmed to Alec through competent sources that Fedia's efforts also it seems to me, have had a rather favorable effect so we are beginning to be preoccupied with the things that have to be done in advance like travel coats and the children's clothes. We received from Odier a short note certifying that all my silverware had been delivered by them for my wedding. All these sorts of documents will help us through customs. Also, as you know, everything that I own is used enough not to appear new.

Mania is very agitated about her future. She talks of it from morning to night. We have written to Olga to ask her if she can envisage a visit with her, to which consulate one should apply. Also, our idea just now is to present the situation to her under the guise of asking her to accompany us for a part of the trip because of the baby and Lizok. Basically I think that we will find a solution to this problem.

The Phippess came for lunch yesterday and stayed for the day and it was very sympathetic. We get along very well. Lizok will spend, unless contra order, the afternoon of next Wednesday with them. She will leave with the car with Mania that goes to pick up the little one's doctor. Then the nurse will go to pick her up by bicycle – Mania will do some shopping and then pick her up and will bring her back here when the car is due to leave.

Zina did a drawing, absolutely not resembling the little one (she). Alec had the intention of offering it to you if it was a success but it is not interesting. I also posed for her one afternoon. There were some sketches that resembled me but they were neither interesting nor artistic. I am delighted that at our departure I can help quite a bit with things for Zina's cousins who are expecting a baby and these are really not the best conditions particularly in winter. They have a cabin in the woods without a real furnace as one sometimes has in the countryside and this is a problem that is not so easy to solve.

Antoinette is very touched by the trouble that you take for her and was as touched and flattered that you ? her.

I will close as I am terribly tired. It is very humid that I stand very badly and today's life is not very quieting for the nerves. The doctor here has really taken care of Alex very well and by following his advice he feels incredibly better and even did not have an attack of nerves during his last trip even though he got very excited when the train he was traveling in had an accident and had to transfer the wounded. He had no ....? Tenderness for all Lia

## August 30, 1941

XIII Alec

My Dear Ones: We could not have dreamed yesterday to have you at the end of the line and it was an agreeable surprise.

Thank you again, Paul, for having done the necessary as to Schadi – I expect to see him next week as it seems that the preliminary requests for the American Visa (doctors documents etc.) and those for the Transit Visas will be in order so that have all will be in process and a lot of things ready when our Exit Visa will be granted. That, I am told, will happen around the 15<sup>th</sup>. I will maintain all the calm that I can and hope to succeed. I admit that I feel like I am walking on hot coals.

Paul seems surprised that I have to see Gorik before my departure – it will only be in the case if the authorization and the possibility of taking something with me. In addition I think that Felix(*I think Valabregue*) who knows the problem, will have explained the situation to you.

I regret that our communications were cut off before we were able to talk with you but I believe I overheard a dialogue between you and Vera who were next to the phone and it made me very happy to hear your voice.

Also happy to know that your cold is over.

Here there is nothing very new to report except that the bad weather persists that spoils the festivities in the this corner (area) – in fact Lavardac was completely empty, literally, to the profit of Agen. This morning Augustine went there and we are going for lunch at the hotel, all four of us, to the joy of Mania and Bousi.

I admire Vera's calm in the face of Mania's situation and with am envious. I would love to have as good nerves in order to confront all my problems as calmly and smoothly.

Natasha's brother arrived and is installing himself and his family in a more comfortable house than before. That is good for the ? As to Natasha. She got on her brother's new bike and had a rather bad fall with a lot of commotion but is healing, I think, quite quickly.

The news of our probable departure is filtering through in Lavardac with diverse reactions and I must admit that I am in a hurry to be go now that our fate is sealed.

Thank you for the greetings from Guetia and Verinette (?) - at the time of our 3 day visit in Brussels during our honeymoon, I saw Guetia and went to Verinette's in Paris. I also met her at Vera-Volo (*de Gunzburg*). Was her husband's father in the diplomatic corps?

I do not know if I told you that Paul, my Katia's brother, is suffering from the same serious illness as Anna, Sioma and Mania had for 48 hours in Orange and from which poor Loulou, Renee's aunt, is still not healed.

We will have send on the piece in rhyme and prose – I admire Katia's memory - to have been able to learn prose by heart. I was never able to retain even that piece of classical Gogol.

It would be wonderful to see Paul – here, there or even en route.

Tenderly to all, Alec

Same letter with Lia addition

Just a few words – So pleased to have you on the line. As you know we are now in full 'realization' of our project To say that we are happy isn't exactly the fact but changing our scene is a sign of necessity. It is a great deception for Alec from all points of view and as Papa knows, he is very shocked that in our day it is always the pessimists who are right. In site of all the aspects of our morale we are full of courage tin the face of this new chapter in our lives.

Mania is feeling very much in her element. She no longer talks of separating from Misha I regret for her as she gets too attached to the children. Lizok adores her but mistreats her as much as I do which consoles my sentiment that my pedagogy has no great value so that I am not alone in being undisciplined

I will close in order to go and rest.

## **August 28, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: Enclosed is a card from Mania for Nadia. We received a cable from Fedia announcing the good news - I could for once have avoided the expense of a telegram for him.

A regulation from the Ministry of Finance authorizes those traveling to the United States to have, if possible, 500 dollar each year is naturally normal.

I will, therefore, see Gorik at your request as Paul said to do.

I am making lists of our diverse possessions in view of packing - which is emotionally draining and preparing diverse documents that I will need. I am awaiting a word from Schach to go to Marseilles – without news I will probably leave Thursday evening.

Finally the weather is beautiful I will go and join the children and Lilia in the garden.

Tenderly, Alec

## August 28, 1941

Alec XII

*Mea Culpa* – your letter on the subject of telegrams is absolutely right. The favorable news from the consul confirms what you say. I am awaiting news from the ? in Marseilles before going there to begin the preliminary measures, probably next week y, everything seems to be in motion and I am a little panicked at moments. Happily, as always, at important moments, Lilia is calm, serene and thinks only of what is ?

Mania is beginning to worry a great deal which is painful. She returns to old memories of dramatic departures in which she participated with you, especially Rosa Sigismondovna (*Lia's mother- Rosa daughter of Sigmund Warburg*), which bring tears to Lilinka's eyes.

Apart from that we are well. Thinking that of Anna will come soon, then Lucy and I still envision the trip if possible, via Paul (by gasogene) Caupreue and Madrid with a stop to rest at Olga's.

Lilia is writing separately to Vera – I am left with the hope that your cold is over and to congratulate myself on the good care of Vallat who has gotten me to the door of departure in really go form.

Lilia is writing to Jean as it may be for their convenience that Alain not make the trip alone.

Tenderly, Alec



## September 3, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for the letter of the 30<sup>th</sup>. Lia's hopes for the second leg of our trip is by me but do not forget that it is only a hope. Schach, as I have already written has promised do all that he can – as to it working all by itself, that seems to me to be improbable. Vera is right – the time it takes the mails and the multiple little details make it necessary for me to go tomorrow to Marseilles. All the other matters still have question marks for me but I hope to be enlightened when I go to Marseilles. It does not surprise me at all, given how long the mails take, that Paul has not had an answer and I am very pleased that he has confirmed the 'class' by phone, as ? advised me to do. I received on the 29<sup>th</sup> the letter from the 26<sup>th</sup> with things that needed to be signed and sent it back by registered mail the same day. He must have received it.

I am a little surprised, I admit, that you can think that Gorik, although I wrote to him that you agreed, is awaiting the written confirmation to follow my instructions but as it is your advice, I do not want to expose myself to another incident with him. For other friends my word is enough. For now everything will have to fall into place until I will be with your son - in particular as Philippe spontaneously put himself at my disposition. I will drop this affair unless there is a counter order, as you have not understood it. Eventually I will explain it but I admit that following the receipt of the telegram that Paul sent upon your arrival, I did not think it was so difficult nor complicated.

For you, I repeat that the normal amount for customs is about 28,000 francs and its value of about 18,000 francs! You see that there would not be a return of capital. We are trying to follow a favorable regimen but as this can take some time and as I cannot await the result, if it works out, Franz will deposit what he can with Gorik.

As for the *tutoyage* of Antoinette, I will tell her of your wishes – she is full of respectful affection toward you and will agree, I am sure, to whatever you ask. She certainly is not ignorant that her name, except for one letter, reassembles yours!!

Yes, I did know the story of Mrs. Echeneyz (?) – and it is, in fact amusing that she studied so carefully this aspect of the question.

I am not at all surprised to know that poor Mrs. Vala is still in bed and delighted that she is no longer in danger when one thinks of what happened.

One must not rub vinegar in poor Mrs. Aulier's (?) skin as she, alas, no longer fabricates anything.

We received the last package from Spain in Agen, it having been sent at the beginning of June.

Lets not speak any longer of Mania – I will see what we can do so that she accompanies us as far as Olga's and if that does not succeed I will be at least as surprised as you and no less unhappy.

Thank you again for the letter – I am forwarding the one from Ira to Anna and I congratulate you that your personal belongings were taken away although by what I hear, the new tenants are usually quite correct on this subject.

I am going to Agen this afternoon – Lizok will accompany me and will spend 4 hours at the Barsalous (*Philippe and Antoinette's farm*). I hope she will stand this trip by car.

Vallat, having returned from a short rest, found Michel in general, very well and even his left foot really much better. Muscles and fat make the massage less easy and he also has his own resistance. We are going to talk to Allenbach about the trip so that he can take, in time, the measurements that he desires, in hopes of ordering the machine. The only real regret that I have – I am not speaking from the point of view of sentiment – is that I am succeeding little by little to calm his regret that the treatment that he so successfully started he will not be able to complete.

Excellent news from Antibes. Annouita has left to rest in the mountains.

Absolutely beautiful weather. Lilia made me a very interesting gift of a book about Nerac that I will have sent on to Olga. Unless there are other uses for it I expect to pack your Casanova in our boxes here.

On my last trip I had the bad luck of losing my raincoat during the 2 changes of trains at 3 and 4 in the morning.

I will close to go to the garden to lie in the sun with the family and watch Lizok make cakes as she now has a lot of sand.

Tenderly, Alec

PS Miss Martier asked me to transmit her wishes to you. She is busy taking care of the children a prisoner of war who have just lost their mother!!

## September 6, 1941

Lia

My Dear: A few words as in truth as I am beginning to mark the time for all the I still have to do. Alec left yesterday and I just received an telegraphic message telling me that everything seems to going well for the moment and that it is possible that we will leave Lavardac already at the end of the month if not early October. He telegraphed me at the moment that he was beginning steps for Mania's safe conduct papers.

This last one (Mania) will add the hotel bill to this letter.

Instead of having yourself paid for her food, we would prefer to go once in a while to eat at her hotel. This makes a bit of a change that I do not disdain and from one point of view it frees Augustine and from the other the excitements of doing the shopping. So in fact this arrangement is good for everyone and I think that we will even go to eat there more frequently when it will be necessary to simplify the housekeeping.

Allenbach agreeably surprised us at his last visit. I shared with him my deep regret that we could not see his treatment to its end to which he assured me that Michel's foot could be considered healed and that the other one only needed "maintenance." Even that we could take on the voyage and that once we arrived it was probable that an ordinary doctor could continue the massage and that it would only be necessary, in order to avoid surprises, to see a specialist from time to time. According to the telegram our presence is indispensable for two days in Marseilles at, for the moment, an undecided date on which we should we go there and we will probably around Lucy while awaiting the definite departure. This wait is ? by one who is counting the days. All this seems rather complicated but one cant think too much about it and must simply try not to have too much that is not finished between now and then.

Tenderly, Lia

**September 17, 1941**

**May be confidential Alec**

My Dear: I am writing from the Hotel des Princes where you have so often received us, so often received me, in so kindly and fatherly way. All these happy memories that are there in despite of the agonies that we are passing through, already carry the gentle scent of the past and are dear to me. The real affection that you inspired in one who in this world is not quite 'grown up' and that I thought to have lost since a long time, move me and make my heart beat more intensely.

I feel I hear you tell me to keep calm and I feel in effect at the same time, calmed and more courageous.

I did not want to leave this place so full of memories of you without sharing a word of filial affection.

Alec

**September 9, 1941**

Lia

My Dear: Although I am dropping from fatigue I would like to thank you for your letter that touched me a great deal and that Alec will certainly appreciate as well when he returns on Wednesday.

We received today two small and two big packages – absolutely marvelous and I would have liked eating all the delicious things immediately.

Alec tells me that he keeps you posted of all the facts and efforts so you know as much as I do.

We will see how the promises will work out in reality but I think that we will still have to live through some ordeals.

I went by taxi to Agen with Mania between two feedings. I wanted at least that she be able to accompany us to Cannes as that would make her happy. But I didn't succeed as the process takes much longer than the delay (?) that we thought we had but I think I did get her safe passage for Orange via Marseilles. That is already something.

You can imagine how much I have to do to put things in order, separate the things that we should take with us. There are things to do for the children and things by train that Lot et Garonne we will surely never have.

We have to take things for three different existences. - the voyage, the stop over in Cannes, voyage etc. Also I would like to leave things in a way that is a bit correct as there are many things everyone is missing.

Augustine is going to Molly's who is waiting with impatience as she has no one worth anything to take care of them and the baby. There!

Thank Vera for her letter and tell her that I manage to write the most necessary and that I thank her for the notebook that Felix sent Alec. The children are well and Lizok is good. But she has a little excema and wakes up periodically at 3 in the night but a visit to her room is enough and she goes back to sleep immediately. I close as it is 11:00 and the little one will wake up and will be hungry at 5. He had his vaccinations yesterday.

Tenderly and thank you for your words, Lia

## November 27, 1941

Lia

My Dear: It is shameful that we are in America since a week and that I have not written to you until today. But truly, honestly, I have not found a moment.

As Fedia told you, instead of landing from the ship to be welcomed by Fedia, Willy, the Pierres (*Uncle Pierre and Aunt Yvonne*), Aline (*their daughter*), Emily (*Brett; Lovey, Granny*) and Ellen (*van Marx*), we were held back on board for a night and then disembarked in the morning and sent to Ellis Island.

It was a pity as it spoiled our arrival but it was not terrible and the physical conditions truly were quite acceptable. Clean, heated, hot water, ? and abundant food. Obviously it was quite complicated with the children on the ship. There were compatriots (*an older Russian couple*) of yours who were touching. They helped continually. The gentleman decided that Michel was too heavy for me and practically did not allow me to carry him.

They took us out to a courtyard during one hour a day, the rest of the time was spent in an enormous hall. The night was spent in a room with 8 beds but we were with the wife of the gentleman who carried Micha and another fellow country woman from the ship. Still from the point of view of nerves and fatigue, it was the last straw. I must admit that I will need a bit of time to get on an even keel.

The ship was very agreeable. There were not too many passengers, less than 100 and it could accommodate 775. The first three days everyone felt quite ill. The ocean was really very turbulent. Micha took it best, then me. Alec was very unhappy and could not take two steps and then poor Lizok was completely sick for three days but got better afterwards as there were a lot of children on board and she was very diverted and led a completely independent life on the bridge when I was busy with Micha in the cabin.

The cabin was fine, the room at least 3 meters by 4, with a toilet and shower. I did all the laundry there and was able to avoid some expenses.

I am very distracted so that this letter is very uneven. For the Pauls (*Paul and Vera Dreyfus*); I have written to Pierre (*Dreyfus, eldest son of Paul and Vera*) and Helene (*Kuffner. Paul's sister*) will come to see me here in a few days. Here (*Hunt Cottage, Warburg estate*) all is well- the house is very sympathetic. The children delightful – the parents exactly as they have always been.

There is a crisis of servants and for all this set up there is only one maid. That makes a lot of work but she manages. De (*Willy's daughter*) is very nice and takes care of me and the children as well as helping with the household.

Alec has gone to the city to try to figure things out – we shall see. This seems quite difficult. He will spend the night at Ellen's (*van Marx*) even maybe two.

Sunday there are a lot of people who are coming to see us. The Pierres who we did see when we got off Ellis Island, the Roberts (*Robert and Lucy de Gunzburg*), the three Meyers (*Olga and her 2 husbands, Adolph and Fritz*), Gisela (*Olga's daughter*) and Elsbeth (*Oppenheimer*). The children are well. Lizok is tired and enervated. Micha looks well and we are expecting the doctor tomorrow in order to arrange a new more accommodating diet for his age. I think they will add vegetables, fruit and cow's milk. The milk comes from the property and is extraordinary.

Tomorrow Ellen is coming. By the way, Emily, and Ellen as well as the Fedias came to Ellis Island.

I will close to go to bed. Lizok speaks of you often. Where is Mania? Tenderly, Lia

As you know, not knowing exactly when we would be able to leave, we took a bit more than enough money and then just before leaving we were able to find two diamonds that we added to the little clip that you gave us. If necessary it will be easy to convert these.

From Alec:

My Dear: I am seizing exactly two minutes to add this PS written on my knees. Ellis Island was just one thing too many and Lilinka who arrived exhausted and enervated. Lizok also and me as well. The weather is infernal and we do nothing. Two and a half days in New York without stopping, a dollar of telephone calls and have seen practically no one! What a huge city – impressive center city, the rest like the outskirts of London, shoddy – an absence of domestics for us Europeans even though the bread is delivered already cut and everything in cans or boxes is a disagreeable, tiring and enervating characteristic. The Fedias and the Pierres are like fish in water, the others more or less also but without water!

When you will have received this note everything will be more in order. I am looking for work but except for Max Warburg, have met with no one of interest.

I hope that the mail to Paul finally arrived. While waiting I am holding, under advice of Fedia, that which Albert gave me.

The luggage that we have finished unpacking seems in tact except that at the French/Spanish border my Goerz binoculars in their case were stolen out of one of the 4 trunks of Cook's. The case was empty when I declared it at customs here and Portuguese locks were broken. I do not think the insurance covers that. Ideal weather, have a nice letter from Pieter, awaiting Guenia for lunch.

Fedia's children are good, good – even too good! I was expecting a disagreeable welcome from Olga's friends or even from Frieda – but it was the welcome from Mozelle's friends that were odious – when the occasion presents itself, tell that to Gorik - it will amuse him. Tenderly, Alec

PS We ask your pardon for the delay. Lia



## January 25, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for your letter to Alec. Sadly your pleasure at seeing him recovered was a bit premature and since 3 days he has pains and is eating only noodles – it will take a little time but this will pass as usual.

Yesterday we visited the house about which we spoke to you. There are still a few practical points to clarify but in principal it seems acceptable. Under no circumstances should you feel obliged to come out of consideration for us,

In any case we are obliged to leave here because, as you know I can not leave the baby out of doors anywhere. From one side there is the street, dust, a lot of coming and going and certainly infestations of microbes – from the other one smells the products that one imbibes. Also the rooms are dark. This is essential, even if it demands a small financial sacrifice, that at least for the first months, so the baby have better conditions. Later we will see.

As for price, the proprietor an Algerian, has not yet set a fixed price or rather communicates with the notary - that upon a discretion of a friend of Mrs. Curltier, who has tended a place about the same as this one. But Alec will naturally, try to argue it out.

The house is specially happily situated for you as it is on accessible without stairs, (maybe one). The *living room* gives on to a terrace with a superb view on Lavardac and on the road to Vianne. You will also have a room the communicates with the *living room* and the WCs are near the kitchen – there there are two little steps. But they are not nasty.

You will be able therefore to pass your time in the *living room* or on the terrace. To left of the terrace there is a tiny garden also without steps. From the other side a ? that is also very accessible. For us there is the upper floor on which the rooms are charming and small that makes them easier to take care of and give everyone some privacy.

Practically all the rooms have chimneys and there are a few that have stoves. Now Alec asks me to tell you that if the proposition is agreeable to you, that when you come you install yourselves with us as paying guests. For the time that you are with us we will take someone to help Augustine either a girl who will live in which in the country is less expensive than a housekeeper or someone paid by the hour.

According to the calculations based on the actual price it seems that 60 francs per head for you and Mania, will cover the costs of the extra maid and all the extras. You can arrive when you wish unless the people who are living in the Pieter de Hoochstra (*the house in Amsterdam*) come to annoy you at the hotel – and then you can come sooner.

We are thinking of taking the house from the middle of February in order to be able to have 15 days to clean without overly tiring ourselves and then we would install ourselves around the first of March.

I am sending you a letter from Irene that was mailed to Vera.

Thank you for the information from Mania. I am adding a note for her. Her idea of sewing in colors will be (?) and necessary for the moment I still have some white but make a little vest(?) in color.

I close as I have a lot to do. Tenderly, Lia

Alec addendum: Thank you for your nice letter. It is beautiful here today. I am reading Huxley – God is he intelligent and pretentious but he gives food for thought.

As For the payments(?) I hope to surmount the difficulties in the details but am not in a very advantageous position as the notary knows that there is nothing else to be had in this place and in truth a real move is repugnant to me. Tenderly, Alec PS The Studio Vigoureux is late, sorry. Photos will follow tomorrow. The package left Celrer on the 21st.

**January 26, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: Enclosed are the photos- more or less successful - of the house that I was not able to mail yesterday as a result of the delay of Studio V.

We are looking forward very happily to seeing Philippe next week at Agen where he is going, as you probably know, to conclude the purchase of a property. I do not yet know if he will push as far as Lavardac or if we will go lunch with him but we are counting on Gavrik who is accompanying him in order to lengthen the visit and will come to us for a little bit. Also, despite the problems of commuting this summer they will be able to visit in a neighborly fashion with the two Asch girls who will be able to spend a few days with us and a bit with them as the buses and little trains make all this quite possible.

Also enclosed is a card from Sonia. It must be very painful for Aunt Mathilde. Packages posted to domicile move well and if you wish, eventually, we will be able to send her things in your name from Orange, from here.

Lilinka feels well. I am recuperating slowly thanks to the strict diet and I feel better but how shitty (apologies) to be obliged to have to watch oneself without stopping.

We are waiting for quite a lot of things – answer for the house, your package, our trunks, news of my friend Alec P. without mentioning the baby and also a little, like everyone else news in general so that the postman's arrival is always too late for me even though it is just 9 o'clock. It is raining but is not cold. Tenderly, Lialec

PS Enclosed is the stamp with the surcharge that I unstuck on your directions.

**January 29, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: A word to tell you that Dr. Vallat has just left. He finds Lilinka well and recommends only that she not take too many walks. As concerns the little one (Lizok) he is equally satisfied but he is especially enthusiastic about Roc Marceau about which he praises the quality of the air and its disposition. It is what is the best for the children in our back woods and he also says, while expressing his pleasure at the news of your imminent return, that for you it would also be excellent. Better than where we are as for climate. This delights me I must admit. Tenderly, Alec

## February 3, 1941

Lia

My Dear: I hope that your illness is completely over. From here there is nothing very new. No one among us has felt very famous these days. Alec still looks pretty bad and despite the fact that the crisis is over, he has not yet regained his resistance and everything enervates him. Lizok had one of her excema episodes which occur periodically and often. Thinking of Mania's ways, we treated it as bug bites. I have to say that her doctor in Paris had warned me that they would return often and that in his experience he had seen very few cases where they were able to cure the problem definitively. Vallat is taking care of her for the moment and with results. I also was tired out but a little more bed time seems to have done me good. I have to admit that the trip to Agen is partly to see the Philippe but also to see the doctor as Alec is anxious that I not be cared for only by Vallat who while being not at all a bad doctor, is not a specialist (*obstetrician*).

Lizok talks continually of you and of Mania and is waiting for you with each train that passes by.

Alec was very upset to receive bad news about his aunt. She went overboard to meet her expenses by adding lessons and the lack of food and fatigue caused her to have a serious heart attack. Even though Lucy sends money it does not arrive with any regularity but after what we understand by the cards from Lucy, *interzones* will allow her to send her enough so that she will have some months of life without worries. ... who took care of my mother in law and Aitoff take care of her with great loyalty.

On the subject of Roc Marceaux. There is a point where one has absolutely to draw the line and these conditions seem to us to be reasonable. It is the only place that has been proposed to us in the neighborhood so if the conditions suit us, we will rent it for ourselves in any case. You must not feel obliged to come to us if you have more interesting proposals and ...with the Halperins. In fact it seems to me that their mentality suits you better than ours – and if you can install yourself with them you must do it. If we take the house without you, we can leave the rooms that we have foreseen for you and keep the living room and the rooms upstairs for our needs. It goes without saying that we will do without the second maid and will continue our life on the same bases as here.

As far as the eventual calculations - I understand absolutely your point of view and know it but there are a lot of *buts*.

We promise to be honest with you and allow you to participate in the expenses exactly in the proportions that you desire

Only you know Alec's super sensitive character. He is terribly disappointed to be in a physical condition so inferior for his age. This frightens him a lot for the future and I view of the effort that he will have to make to be able eventually to have a real job. He has the fixed idea that he is capable to nothing and it is very painful to him to feel not really on terms with you. So if he can manage the household completely he will feel useful first and then responsible. We will have to organize ourselves in a reasonable way and one that makes for the least possible expenses.

If there is the young man and a woman to do the physical labor that will work fine but if each time he needs their help he thinks it will deprive you from going to the post office, he will do the physical work himself and that will not do at all.

Moreover the question of ....becomes more and more complicated – and he cannot blame you each time for whatever reason and when there is or isn't something better to eat. Sadly, we are no long the ones to chose - one buys what is for sale. The day that there are cakes we take them not because of gourmandise but because we need some sugar and sugar is certainly missing from our diet certainly. Same thing for fats. We have only the butter of the little one and do kilometers to go to Nerac is there is some there.

There are therefore weeks where we spend a lot when there are things on the market and others when in the evening, invariably we eat our vegetable soup and a roll. So one must try and find a medium all while trying to feed ourselves as best possible. One cannot easily say that something comes at such and such a price but usually one can know what to expect and if Alec agrees to a price and that seems more or less reasonable one can always find a way to make up the difference.

But we must be free to do and eat what we chose and if rather than buy a pair of shoes Alec sends packages of food to his loved ones, in the budget it does not make a difference.

We do not make any extras here – do not envision any luxury but have the incredible luck of finding ourselves together and having enough to eat and to be able to help others. We can send practically nothing to Serge and it is Lucy who has the big expenses. We do what we can not to spend above our means.

When you were here you considered it exaggerated that Alec bought cakes and you made him aware of it each time but at the same time you ate them and so he is always being disapproved of so at this time it is my fault as we three in any case, need a great deal to feed ourselves as best as is possible.

All this is said without spite but if we live under the same roof it is better that things be clear and arranged in a way that each one is the least irritated as possible by all the questions of money that in our day are still more ... than ever.

Life right now is not our ideal and Alec suffers a lot from being inactive and tries to least to make himself useful.

As I said, given the future baby it does not matter whether the move and installation happen, so long as we continue to stay in this our little village where neither the toilets nor the extras exist. On top of this we are living more than unstable days and here we will suffer the least changes and would pass completely unnoticed. That is a great advantage I think.

I did not receive the last circular from Fedia but a letter from Willy with photos of the little ones, Dima and Macha are wonderful.

Also Willy tells me of having bumped into Ellen with her children who were on vacation at their place in New York and asked that they come pass an afternoon with them in White Plains. Ellen said no as it was too great an expense. The trip costs 90 cents each. You see that are not yet living comfortably.

Tell Mania that I received te packages and if I didn't mention it in my letter it is because of distractions as I have so little time that I accomplish nothing.

I will finish. Ask Anna what they have the intention of doing this summer. The south is open says the radio today.

I forgot to to put these clip outs in the envelope for Fedia. They could amuse him. Would you send it to him as I am thinking of not spending 12.50 soon -also it will ... if I forget. Tenderly, Lia

P.S. I have read the long letter that Alec sent you and before destroying it would you send in to me as I find the description very (*realistic*) alive and it would give me pleasure to keep an example.

## February 9, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Lilinka will answer by the same mail but I didn't want the envelope to leave without telling you how much the sentiments that you expressed in your letter touched me. I feel in every word and in every line the profound affection that you express and far, very far from taking your words badly, they are sincerely agreeable to receive. All that you say is absolutely right and will facilitate my job mainly of convincing Lilinka to make as few efforts as possible and to augment the hours of the maid to start with – but sadly she is your daughter – so “all for the children and nothing for me” is her formula. And how to fight that against your 'bad’ example under the our eyes and the fact that they reflect my profound sentiments!

We will not dare to speak to you about my sweet tooth if that is translated by such massive gifts of candy but I hope that when you will be here, the reasonable apple ? will be available in Lerac and I must admit that they are excellent desserts.

I add nothing on the subject of the house as the last offer from the proprietor is still too much what we want to spend and I have made by offer by phone – at the price of 8 francs back and forth but 2 days rather than 15. *Once the bear has been killed we will be able to sell its skin.*

To ease your concerns about the word 'weekly' – once a week without commitment on my part – in addition from one day to the next the regulations will surely be unified for the camps and then one will be limited in the sending of packages as it is sadly the case for Serge.

I am leaving this evening to spend the tomorrow in Marseilles and I hope to be back on Tuesday morning. If I can, I will telephone from there but as you do not willfully talk on the phone and that Mania understands very little I won't make any special efforts. I am going to Lerac by bicycle and from there to Agen by bus and then return in the same way which will permit me to arrive Tuesday around 9 o'clock. I am going principally to see my friend Tony off as he is going quite far away – that between us please – also to have news of the letters that Fedia will have had sent and that seem to me not to have arrived, also to chat with my nephew Jean Jacques, see Felix and then go to see, if there is a consul of the Low Countries (Belgium), as I conclude that Sioma has not had any information.

If by any chance my friend Alec has returned in the mean time, I will go from there directly to Lyon to see him, but all that is very vague.

I am again feeling very well – healed after the my crisis.



Thank you for the nice thoughts on what I have written – perhaps I will follow your advice this summer as that has always been my dream since I was a kid.

Luckily the news of my aunt's health is better – the mother of my friend Madeleine de la Grandiere goes each day to take her provisions.

I am leaving the pen to Lia. Tenderly, Alec

## February 9, 1941

Lia

My Dear: There is little to add to Alec's letter. As you see, we are more than touched by your attentions. Do not worry about the the question of butter that begins to be more or less resolved as when you were here. It was only for two months that we did not have any except for Lizok.

The melon is very decorative and it is even painful for us to cut it.

Alec does not want to give in to the proprietor yet. Besides, his offer was very exaggerated – everyone agrees on the subject. So we have made a second more conciliatory offer especially as the conditions of the deal leave us very free. Alec insisted on a three month payment schedule that engages us very modestly. Morally it is agreeable for us to be of one mind with others as they are so nice here.

Lizok seems to be over the crisis. We have learned from my obstetrician that there is a real specialist for children in Toulouse. That is after all agreeable to know in the case of any unforeseen hooks with her or the future...

I am glad to know that you are not here at the moment as the Vigoureux have a little dog ut so one know how to care for this poor animal – charming however. There are fights between them and the Curlier because of behavior of the dog. Besides even me who loves animals find that if one has a dog the owners must take care of it. It is a continual struggle to keep it from entering either from one side of the other of the house.

There, I have finished. Guenia has received her papers and thinks of leaving soon.

Again thank you and tender feelings for all. Lia

## February 14, 1941

Lia

My Dear Ones: Just a few words as I really don't have the time to write but I wanted to know what possibilities you were envisaging for Papa after Orange. In affect the location of the new house has some disadvantages and might be rather difficult for him, and it is far from being a settled thing and it seems really to be the only one that could suit at all him here.

Tell us what you envision for Papa as we cannot, as you know, wait too long for the move.

Philippe spent the night and we had a lovely evening together. Tenderly, Lia

## February 15, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Philippe dined here and spent the night on the kitchen sofa and told us that the Pierres were supposed to pass through Orange. I suppose that they must have profited from the week end to do so and that you are enjoying their visit as I write.

We spent a lovely evening with Philippe who gave us quite a bit of news on the family and of others.

The property that he has acquired seem to be very appropriate and timely and he expects to move in soon as a few small projects that he has undertaken on are terminated. Gavrik who should have arrived in Agen today will certainly come pass a few days with us.

Alec has become very elegant. His friend Tony passed on to him when he left, two very beautiful suits and two pairs of shoes. As our trunks are still en route and who knows if we will ever see them, this really suits us extremely well. Especially as they fit him perfectly.

We had a letter and a circular from Fedia.

There, that is all I have to say. The book that you said was on its way has not yet arrived.

Tomorrow we will lunch at Mrs. Cultier who will serve us a confit of goose from the countryside that I do not know.

Tenderly, Lia

PS Alec

I will buy the book by Bamville It covers the history of Austria and Germany over 1000 years I am told. I have just read Maurois' biography of Dickens that is good.

Again thank you of your offer of a servant – first we haven't found one yet and then in our three rooms it is really impossible to have a 5<sup>th</sup> person all the time. We are resting at this moment and only our respective colds make us look so so. Tell Mania to see if there are playing cards in Orange at the Tabac.

**February 17, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: We have just received a card from Mania telling us that poor Bob (*De Vries*) is in hospital and not having known of this aggravation of his condition, are very anxious - the telegram was sent to you *response paid* and this, according to my friends, will facilitate your sending an answer.

Gavrik is coming for the weekend.

It is beautiful and except for a small family cold, we are all well. Tenderly, Alec

## February 17, 1941

Lia

My Dear: We have just received the circular from Fedia who seems to be waiting impatiently for you. I do not know what your desires are and not wishing to be indiscreet did not bring up the question that Vera had spoken of with me in Orange.

That being said that she had wanted to simply know if eventually we would be able to accompany you. As you know the idea of leaving is repugnant to us and you know our arguments for staying where we are. Material life is beginning to present itself in a complicated way and the stability of Europe is still a long way from being settled so that you would really be better near your son. Here we hear so little news that Philippe really interested us when sharing with us the life of others and really, your departure seems very indicated especially as you would find yourself among many of your own.

We have not yet received an invitation from Marseilles and I do not know if you have yours. In any case it is not enough to simply wait as one can, after all act, it is certainly very feasible especially for you with your Dutch papers.

Alec, as a Frenchman has no problem in moving around and could easily and happily put himself at your disposal immediately to make the necessary efforts. And given that Gorik is busy, there is only him who could take care of things. We could come to Orange and from there Alec would act as your secretary and would do whatever was necessary.

Please tell us your plans. It is not to send you away from here that I am mention this but it seems to me that if you decided it would be good to start the process clearly now in order to be able to transmit to Fedia through Pierre what queries he has to make there.

In any case we are not going to stay at the Vigoureaux and at this moment are not envisioning another domicile so that now we will very easily be able to come to see you and that would permit Alec to arrange your trip.

There, I hope that you will not consider that taking part in what does not concern me as an indiscretion. I kiss you all, Lia

## February 21, 1941

Alec

This note is to tell you that it was a great pleasure to be able to feel the atmosphere clearly in Orange and I was very very touched by your reception without mentioning the rest. We are organizing our departure but before that I am going to Toulouse to meet Alec P. (*I think Ponyatowsk, see Ducky's memoirs*) who is back. I do not yet know the details but it seems he has succeeded very well and as I am always a bit anxious *to sell the skin of the wolf* I am waiting to have seen him to give you details. These are naturally for you alone.

Gavrik is coming for 5 days and Lia will have her there for the 24 hours of my absence.

Cannes was agreeable although short and on there still quite a few members of the family on the Croisette.

Lia does not know who Julius is. Tenderly, Alec

February 21, 1941 Lia

My Dear: Despite my good intentions yesterday, I did not find the time to write to you.

First I have to tell you that after our telephone conversation it is Alec who decided to take the train in order to be able to speak with you in person as in letters one gets mixed up and one gets irritated.

So the initiative is to his credit. I see that the direct contact was a good idea and that you understood each other perfectly.

We are delighted by your invitation and we will have to see what is going on here to set a date.

There is only one thing that I want to ask you. Please indicate clearly to Mania that she will take care of the little one (Lizok) as an "amateur". I know she no longer has the strength to take on this occupation and as she is not in her element except with children even if she takes care of them a little bit from her point of view, it becomes a lot.

As all this has to do with my own person - what I find to be exaggerated concern on your part and on Alec's, as I am perfectly well, I will participate only if it is something that does not tire me, such as housework and long walks. So as concerns the first I will not have that in Orange and for the second neither, as there is a park where Lizok can amuse herself.

So quite honestly it does not tire me in the least to have Lizok in my bedroom. Alec and I will take care of her from sunrise to a reasonable hour when she will probably come to annoy you with her cut outs and then either Alec or Mania will be able to take her out. That will allow me to stay in bed and do my sewing and knitting until lunch time.

Once her nap is completed we will take Lizok out again and in the evening Mania can give her her bath and give her her supper. That is more than enough attention to result in, to begin with, a good little fatigue, and a terrible expression – believe me. Without even noticing it you and Mania will do the most tiring work which consists of keeping my daughter busy and controlling her uncontrollable energy which comes if she does not have a victim who answers her questions or shows her a book or simply is present.

All this has been carefully thought through and you can take it as the truth.

As I will have all the time in the world that I could possibly wish to remain lying down, if I want to take care of my daughter in the morning it will not discomfort me at all as she is very good with me about the toilet. Then little one will lunch and this will allow Mania to have a complete rest in her own room which is absolutely indispensable for her.

We have been told about a house in Nerac and we will go to see it this afternoon. This might be interesting and seems to be a better fit for our means.

I am happy to hear that you understand our hesitations to join Fedia. Alec was very agreeably surprised at Felix's positive state of mind, more or less optimistic about the future of Europe. On the other side, this last one (Felix) absolutely disadvised against efforts in the direction of the colonies. They are already very full and there is a bad atmosphere as concerns us (*immigrants*).

As you know I have complete confidence in Fedia's judgment and this is probably the first time that I have tried to separate myself from his influence. Every letter from him sets off our equilibrium as after all he knows much more than we do. But we would not like to take on anything that is contrary, perhaps not by reason but by our intuition especially for the children.

In any case we have lost nothing as nothing has been done and there is no longer any question of leaving before the event (*Michel's birth*). I will close and kiss you, Lia



## February 26, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Just a few words. Thank you for your letter. We continue to make plans in order to spend a week with you while Anna is in Lyon. I think that our departure will be set for between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

Alec finally had news from his ....*(I think it had to do with getting funds from Alec Poniatoski who was commuting from Grenoble to Paris doing 'business')* and the poor guy has to retake the train to see him in Grenoble. It is a long trip but sadly unavoidable.

It seems things are presenting themselves satisfactorily. He is worried that we did certain things too early and could have done better if we had waited. Alec will give you the details himself once everything is settled.

It seems that our trunks have been lost. That is what the station in Paris informs us. But really we can get everything here and I think that once there is a little more stability in our budget Alec will be better as this makes him anxious and that is a number one stimulus for his ulcers.

Sadly Gavrik leaves tomorrow morning. She has been, as always, good company.

Alec will return Friday morning. It is raining without interruption and we have had trouble taking Lizok for walks. Everything seems to be floded which worries everyone from the point of view of the harvest.

Except for that there is nothing new. There is one thing that is definitely decided and that is that we will liquidate our installation at the "Vigoureux" as it is from all points of view nothing that corresponds to our needs.

I close. I kiss you, Liz

## March 2, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for your letter and card. We are also arrived at the conclusion that one had to try after all to recuperate our suitcases. They must have been stopped at the border and we have found some one who will try and unblock them especially as we have the receipt. I can console you by telling you that we have seen the list of the contents and that it is not everything. The rest will already have been sent by Lucie Leon who has managed to send several other packages with success.

Alec has been to Grenoble and has returned very satisfied. As you have witnessed all his friends are more that devoted to him and this will make things possible. Paul Berstene was absolutely up to the mark. Alec's friends who came to Orange did everything in a very conscientious and intelligent manner. Paul and Lucie Leon are liquidating the apartment and have been ale to make very reasonable arrangements with the owners. Another friend of Alec's has taken on himself to take all the furniture to his place. So despite the efforts and the moving we do not risk losing things and on top of that it will probably not cost us more than the fees and certainly not the price of a storage place.

Also Alec's friend wants to try and do something more and as he has fixed his departure date for the 20<sup>th</sup> of March we will profit of his offer and Alec will bring us back to Orange already by the 15<sup>th</sup>. He will leave for the Midi where he hopes to have a personal letter from Liaka (*Ashkenasy father of Gavrik and Mouks*) to me that could arrange things and also he has a little business in view and his family to see.

Alec asks if he should bring you the envelope. On this subject I wanted to suggest that you to get a reduction of the price of the pension for Lizok. As the hotel served dinner only from 7 o'clock at the time of our stay in Orange, we always had her supper in our room. For the few days it was not worth mentioning but for a longer visit you could perhaps obtain a half pension. In the evening she eats only a porridge and a fruit and that is quickly done. Would you tell me if you can easily acquire solidified alcohol (*used for fuel*) and if not I can easily bring some with me.

Lizok is delighted with the idea of seeing you. She is preparing to put you to good use by having you wash her hair as you certainly will do it better than her parents.

I have to say that the idea of liquidating the installation 'Vigoureux' makes me smile and we have another hope for a very practical little villa that the present tenants have to vacate very soon.

I finish as Alec and the little one are waiting for me in the courtyard. Tenderly, Lia



## March 5, 1941

Alec

My Dear: We are preparing to celebrate your daughter's birthday and I have to say that at the end of each day, better even to say at the end of each hour, that I live with her I tell myself what a marvelous luck I had the day she accepted to become my wife. This profound gratitude and one that I feel about fate and that finally, surpasses the little annoyances that seem unimportant by comparison to the immensity of my real and great good fortune. This gratitude flows on to her parents and my hope is that we will be able to instill in Bousi something nearing the qualities of her mama.

I humble myself in the face of your generosity for our trunks but I admit having had the same idea and when your letter arrived I had already charged by comrade to make the necessary efforts and so I do not lose hope – other things will arrive as well, I think.

Tomorrow we hope to offer Lia a menu to her taste: mashed potatoes with mushroom sauce and a foie gras (liver pate) with a salad and then a chocolate cream.

I order not to carry around books I had them sent to diverse places in the country as you have seen. Pardon me!

I reserved Wagon Lits (*sleeping compartments*) – your daughter made a fuss - for the 15<sup>th</sup> in the evening, so we will be arriving on the 16<sup>th</sup> in the morning.

Thank you for the amusing historical anecdote. On this subject, in the beginning of the war my brother, who like Sioma was in the organization of the Grande Duchess Marie, was charged with a mission to the general head quarters. On the quai of the station the Grand Duke Boris saw him and as they had known each other for having passed some nights at the same gypsies, invited him into his train car. They drank more or less all night that my brother, although quite drunk, was barely able to present his report and Boris found it impossible to assist at the Emperors' dinner. Both of them were copiously scolded as Boris confided to my brother on the return trip the same evening. Later on at Alma's in Paris, he liked to remember the glorious page on his life.

giI will leave your papers in my safe here in my special compartment.

As from my side I have received quite a lot of news about Guetia's health I think I will be able to give you the details that you asked Paul. This will avoid off that might not be necessary. I will certainly find things that judge perfectly useless

In any case, see you on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Tenderly, Alec

Continuation from Lia.

I will continue this word without knowing what has come before. Thank you a thousand times for the royal gift and I am sure that I will soon be able to give you a details of how it was spent. I know myself enough to know that while moving I will certainly find things that are perfectly useless but seem indispensable. As we seem to consider ourselves as provincials our conscience will not allow us to have the luxury of buying things that we wish but it will surely be very comfortable to acquire them at your expense.

Alec succeeded in explaining to me that as on his last trips he had to stand up part of the way it was cheaper to take 'beds' on the train than to travel in first class and to pay for meals. Finally I let myself be convinced in order to simplify things. I have to warn you that Lizok squints so do not be concerned if she looks at you oddly. Once we are in Orange Mania will give us instructions for the regimen to follow. So don't buy too many cut outs (*paper books out of which one cut out dolls, doll clothes, houses etc.*) and books in advance as it seems that her eyes tire less when she uses them less strenuously. She has become much more reasonable and we will certainly be able to occupy her without tiring her too much. I am looking forward to seeing Vera. For the moment I close, thanking you again and see you soon. Lia

## March 7, 1941

Alec

My Dear: I thank you for your letter. According to the town hall you have to declare the tires and I am following their directions as actually I feel for once that the measure is right and I have after all, no reason to avoid it unless I sell the car – a question that I am asking myself for us but that alas is not for you for technical reasons that I will explain to you later.

We sent you in telegram in order to calm you, as I must say that the the mumps are first of all a benign illness and indispensable and that if one pushes the proselytism that far one lives in the frightening atmosphere and that after all there are always and everywhere risks.

I think that Lilinka's monumental cold will be over by the 15<sup>th</sup>.

The photographs of the kids that you must have received the Fedia's letter dated the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, are charming. They sent us a minuscule roll of yarn. It is very nice of them, happily that we are not yet at 1 centimeter of yarn but one must not lose "faith".

I think that there must be an advantage for Fedia to send eventually the packages to us here. If you are ordering linen and soap it would be even more important for the baby than chocolate. On this subject ask Mania if she has yet had any success for the stoppers, infants caps and baby bottles, Soxlilet (?). Thank you in advance for the twine.

I am sending the money order for the Wagon Lits (*sleeping car*), have ordered the small taxi (the one you used when you came with Anna). We are cleaning the room where we will put the trunks and we classify and arrange – still mentally – things. It feels like a departure.

Fedia adds that the youngest brother of my brother in law George, telephoned him. He was, I think, in London during the war.

We are getting to the end of the wood – including that supply that we bought in January !! But we have just received a voucher for 100 kilos of coal and have bought wood for later.

See you soon! Tenderly Alec

## March 9, 1941

Alec

Thank you for your letter. I hope that you have kept my telegram. I had written that we had reserved places for the 15<sup>th</sup> (we leave, in affect, the 15<sup>th</sup> in the evening). We arrive therefore on Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of March at 6:00 AM.

The large package from Fedia included 2 kilos of sugar, 2 boxes of conserved butter and dry sausage and coffee (I think 1 kilo) *S.E.O.*

We will stop by at Dr.Vallat tomorrow for the name of an occultist. I attribute the 'squint' to fatigue but that does not diminish our interest in having her taken care of.

I hope you received the two books that I sent you from Lyon.

We are beginning to pack and make order so that means that we spend hours in abominable disorder that I handle with joy and that make Lilinka ill.

I am trying to fight of the characteristic of paternal panic sadly so special to our race and to behave with the reasonable calm of my parents when it concerned childhood illnesses. See you soon. Tenderly,  
Alec

## April 26, 1941

Lia

My Dears: It is certain that I will not have the time for a few days to write to you separately so this is meant for the whole community including Mania.

First I have to begin by thanking you all for the warm welcome that we all appreciated more than we can express. Alas Lizok has taken with her all of Mania's healthy appearance but I hope that Mania will regain her health without Lizok losing her big rosy cheeks.

I will begin by the beginning. So although the train was some 15 minutes late, left us in Tarascon in time. The trip by *wagons lits* was perfect. In the beginning there was a torrid heat and we were obliged to open the window. But already night time the weather was cooler and upon arrival in Agen there was probably not more than zero degrees weather. At this point Lizok is not too hot in her striped beige sweater that comes to her knees and the padded green coat. But this afternoon in the sun after 20 minutes it was already much better. In Agen we took a room and as there were two big beds Lizok lay down next to Augustine and Alec and I took the other bed and were able to snooze until 8 o'clock.

After which we did some errands and as it was raining torrents Lizok went back to the hotel. We took our meal at the hotel and put the little one down for an hour but she was so tired that we had a terrible time waking her.

The hotel where we were staying was very decent but quite expensive as they do not make special rates for longer stays. So we went to find another one and found something as sympathetic and clean and much more reasonable.

We were able to buy things with vouchers at Bastorel that still had merchandise and was very accommodating. Then we went to see our residence. That took us all the evening to combine the rooms in a practical way as Alec discovered that if we gave Augustine the room that we had envisioned for her, one had to cross it to get to the WC and bath. So we installed her in a closed veranda so that one can close the shutters completely that will keep the heat out a bit in summer. We hope so at least.

Lizok's room is already almost finished and is A1. In general except for some absurdities worthy of the L & G (*maybe Lucy and George Kamenka*) the house is really very nice, very clean. All the walls are



fine as colors with a lot of taste. There is some very beautiful antique furniture. The rest is conservative and bourgeois but clean and practical.

This morning we opened the trunks from Paris. We received all the linen and all the layette so there is absolutely nothing that is missing. There is a *passe couloir* – all the dresses and 12 *aines* of diapers. I think I may even sell one or even two dozen that I had bought.. The garden is very pretty, the vegetable garden is tended by the gardener who lives in this huge house. I hope that we will have the priority in getting the provisions from him and by the looks of our conversation this morning this seems quite probable.

Here also one has meat only once a week. That is to say that theoretically one has the right to 90 grams on each card.

At the hotel we are perfectly taken care on. The rooms are quite primitive but exceptionally clean. The food is excellent even without meat.

In looking back the Carlier and by coincidence of the return to Lavardac made the same diagnosis of the adventure of Augustine that Alec had made. Basically it is all the same for us but it is not very simple for the maid and Vigoureux who is a fool is embarrassed and tries to avoid us. In any case this cause a lot of amusement to the Carlier and for much of Lavardac.

I close to continue another evening. Again, thank you and all my love, Lia

**April 29, 1941**

Lia

My Dear: Finally the sun has shown itself and we are taking advantage of it immediately and are installed in the garden – park as Lizok calls it.

In general our installation presents itself in a very satisfactory way. Everything is put away. The house is very clean and easy to take care of. We even find that it is becoming ‘cozy’.

Lizok goes up and down the stairs without stopping and we stay stoically quiet but each attempt is still a worry at the moment as watching her at each attempt we are unable to understand why she doesn’t fall down as she moves at an exaggerated, ridiculous speed. I guess that at the end of two or three days she will be the mistress of this exercise in equilibrium.

It is now upon returning and taking back our occupations of the housekeeping that we have become aware of how rested we were with you. We are more than grateful for this indulgence as like before the war and hope only that your budget was not too impacted by all the expenses. We repeat that at any moment that you wish you are welcome as well as Mania. You would have the smoking room that has a bed and that gives out onto a bathroom and W.C. and an entrance onto the garden so you could count the steps that you would take each day. Mania would have the dining room or share the nursery with Lizok. So you see, it is absolutely feasible.

We had a very nice piece of meat and produce from our farm.

Fedia’s letter arrived with dizzying speed and we were surprised to be able to read news that was not out of date. I see that there the mentality is still like before the war. Here one cannot think of the consequences of what is to come as we are on the edge of a volcano and all the everyone saves and helps whoever one can without feeling one has the right of considering anything but solidarity. What is to become of the close now to see if the little one has woken up. Again, thank you and a thousand tender thoughts to all. Lia

## April 30, 1941

Lia

My Dear: This little note to wish you “*many happy returns of the day*” (in English) and all the rest. Especially the realization of all your wishes. But I am very worried that you do not make unrealistic ones – or at least that they do not take an infinity to become a reality.

We continue to be very well. Lizok is delighted with her 'park'. Since two days she is waking up at half past seven. Yesterday she finally fell down the stairs without hurting herself except for a bump that with the use of vaseline disappeared immediately. However it did give her moment to think about it all and today she is waiting for us to go up and down with her which suits us all better. I am adding a request for Mania as the hardware stores and cleaners are very diminished here. She will tell me what she has had to spend. Tenderly to all, Lia

P.S. Here is a joke that appeared in Ric-Rac. You will see that the press is not embarrassed.

From Alec: I also with all my heart wish you safe sailing, my dear captain, that you have already passed through so many tempests, arrived with your heavy and varied cargo to safe port. “one of the packages of the board.” (a colloquialism I think)

PS All is in order at the pharmacy.

## May 5, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Just a few words as the thought that we are already here 4 days and it is becoming catastrophic when I think of all the things that there are still to do. We continue to be very happy with our installation. Order reigns and it is a great satisfaction to live in comfort and cleanliness.

The little one is also much easier to handle with a real nursery where she can play without danger. As concerns the weather, I suppose that you are suffering from the same cold and humidity as we are here. Since quite a few days we have not been able to use the garden.

Alec has made prodigious efforts concerning our alimentation and for the moment we are managing perfectly. Just a little while ago we received 430 grams of meat for the week but like the villagers, we still have our garden.

I do not think about the news as it is better not to think about it. We will end up as pessimistic about these times as you but it is certainly more agreeable to spend the time with a little more hope although we do try as much as possible not to give in to illusions.

Here are the photos and a card from Lizok who talks continually of you. She considers that *Mallbrough* (the nursery song *Malbrough s'en va en Guerre*) can only be sung with you but allows us to sing *Sur le Pont d'Avignon*. Tenderly to all, Lia

**May 11, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your gentle note that touched me profoundly as I am always touched by your kindnesses and that profound altruism that sometimes saddens those who would also like you to spoil yourself but which forces admiration by its thoroughness.

I apologize for having forgotten to send you the stamps – here they are. (*I believe that my grand father was an avid stamp collector.*)

I finally received a response that the post office forwarded to me here – so the telegram is doubly signed and I will leave this evening for Marseilles and spend the day there tomorrow. Will return by Tuesday evening and Friday we go for the last visit to the doctor in Agen.

Lucy is thinking of meeting us around the 24<sup>th</sup> I think. She has letters and even a recent telegram from Georges who says he is fine and begs them not to worry about him. Thank you for your thoughts.

Since yesterday we have the Curlier's radio that we listen to with joy and even sometimes interest. As it is big, Bousi is very impressed.

The barber is the one of your other son in law, Salomon by his first name and is located on the Town Hall Square. As to the beard that I suppose is restored from the massacre that it suffered, Bousi has assigned to you the beautiful monopoly of the word “bearded” Even in the book where a goat that has a beard and goes 'bee-bee' she was very vexed with me and answered, “Papapa does not say 'bee-bee'.” (Forgive the respect which I owe you.)

Thank you to Mania and all of you as you have actively and happily collaborated in the basket that we received this morning.

Sadly no news yet about the Willy's coat. I fear that we will not be able to give it to the Roberts in time. (*Robert and Lucy de Gunzburg*)

For Anna: My old rain coat that is no longer rain proof was not included thankfully but Lia's “*snow boots*” were, also happily. The bottle brush was bought and even a bit mistreated by Bousi for Uncle (*Diadia in Russian*) Siaoma and Aunt Anna (in that order).

I have acquired the bad family habit of using the corners of the letter to close and sending you all my most tender thoughts. Alec

The hotel in Agen is Hotel de la Croix de Marbre, 7 et 8 Place Jasmin, Telephone 4-66



## May 6, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your nice letter – I find that as captain of the ship you have brilliantly succeeded in crossing through extraordinary storms and I hope that you feel all the real and profound affection that you have won in the hearts of your crew. This one asks only to see you only on the bridge when the ship having sailed under great sails, enters port.

I am delighted for Irene and Bob – despite all the satisfaction that we have in our new little home, I do not abandon the thoughts of making some kind of efforts through the people in Marseilles and although nothing has yet come to mind I am not losing hope. In the last resort I will profit from Emily's bosses (*the Chaumtemps*)– this for you alone.

The suitcase that was left at Anna's at the time of my *permission* arrived with my beautiful winter bathrobe and also my shoes and especially two pajamas and also Lia's boots and her new shoes from Helstern!

I had a long letter from a friend who lives quite near Mozelle (*a cousin of Lia's who was English*) – he is well, saw my friend Tony and they live a much more normal existence than I do, For example at Easter time they took a short sightseeing trip to see the cathedrals. Arngrelisa and her daughter with Lucy, who was able to find detachable collars in Canne and so I am now the master of a real wardrobe.

You were asking us to speak sometimes of you to Lizok. This is extremely superfluous as without exaggerating she habitually speaks of you at least 3 to 5 times a day.

After a Russian evening with G Arngrelisa and her daughter with strong cups of tea, we went to bed at midnight! I left old man and his little car to take Lia and Mrs. Curlier to Ponroy which is about 6 kilometers from here. Sunday there was a big reception with Gorbe at the Curliers where the Cezanne and the Nisines asked after you.

You will receive photos of the villa soon. It is beautiful weather and I even bought myself a colonial style straw hat. I am going to join Lilinka on our sun drenched terrace. Do not forget that you will always be really welcome in our *home*, and there is the place for you.

We learned through Jeanne Marter who saw them that the Philipps were well. I am thinking of passing there on the 16<sup>th</sup>, when we go to see the doctor in Agen with Lilinka. Tenderly, Alec

## May 9, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for your letter of the 7<sup>th</sup>. We are so sorry that the package we sent you caused so many problems.

We are including in this mail photos of the house to give you an idea of what it is like.

Here also no wind – Madame Curlier came over yesterday to spend the afternoon in the garden.

Our friend came by and brought a letter from Alec's aunt. I think that at this hour, Lucie Leon is taking care of the coat for Willy and we are not despairing of getting it to Lucie Robert (*Robert de Gunzburg*).

Lizok thanks you for the picture. She continues to work with Alec every morning for ½ hour. In the afternoon we have undertaken nothing very regular but we tell her that she cannot work without eye glasses and for the moment that works. So if she takes a book or beads to string, she wears her bifocals. Evidently all that will make her look a little bit like a trained dog and this was not quite what we had in our pedagogical ideas for her but if that helps her eyesight there is nothing to discuss.

Yesterday she was very amused when Alec showed her the vowels.

I am leaving space for my husband.

The friends of the Curliers a sort of cream and pastas (*pate de coeur*) from the products of their cows and it is excellent. In general I think their economic situation works well and in our day one earns well from (*elevage*) raising cattle. Tenderly, Lia

Alec continues at the end of the letter:

To whom do you say that to have a rich relative is not to be scorned! I think that after a visit of 6 weeks with wife, child and maid all gratuitous at the Hotel des Princes, I am paid and even royally so, to know it.

I am not one to overlook being a little nasty. With Gorik as collaborator Pierre cannot have any trouble being an anonymous benefactor.

I am reading Casanova! With my wife in her actual condition this is perhaps not recommended but I am aware that I am no longer 20 years old. I think that we will shortly have the mail without delay delivered by Jean Curlier and so our daily dose of bad news.



I hope to soon be able to correspond more easily with my sister in law but the post office here is still waiting for orders – is yours like that also? For all those for whom it may concern, the clinic is called Saint Hilaire. The telephone number is 111. To Lilinka's delight it is not allowed to sing *Malbrough s'en va t'en Guerre* and I am limited to *Sur le Pont d'Avignon* which is quite enough as I 'sing' less on key than more. We have received the coupons for cloths for Lia and will make another visit to Bastone on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Her wardrobe will be well stocked. A thousand tendernesses. Alec

## May 14, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Alec returned yesterday from his trip. Fedia's friends were more than disagreeable but did begin the necessary business. The letter that Fedia had sent them was written they had received already in Decembe but had misplaced it. They still had another supplementary letter to send to Fedia. As you know it is always the case so Alec did it by cable otherwise one doesn't advance at all. Alec was absolutely disgusted by the hours spent there. All his friends are in very bad moods.

I beg you to notice that the fruit do not yet exist. I think that Alec saw some in Nerac but was not even tempted to by any. However he did bring some from his trip that were reasonable. Lizok is delighted. Thank you for "*Madame a sa Tour Monte*" (*another nursery rhyme*). I do not think that the little one reproaches you for your literary education for the time being. It is awful weather for the moment and we go out very little. Really it is simply freezing and Lizok even asked to put on gloves as her hands were so cold. The appreciation on Vera's close analysis I think are similar to everyones and we should send everything and which I Olga as even if it takes longer, it must be more sure of arriving.

Olga writes that Irene lives in a house that I visited with Olga at one of her visits to Amsterdam. I remember it perfectly. It is a real cottage in the English fashion if you wish, with a big thatched roof in a superb property. It is absolutey beautiful and sympathetic. I think they will find the peace (*quiet*) they are looking for. I close, kissing you. Lia

## May 17, 1941

Lia

My Dear: First the question so that I do not forget: Not being quite sure of Mania's pronunciation in French, I had asked Vera the name of the medicine that she had given her children when they had whopping cough and of which I had spoken to Madame Cerf the younger and that this last one couldn't even find in the pharmaceutical catalogue of the pharmacy in Orange. So Vera instead of writing the name of the medication to Mrs. Cerf was able to send one of them. So that is resolves the mystery. It is a medicine destined for Mrs. Cerf and comes from Vera.

Thank you for 'the sisters' (*Anna, Vera, Olga, Lia, and Irene*) letters. I see that Irene is full of energy and I admire her tenacity. I have to say that I am delighted for her that despite all that is happening she will finish her study (*maybe thesis*). Evidently this book – from the point of view of knowledge will not make her more erudite as she has mastered a lot of material over some years but the men (*mankind*) are so 'vain' that the published title will change her possibilities of applying her knowledge in the practical (*real*) world. Especially abroad.

We went to Agen yesterday and in accord with the doctor have decided that it would be more prudent that he have me closer at hand from Tuesday on. So our moving date is now set for Tuesday after tea. But as you know by experience, guessing a due date is never very easy and we can all three still be wrong and number 2 may not arrive with the exactitude of Lizok.

On our return trip we passed by at the Philippes. The property is really agreeable and set as it is on a golden hill it has a a relaxing view and is pretty. The house is spacious and comfortable but still misses being 'cozy' but all this presents itself very well and Philippe seems to be delighted. What will poor Antoinette do with the harvest is still a question but I think that events will decide and not us. For the laundry ... thank you a thousand times but for the moment I am missing nothing and Vera announced that she is sending some. If later on I do need any I will permit myself to ask you.

Enclosed is a letter that I had written to Mania yesterday evening. Tell her from me that Lizok seems to have overcome the problem with her stomach.

She is very impatient to have possession of the future baby and yesterday when we returned from Agen she demanded the baby (I had not prepared her). Now she agrees to go get the baby herself – with us in Agen on Tuesday.

Thank you for the ? Tenderly, Lia

May 20, 1941 Alec Hotel Court de Marbre, Place Jasmine, Agen Tel 466

My Dears: Please forgive the bad copies fro the Studio Vigoureux. Have the Goriki (*I suspect that means the Halperins*) received other photos?

It is very bad weather – rain and cold.. We are leaving in a little while.

Lilinka is behaving as always as a charm.

I will let the brother and sisters of the happy event as soon as it occurs but it is still early. Thinking of all of you affectionately . Thank you to Mania for the card and the package that arrived – we agree. We still do not have the package from Lisbon – did you receive the bag in return?

Tenderly, Lialec

## May 26, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Thank for your daily journal - the letters make us very happy as well as the pictures for Lizok.

We are still waiting for the event. The doctor, who seems absolutely equal to the task, is satisfied and calmed Lilinka who after having not felt well after feeling normally so well was a bit anxious. I admit that the modest provincial hotel in grey weather, cold and rainy, of these past days, is not ideal for the state of mind that affects me. I still think the baby will not delay much longer.

Only one of the telegrams is expensive, the one for Fedia and as I have anyway, to advise him about the maid of friends in Marseilles who have asked me for news, I will profit from that telegram to do so.

Once the letter that they have promised has been received I will have to plunge in and visit the offices here. I will do that with neither a light heart nor with pleasure but I will probably do it never the less. While waiting this is between us. The Captain to whom belongs half of the cargo will find himself relieved when he stays on deck. All this with a lot of 'ifs'.

Lizok spent the day at the Philippe's – fetched by him (*I'm pretty sure that that was by motorcycle*) and brought home by Antoinette with two beautiful fresh eggs. She came home delighted and Augustine was very proud as she behaved admirably – eating by herself etc. This honor due to Lilinka, Mania and “Ta”. The Barsalou (*name of Philippe and Antoinete's property*) shows itself to be absolutely normally humane and nice which has not always been the case with this branch of the family and this is very nice.

Jane M. (*Martel I think*) is now very nice and puts herself out to the nines. Thanks to her I was able to make a package of 5 kilos for my prisoners.

The big package from Lisbon has arrived and Lilinka's worries for the laundry are lessened.

I will send you to read a book from Jane M. It is the style of “The Iliad” and not at all bad. I am reading *Sanguantes de Paris* – labored, disconnected but full of documentations that that I will also send you. It is your kind of book.

The little one is waking up and we will go and eat some pastries and drink some tea. While waiting, a thousand tenderesses to you. Alec May 26 3:00 The letter from Mrs. Cerf has been received. Thanks her. The Figaro has started again to be sent to me directly from Lavardac – it was an error.

## May 29, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for the letter from Bob that I am returning to you with this one.

It is curious that one falls back on the same people and maybe the during these last months Irene will have to do business with Gusji and in all the ? as you had to take the first steps toward them the first time fate pushed us to Holland.

You can imagine how happy we are to have chosen the least expensive hotel to settle in as you can guess that we feel exactly like we did in the past in a bad traffic jam in Paris when we were in a taxi and watched the taxi meter adding up the fee without our advancing at all.

I visited the doctor again who could tell us nothing new. So we continue to wait and kill time. The hotel is not too bad. The bed is perfect although it grates – and the rooms more clean not, only there is no water tap that shuts off the emptier is not working. Warm water is a myth but we receive from time to time a pitcher of almost hot water for Lizok. Thanks to my system Lizok eats only one meal at the hotel. In the morning she has her mush of gruel and in the evening we make her some real soup. Thanks to the number of packages from Portugal we do not miss anything and Lizok is full after 2 or 3 sardines. Thanks to the diluted medicines, Alec has a nice little intestinal crisis as at length the food is not exactly what he needs but since yesterday ? brought us products from the farm and that will be very profitable. I do not write to you so often as this wait paralyzes my faculties and also my imagination that writing a letter needs. Tenderly for you all.

From Alec: Lilinka is supporting this wait with courage. I am resuming working on the arrangements for the USA this morning. My aunt writes that she has been promised reimbursement for the suitcases that were lost. I am thinking of going tomorrow with Jane to the offices here to see about our trip in the direction of Fedia. At just this moment it is sunny for 10 minutes but the downpour is coming. The Philipes come to see us very often. Alec

## May 30, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your nice letter. Yes we also are finding the wait long for camping in this second class hotel while our lovely villa is waiting for us. At least I have the satisfaction of knowing that the forced physical rest is to Lilinka's profit and as the business that would have taken me to Canes worked out and that there will be a return of money into our accounts, I am also a little less disappointed from this point of view.

As always I understand your kind worries but as we will have in any case to go to the Commissariat to send a telegram to Fedia, I will do the same for the sisters sparing you the anxiety - excepting Aniouta (*Gavrik and Mouk's mother, grandfather's youngest sister*) and any others friends of the family who in your judgment should be told and, as at the hotel, we are without address books and have other anxieties, I leave it to your care. However make me a list of those that you will have contacted – I think for example of Aunt Elsa (*Carlo Melchior's mother, cousin of my de Gunzburg grandmother*), Mathilde and others. We are expecting my sister in around 8 days after the birth to accompany is to Lavardac. Here at the hotel is would not be 'cozy' but if the baby takes too long in coming, she may decide, I think, to join us here anyway.

Through a letter from Ellen, Lilika has learned of the death in April of Westendorp. (*this may be Robert May's 'companion'*) . Robert seems to be okay although his letter to not reach his niece.

On my side I have learned of the death of Anastassia Kamenka, daughter of at the end of his resources, took his own life. I must admit (*George Kamenka's mother*) a few days after the return there of her daughter (*Daria de Cayeux*) and her grandchildren who she had the joy of seeing again. If you wish to a condolence card to the old man, send it to c/o de Cayeux 20 avenue Brezin, Garches. It is really very sad, this ending, and painful for my brother in law I think, he who is very sentimental and feeling lonely and lost in his wasteland (*backwoods*). As they are without news of Michels (*Kamenka, brother of George*) who were in Brazil they fear that this one took his own life. I must admit that I more touched by this disappearance that I would have guessed – the old lady was always very nice with me and so linked with my childhood and memories of my parents.



It is still strange weather – a few rays of sunshine in between downpours that do not deprive Bousi of visits to the Barsalous (*Philippe's farm*). The Philippes come to see us often and spend the hour sitting on our suitcases and the bed, chatting very amiably in our room while the little one has her bath. As I was saying, already completely human.

Jane M (*I think Martel*) is really more than nice and puts herself in all fours comes to see us every day and is in the process of asking for useful information in the offices here concerning our displacement in the direction of Fedia. I am expecting her in an hour to go with her to see the people and I will add a PS on this subject. I do all this with a heavy heart.

The first sign of senility is to be unconscious and I am absolutely not of your opinion concerning the mental state of my father in law. I am not always in agreement with him but the better I know him, the more I value his clear and straight judgment, sometimes a little rigid for my taste but with the clarity that is a characteristic of the family.

I was alluding to a phrase in a letter of yours a few months ago and it is not at all reprehensible of you to have. What I was saying was that as you were considering, one might say musing, on the question that your two youngest daughters were changing residences, I was wondering if in fact you might not consider going yourself to join your son and in this way, even 50% of your offspring.

We are reading a paleolithic on the Russian Revolution (the first one of March '17) that interest us and we will send you in order to have you give us the full names of those who only have initials as they are surely people who you know. Who is the *Mr.* cited on page 51 on October 30<sup>th</sup> 1916? You will answer me once you have the volume in hand.

Our respects to the Duchess. Alas the rain is unfavorable to the reaping of the honey in the spring which explains why we have not sent anything yet.

Would you please, at our expense, if it still exists, send Jane Marter, 28 avenue Georges Delpecle, Agen, one of those little melon preserves that are the delicious specialty of Orange.

I am like all the family, and will close on a corner of the first page. Tenderly, Alec

## June 4, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for your letters. I also feel impatient to have details of Irene's promotion but I am afraid that we will have to be patient a long time. However, we are getting accustomed to that.

We have just received Willy's coat and also the bags which we hope we will be able to give to Robert (de Gunzburg and Aunt Lucy Kamenka's lover) to take along with him. I am delighted.

On top of that we have received confirmation of the sale of our refrigerator and thanks to the fact that Alec took care of the liquidation of our affairs and that the taxes are paid, it seems there is some left over which is very agreeable.

Lizok spent the day yesterday at the Philippes and was delighted. Today will be a repeat.

Alec is profiting of our stay here to take on a lot of measures so that despite your concern, our stay here will not be for nothing.

We are trying also to sell the two cars. We have taken on this effort without your advice as it seems suddenly seems possible through the efforts of the man who was responsible for taking care of the car in the past.

As soon as there is a tangible offer we will write you. Even if this is not a brilliant affair it will permit you to pay your hotel for a while and I think that this car can no longer lend you any service. Sadly.

It is once again the Jacqueline's effort what in the past helped Alec a lot as he was able to speak to the responsible person in authority here and this allows us to start the process.

I close as it is raining and the coffee table that we installed is getting a lot of drops.

Alec continues: ? Marcel gave me nothing. The ordinary cards take the place I have the impression of the '*interzones*' and the price of cardboard of 0'0 is not expensive.

You touch, even for me, a sensitive point when you speak of our expenses at the hotel. They take away any recent gains alas. Lilinka has felt badly so often that I am afraid that our displacement would have been inevitable at least since 10 days. If you do not profit from the subscription of books from the bookshop (this is for Bollack also) take your reimbursement on the guaranteed deposit. I expect to contact Fedia on the subject of the cabins in my telegram. How painful all this is for me as you must know. Tenderly, Alec



## June 5, 1941

Alec

Thank you for your letter – we are still waiting and I must admit that at moments it is becoming unsupportable, my nerves not being too well to start with and I am starting a nice crisis – luckily Lilinka is physically well.

Augustine went by the Lerac bus to get some things from Lavardac and will be away for a few hours. Alas nothing is happening even while she is not here which I was counting on according to our 'luck'.

In response to your letter, we “Agenois” preassessment that is not absolutely certain it seems to me the malaise of a number of Jews in the Free Zone. To take quietly and well in advance, all the measure that we can which means that we put ourselves in the hands of fate. Naturally this keeps us from the panic that our coreligionists suffer and that is the salt of their existence.

As for your sale, I proposed coming to you in December to discuss it and, as you may remember, was decidedly refused. I cannot approve of your having charged the 'Generale' of this as even if your old colleagues wanted even to be accommodating, they can certainly not do anything with the quasi official establishment of the Generale.

I worry that you misheard and the others misunderstood. There is no blockage of Jewish accounts in the occupied zone. Only commercial accounts and in certain cases private accounts are put through a preliminary control for all activity and in these conditions not all the withdrawals. He is also exclusive and transfers are authorized.

Before July 17<sup>th</sup>, in the case that for the one has at that moment qualified as being Jewish, it will be noted at the time of the census which is not absolutely certain. It seems to me to be difficult to count the number of Jews in the Free Zone.

As concerns Fuelis, it is rumored here that his tact leaves something to be hoped for as his exaggerations lead to unhappy conclusions. He is also exclusive for his “pays” (*natives*) as one says in the countryside, and he does not have the best interest of Parisians and others in mind. All this according to Jane, as I do not know him but this might interest your relatives who are practicing. (*practising Jews*) I think. I am rereading your letter that we received yesterday – you say “thank you for the address of B.A. I would like to write to him” so I conclude that I omitted telling you to write c/o de Cayeux, 20 avenue Brezin, Garches.

I do not know whether Lia told you that the coat has arrived and we hope to give it to Philippe who is supposed to see Robert when he passes through. There are also some pretty bags but I do not know if our cousin will want to take them with him!

Bousi is overflowing with energy. What does 'doctor' Mania say to that? Tenderly, Alec

## June 8, 1941

Alec

My Dear: The night passed well and Michel has already nursed and like all Berlins, as soon as he had eaten well, his expression (appearance) becomes excellent – rosy, round cheeks.

Vera, upon returning (*to Basel*) from Ascona telephoned. They are well. I am beginning to know her and it is to avoid all misunderstanding that I am confirming all this to you. In addition to an answer to my letter, sent by Olga, Bob answered me on May 17<sup>th</sup>. I received his letter today -a very nice note wherein he talks about their visit to Fedia with as little enthusiasm as I do and quite sadly of his health. He had just started to take time in a lounge chair. The beautiful photo of Nadia was attached.

I went to see Mr. Fuchs. He was brought up in Eisendstadt and as I was respectful of the rules and that on the other hand Delmas is holding to 5 or 6 days after the operation at the clinic, I invented the following scheme. The surgical operation (*circumsision*) will be done tomorrow or the day after by the surgeon (Delmas). Then Monday Fuchs will come with local specialist who will do a feint one with a symbolic incision and the traditional prayers and will give me the certificate ad hoc. In this way the minimum delay of 8 days will be respected. Paul asked to be godfather as Michel Paul has his middle name. He was enthusiastic at the other end of the telephone line to learn that all would be done according to the rules. This shows how one does become practicing (*practicing Jew*) with age and with the persecutions.

He insisted on the pleasure this would give Sioma who wants all to be 'reglo' and I ask you to communicate this to my eldest brother in law. Speaking of and even expressing the opinion that I was supposed to invite him, to the ceremony in order to stay within the law – naturally I extend this invitation morally (*he means that he extends the invitation in his heart*) and I know that he will quite specially be with me in his heart in this situation. In other times I tell myself that at the family reunion that would have taken place, I would have liked to learn my responses and spoken them well, like at our wedding, most particularly for his intention (*for his sake*). But as neither the head of of my in law family nor of my own can come, sentimental traditionalist that I am – I will do it alone and in any case will let you know the exact time before it happens.

As to the ridiculous and upsetting story of the arrest of the bitch of Mrs. Philippe de R. (*Rothschild*) I learned from Jane's father that the grandfather Nathaniel, after having been *elected* to his circle and

having seen the accounts of the bank closed, committed suicide !! I this a “cadaver” (*an empty bottle, a skeleton*) true or is it true!

Dlighted to know that Anna was able to celebrate her birthday with her husband and sons. It is a rare thing in our time.

The congratulatory card that Mania sent for his sake) Lizok – the first one to arrive – arrived this morning. Tell her that and tell her that Bousi loe the image, I myself had noticed the card in the window of a shop and wanted to buy it for my daughter in Orange.

Misha is sleeping and Lilinka is reading. There are no flowers but for her they are impressed by the telephone calls and the telegrams.

You speak of your visa for Switzerland. Must I conclude that you are expecting to go in August? I would like to know as on my trip to Marsellis at the end of month for business, I would not miss passing by Orange in that case, and I would bring you the letter that you confided in me at its time.

Thank you in advance for the cherries but don't go to that trouble – cherries and strawberries although the only fruit, was marvelous here.

Think about the melon - even if one has to spend 60 francs.

Bousi brings her toys to Misha and in general is very impressed, Tenderly, Alec

## June 10, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Alec tried to call you yesterday but as he had to tell you quite a lot of complicated things he wanted to have Anna at the end of the line as he was worried that you would not be able to hear him well and that you would then be anxious. He will ask for the connection again this evening.

No matter what you wish, you can not have everything and life is always more complicated than one would imagine it.

Apart from this, the little one seems very sturdy – he has a huge appetite and he seems to find all that he needs to satisfy himself. I think that we have had a lot of luck to have fallen by chance on a specialist, a refugee from Strasbourg, whose reputation is very much *as we could have hoped for*. He is going to undertake the care of the little one beginning today and says that if caught within the first two days the deformation, thanks to the flexibility of the bones and ligaments, is completely curable. He doesn't seem to doubt it. The doctor will have the time between now and our departure to see the child's reaction and decide on the therapy. Then he will tell us how he thinks the treatment should be organized.

We had the circumcision done as quickly as possible as here one has a modern system for the women who have just delivered a baby and one gets them up very quickly. So we will be able to return to our home in as soon as in 10 days.

As my sister in law will be here with her maid, we will profit of that possibility that as it might have been a little too tiring if one didn't have help with the children the first days after the move. So between now the departure there will be no special care (*therapy*) for the little one and I will be able to bathe him etc. when we get back. The rabbi will come to do the ceremony on the 8<sup>th</sup> day and everyone will be satisfied. The clinic is very good and the food is excellent. Evidently the care is not very modern but as all is well, it is of no importance. And the nuns have experience and a lot of devotion if not too much training.

This letter is for Anna as I do not have a lot of energy to write to her separately. Vera has mailed Irene's book and I am very impatient to see it. Tenderly, Lia



**June 13, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your long letter. I think that you must be our acknowledgment of reception of the magnificent cherries that arrived.

Dr. Allebach is a charming Protestant.

The ceremony will be tomorrow at noon and Philippe will hold the baby. This last one is well – his jaundice is passing and he eats meals of 80 grams very often – so you see he has inherited the appetite of your grand father. The treatment is moving ahead very favorably.

I think that the fruits for Jane have left.

For the tumbler try to get a goblet with the least ? Bousi's has a little too much from a point of view of cleaning.

Lucy is taking Lizok Sunday afternoon and we will follow on Tuesday – that will give me two days of rest!

I will be with you, I think, around 11:00 without surprises.

The weather is still awful.

Lilika looks well and got up to get dressed. Enclosed is a word for Jean to congratulate him – I do not know his address.

Philippe tells us that in the photograph of Pierre (*Philippe's father and my grandfather's brother and Aunt Yvonne's husband*) he already looks heavier and younger.

I never got passed further than the song of Mireille!

It is terrible weather – we received a 5 kilo package from Lisbon that was very well balanced.

I am selling my car tomorrow – as far as yours is concerned we have to get in order with customs – I hope to accomplish that when I am in Marseilles and hope to get around ten bills.

Lizok is very good and adores her brother. She doesn't stop talking of him. Tenderly, Alec

P.S. The “of the religion” (*Jewish*) residents of the hotel and others are very touching – they come to see Lilinka with arms full of pretty presents and even take care and distract Lisok – they are obviously simple and modest people and not the millionaires that displease my sister in law!

Philippe saw Fuchs yesterday and is very pleased with him. I have a certificate that Fuchs had legalized to make it pretty. -I still do not have an answer from Fedia. Do you think that my N.L.T. (*I believe that this is a telegram*) to White Plains did not reach him at their new address? It is true that Fedia was supposed to answer also about the "?" of the cabins – but I do not think he needs this information to begin to worry about the loss of my cable. We will transmit your respects to Lucy this evening. Georges telegraphed his congratulations on the 16<sup>th</sup>. See you soon, Tenderly, Alec.

## June 15, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Lizok has just left with Lucy. She was so excited that she almost didn't want to trips say goodbye to me so sure she was that I would arrive soon.

We have received Fedia' circular with his address and a note from Willy.

Other than that everything is going very we well and the doctor is more than satisfied with the treatment. He seems even to be surprised at how well it is going. Alec may be right in thinking that he has seldom had the opportunity of treating. little ones who are just days old and their bones still so supple.

In any case the doctor will be coming to carry out the treatment at our place for the first weeks as Michel is really too small to travel. I think that Mania will share my opinion that 2 hours of travel by car, two or three times a week it too much for a baby.

Yesterday Lizok went alone to the Barsalou. Philipppe and Antoinette picked her up and the nurse and Patrice brought her home. The children spent the day in the field patting and feeding the cows . Lizok adds that Patrice said that the cows are not mean..)

We are receiving letters from a lot of of friends. - this actual time makes for solidarity of humanity.

A lady from our hotel came fore a visit and even brought a present. I have to say that Lizok played with it with her brother.. Another wanted to send a bib – she is not of the religion (*Jewish*) and she will drop by today or tomorrow..

Tell Anna that we received congratulations from Milia (*Siamoa's sister I think*). Tenderly, Lia

Continued in Alec's hand: We had found at the big pharmacy near the post office some PAROLAGAR BLEU that Lia's needs a lot – if there is some there or somewhere else, please send it to us.

## June 15, 1941

Alec

My Dear – or rather my Dear Ones as this is specially for you and Sioma. Room – the Man (who by profession a butcher) did a lot of “schnickese” for the hygienic part and pronounced the prayers in a beautiful voice. I mumbled after the rabbi my part of the speech. The operation was done in a very surgical way according to them with no sutures. Philippe was very good – very serious and even a bit moved I think. I sent, from us 200 francs the “melun” (?) and from me as much to the Rabbi who will visit Philippe tomorrow as he takes his “role” very seriously. Michoel will have the certificate written by the Rabbi. They asked if I was “Cohen” which I naturally do not know – I think that only the old Eisenstadt (actually in the United States according to Fucks) must know. And there it is. Alec

## June 17, 1941

Lia

Irene's letter more than interested me especially as I know the area and the scene. Again the I am proud of the Dutch who are always loyal and faithful friends.

Kenny (?) is the sister of Scheu (?) van Scheudel, friend and colleague of Bob's. What is curious is that for no good reason the other day, already here, I remembered that old professor of Fedia's and even spoke of her to Alec and here she is playing a role in Irene's ceremony (*when Irene presented her thesis for her doctorate I think*). I know you do not believe in the *transmissions de pensees* but I am convinced once again that there is a unknown factor that plays out when one is in spiritual contact with those that are dear to one. It is sad that Bob could not be at her promotion. As concerns Irene's title, she is in possession of her license in Letters and it follows that she had all the supplementary diplomas - and it seems to me that for her doctorate - she needed to defend her thesis as she had already accumulated all the learning - also the title does not correspond exactly it seems to me, either to the French or Russian one. Only once the thesis is written and defended one can have the doctorate in all the languages and that is what is most important. We leave this afternoon - delighted to be back in our little "home" (*home is in English*). Michel's doctor is agreeably surprised by the progress of the treatment and says that he could not have hoped for such rapid progress He is absolutely sure now of the complete recovery of the little one and is assured that there be no deformation or delay when the child will walk.

Now two questions to be clarified - really three. First if you have not yet acquired the fruit preserves don't about them any longer. Just drop me a line with a yes or no if they have been sent or not. If no we can send something from Lavardac and the incident will be closed. Thank you for taking the trouble with this.

Secondly Alec begs you to let him know immediately when your plans are a trip and would more fixed. He has, after all, still to make a trip and would profit by it to pass by your place. From that he eventually wants to profit from Mouk's visit. I think she will come to see the Philippes then afterward come to us. Alec prefers not to leave me alone with the two children. Say it simply as it is not complicated at all. The third question is: Do you think that Mania wants very badly to come see the little one. I would be happy to her trip but I did not want to ask without knowing if you could manage without her for a few days. If you think that this is a possible combination, Alec would bring the little one and on his return he could meet Mania and the little one in Tarascon or they could travel

independently. In the case that you would like see have the little one and not send Mania we will find a way for Alec to come and take her back or even that Mania brings her to Tarascon which must be possible.

Despite the little bit long period that we spent in Agen in the present situation it was maybe a salutary for the future as Alec yesterday talked to someone at the prefecture as it was immediately accessible and everything happened more quickly. Alec went to collect the money from the sale of the car and this will permit us to live for 2-3 months. Although it was sad it was reasonable and I think that we got a rather good price. Alec will now take care of the sale of yours but he has to get an agreement with the customs official. If this one, given the circumstances of the moment and the age of the car, consents to making an important reduction we will be able to realize the sale of the car and you will have a few thousand francs. But for the moment the custom costs are more than the eventual cost of the car. They chatted of this and that were happy, both of them. Philippe asked a lot about how you were for his own sake but also because at the time of his departure, Pierre (*Philippe's father, my grandfather's brother*) charged him to be at your complete disposal.

I have to say that the Philippes children are a great success. They both take a lot of care of them and often Patrice goes alone by bicycle or on pony back with his parents and is very wide awake and independent. Patrice loves the animals and spends every day at the farm with the little ones of the farmer and takes care of the animals etc. The Philippes, Antoinette and the nurse included, work in the vegetable garden. I beg you to notice that Alec while at the hotel heard quite a lot of things from the tables around him is agreeably surprised at the reaction to the status quo that is not admired. Finally it is a feeble consolation.

I will close having I think nothing more to add. We received a nice note from Helene Propper, ex Fould and from her brother. Helene is leaving for Spanish Morocco where her husband has been posted as consul. We had a telegram from Guy saying that his parents left as expected with Willy's coat. As you know we were just in time to send it insured and even on the road. Tenderly, Lia

## June 21, 1941

Alec

I told our mayor about my efforts - he received me with an impressive greeting, friendly sympathetic and saddened and also discrete.

Mrs. Curlier came to see the 'Prince' and asked us to send on her best wishes to you and Mania.

Tenderly Alec

PS Having two old suits, I My Dear: It is sunny and humid and the heat is at a point where Lizok can wear her swimsuit (an old one of Macha's) and bathe in the big tub that is in the garden. The little one stands the temperature well and we will take him out, on the advice of Vallat, in the evening after dinner on the terrace, at 20 li.m which means 18 in the sun. Everything is going well and Tuesday when Allenbach comes, Vallat will see him, Vallat himself having felt that the bones are moving as they are supposed already.

As concerns the ? from Mania, the toys leave tomorrow. After another 6 little ones arrived yesterday, we have been told to expect a big parcel from Lisbon. Still no news from Fedia nor from Paris - how very much time everything takes.

It seems to me that Mania, so you too

(I think) thinks that I will be in Orange next week. It is an error of interpretation as it will not be until the beginning of July that I am expecting to take my trip, when Mouks will be here, that is to say around the 5-10 of July unless you leave for Switzerland.

Lucy is resting here and Jeanne (*Jeannette Clemence*) helps a lot - which allows Lia not to do too e having had a but after all the little one takes more out of her than I would have liked. I am not very active having had a *simili* crisis in Agen and it is not quite finished.

Since cold baths arf agreeable in the bathroom is in constant use.

The Ira's (*Irene*) book is really good as she has known how to describe a personnage who must be at bottom quite *ferue*, something - the French is hardly heavy, you remain, in my opinion, with Ira, the ones who speak and write the language best in all the familly. We take turns reading the book.

We had the *receusement here* - completely in the family naturally and the confession was asked almost with excuses.

permitted myself a new one - and not expensive. It is a combination that functions easily and your stock of old cloths in this regard maybe useful in France - I do not know if it will be the same in Switzerland.

PPS This letter stayed on the table waiting to be sent - it is leaving from Nerac - all continues well.

One of the two trunks carrying a thousand little things arrived - agreeable souvenirs to be looked into.





## June 23, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Thank you for the long letter. We will be delighted to send you Lizok and it will be very simple. As concerns Mania, I leave it absolutely up to you. If you judge it opportune, talk to her of our project. If you think it is too tiring for her, don't speak of it. In any case we are sending you a letter with the signature *Alexlia?* in case you are asked for a permit.

We have just received the goblet and it is beautiful as we both like simple things. Also, thanks probably to the Anna's choice it is a goblet from which one can drink which is not always the case - tell this last one that I am not writing to her yet because I am still quite tired and don't seem to accomplish a little part of what I wish to do. The design at the top of the page is a drawing by Lizok made for you. Alec seems better but he decidedly has much to do with the little one (she) and the shopping.

As for Michel I repeat that we had such luck in having had the doctor on the spot. When I told Vallat what the child had, he could not hide his alarm which was lessened when I told him the little one had been operated on on the second day. He said that he had had quite a number of similar cases and had sent those patients to be cared for in Bordeaux. The only place where there was a specialist in the area. He says that because of this he was never able to send a baby to be taken care of before at least 10 days and that this was very regrettable as his experience showed that one really had to begin the rehabilitation immediately. He does not know Allenbach yet and will come Tuesday to meet him and discuss the problem with him. He is of the opinion that one should not travel with the baby in this heat and I think that he will come to an agreement with Allenbach. We would like Vallat to take charge of the non medical treatment that we are doing for the moment ourselves but hope that he will do it better. You are right about the problem of the straightening of the bone. We do not know yet how the situation will be solved in the end. I think that we will have to follow a treatment for quite a long time.

We received the medicine for Alec. Alec will do the accounting with you when he is in Orange as we certainly owe you some money.

We received a card from Sonia.

You seem to be speaking of francs and Alec reminds you that you still have some in the envelope.

As concerns the debt of the girl Helene, her sister Vera is taking care of it.

Concerning Michel, Lizok says in one phrase, "the son of papa".

We received personal effects from Paris. On top of linen and clothes there were quite a few bibelots. Among others, something that delighted me, was the ink stand that you had made for me. An antique salt shaker created by Boutraburet, a little dish (*vide poche*) in bronze from Popottqui that I had from

Fedia and still more antique ashtrays and cigarette boxes etc. There, I finish by kissing you. We are still very surprised by the events and wonder what will happen. Tenderly, Lia

## June 24, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Dr. Allenbach has just left. He is satisfied with the condition of the feet. He met Vallat who will take charge of the daily massaging. He will come back next Tuesday. As you see, everything is being done in the best way possible and even before the war we could not have done better. I was amused to learn that when he was a boy Allenbach had spent some years in St. Petersburg where his father was director in a factory of "galvano plastic cellulose etc." in which the Konradi (their good friends) had interests - the few Russian words that he has are pronounced without an accent.

I am waiting for a telegram from my friend Alex to set off . I expect to spend 2 days in Marseilles, 1 or 2 in Viely and one with you. Lisok will stay with you for 4 or 5 days - I am delighted that I fell on the idea that seems to please you. Tenderly, Alec

PS Still nothing from Fedia.

June 26.941 Alec

A word to tell you that a letter from the 8th of June from Emily thanks Willy for her telegram announcing the birth of Michel and congratulating us. So the FW are well and in possession of my cable. Ten...Alec

**June 28, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: I am confirming my telegram as in effect the exemplar of the last circular from Fedia not having yet arrived, we thought that it had not gotten into the last mail and as it contains interesting things for us, we are asking that you send it to us and we will then return it.

Thank you for the telephone call. I am waiting for Fedia's circular to try and understand what I have to do and you are very kind to have thought to tell me that David was in Marseilles. I will see him when I visit there. The trains have become so inconvenient that I am concerned that I will have to bring you Bousic via Marseilles and then come back afterwards for my affairs. I will make the trip to Tarascon Marseilles and visa versa at least 6 times but it is sadly unavoidable. Unless I go this time simply to Marseilles for 24 hours promising to bring Bousic to you at my next trip at which time I will see Roger Nathan, as you are not sure, it seems of your departure yet.

The description of the party of the Jules (*I believe that the Jules are Uncle Paul and Aunt Helene's parents in Bale*) made us very happy. A burst of normalcy if not agreeable, at least supportable.

Enclosed are photos – not very well developed but that is the habit at the Vigoureux studio and there will be others soon.

The letter of congratulations from Irene made us even more pleased as she let us know that she was in easy telegraphic communications with Vera and also that Bob really is feeling better.

Enclosed an envelope that will amuse you – on top of this we did not receive a letter from Ellen in the mail of the 8<sup>th</sup> – only the one from Emily.

I stopped to lunch and your grand daughter has just caused us one of those little emotions from which one heals very slowly. She bit down on her glass while it was in her mouth. Finally after great efforts Lilinka reconstructed with all the little pieces the broken glass and Vallat, called in haste carefully examined her mouth. There are only a little scratches that hydrogen peroxide helped stop the bleeding.. But what emotion. I am still trembling!

A thousand tenderness for you and Mania and affectionate thoughts to the Siomas (*Uncle Sioma and Aunt Anna*) Alec June 28, 1941

PS Enclosed the telegram addressed Gunzburg Orange as I thought your address was registered this didn't lose a day and cost some money –please make a request.

**June 31, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: This is between us two. I have returned from my visit to the local offices where thanks to Jane M. and to her only, I was most warmly received. When I will have presented a few pieces that are missing and thanks to my certificate of liberation that is the essential piece of my file, my file will be complete and transmitted to the ones that are responsible with a chance of success, I am told.

The delays are in the order of about 2 months so by August my situation should be settled – I do not know whether I should be asking Fedia as we speak to see already about places (*tickets*) or wait. What do you think? Tenderly, Alec

## July 3, 1941

Lia

My Dear: Alec fortunately brought me good news of you all. On top of that I am all confused (*embarrassed*) to learn that he did not return empty handed. You know that for the moment we are able to cover the costs of the doctors but as you are offering so kindly to help us, I must admit that I must thank you, especially in the name of Micha (*Mike*). From the point of view of the bones, one of the feet is already, says the doctor, absolutely normal and the child simply has to get used to holding himself properly. The other foot still leaves something to be desired but he thinks one no longer has to doubt that there will be a complete recovery if we continue to follow the care conscientiously.

In general we are delighted with the 2 doctors. The specialist is a charming man with a frame of mind that is most agreeable for these times. It is true that he was more than affected by the events (*the war*) and he understands that the situation is impossible from all points of view. Vallat, has been fabulous for the Russians. He immediately presented himself at their service by precaution on saying ? for food etc. It is he who obtained their liberation after 24 hours as he intervened with someone in Agen and explained the absurdity of keeping hold of (*locked up I think*) cultivators when work was waiting for them, that they were known since a long time in the community and that there was nothing to worry about either from the point of view of domicile or food.

Mr. Poutroy came by to ask if these measures did not affect you and in general to ask if he could render you any services.

Lizok was delighted by the watch and talks of nothing else but to get on the road to show it to you.

We are expecting Molly Falco tomorrow for the day. Mouks will arrive by bus in the evening.

I regret that I am not more able than you to decipher the name of the lady about whom Bob speaks.

Enclosed are all the letters that are addressed to you.

Other than that there is nothing new. I close to go and rest a little as in this heat Lisok is a bit capricious and because of the ridiculous changing of the time, one is obliged to leave her in the house even after her nap as it is untenable in the garden. In the evening it is so hot that she absolutely cannot not fall asleep. We are putting her to bed now, already very late. Tenderly and again, Thank you. Lia  
July 3 continued Alec

My Dear: I have returned home, and found everything just fine – Lillinka not tired. The letter from Fedia arrived via Bordeaux – I suppose in the future one will have to specify – and you must warn them - they must put ‘not occupied’.

Thank you once again of your welcome and your gift. Except for 1 hour in the bus Swador it was not at all difficult.

On Fedia's advice I would like to ask you for a note of introduction to Nicem? in Marseilles – is it she who is representative of the Joint? I would like to know so that I do not worry about the question on my next trip to Orange. Tenderly, Alec

PS What does one do about your Casanova? And of the Renue?

## July 7, 1941

Alec

My Dear: As you see we are resuscitating old stationary – how ‘sophisticated’ one was at that time..

The heat is abdominal and exhausting that Lilia stands very courageously and really quite well – she even takes walks – it is I who is paralyzed. The Falcos spent Saturday here with a beautiful baby that Bousi saw leave with tears. I had a certificate from Odier (*the jeweler/silver store in Paris that their silverware came from*) from the time of the purchase of our silverware but the papers are still in Agen -, for those of the Consulate there is a new regulation that makes everything dependent on Washington – I am inquiring to know whether or not we are effected by that change – what I mean is - if it is retroactive. We have the letter from Fedia on this subject of their visit to the high school.

We are making preserves of green peas and tomorrow apricot jam.

This night I cursed Mania and her advice to diminish Michels meals from 7 to 6 – despite sugar water, he made a lot of noise.

We had a nice note from Jeanne, one from Paul’s mother (*Paul Dreyfus and Aunt Helene’s mother in Bale*) and one from Mouks announcing a delay of her arrival. My trip, so that of Bousi as well, continues to depend on the news I get from Alec.

For his ‘birthday’, Michel received an identity bracelet from Lucy – Bousi also.

Please forward the letter once you have read it to Volo.

Thank you for what you say about my affection for my in law family. It is very true and is merited – you at the head – as I found there a haven that turbulent times and difficult ones gave to a tired heart a great thirst. Tenderly, Alec

PS A word to say that if nothing changes I expect to leave with the little one on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> in the evening via Marseilles, the only convenient way and will be in Orange on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:17. I leave the same night for 2-3 or 4 days. Tenderly, Alec

I have lost David’s address – sorry – and would like to write to him.



**July 8, 1941**

Alec

My Dear: Thank you for your letter – do I understand that Fedia's letters have the same stamp as ours which would explain and justify my proposition in what concerns you. Your letter to d'O ? is very dignified and good. I think that upon my arrival next Monday I will find an answer. I envisage asking Mania if she could not come with you to bring with you Bousi but should I conclude that it is not only the delay as concerns her arrival at Vera's but that it has to do with definitive impossibility. If it is provisionary, she will be very well at our home and with Anna with visits to Aniouta . But if it is for ever, the problem becomes very serious and complex on the moral side that weighs already with my sentimental character. Especially if our displacement happens and I think that Paul should in that case put Fedia in the know. So that what happened to Bob's father doesn't happen to her.

My friend Lisa (Villameur *who Lucy met in Marseilles and who did underground work parachuting into France from England...see obits in Chatham archival space*) is finally leaving to go home. We are sad to lose her and also completely happy for her. Lucy seems delighted in Annecy. Mouks is prolonging her stay at the Phillips. It is sad because it shortens her visit with us.

It is awfully hot and the little one (he) cries a lot but well; the little one (she) falls asleep with difficulty in the evening but stands the temperature.

Thank you for the note for ? See you soon, Tenderly, Alec

PS

A good letter from Vera/Paul with one from Ank (Lia's Dutch friend who was also a painter)

**July 10, 1941**

Alec

Thank you for your letter of the 7th.

I arrive with Bousi on the 12th from Marseilles. It is horribly hot but this morning after a storm, it is okay and Lia is taking a walk.

We have Fedia's letter of the 22nd of June with the application enclosed. – what I call order.!

David seems to be as much of a bastard as I thought with types like this one needs methods of the 20th century that I indicated to you.

We have complications with the tax gazogenne of Dr. Allenbach but I think I have arranged from here a price that is a little better. Happily Fedia proposed to give me all the *tuyaux* that David was supposed to give me.

I telegraphed Fedia and he is energetic, by the advice of Felix and of his friends at the office in Marseilles, the delay may not be too serious, but will Fedia be able to ?

Life over there seems to be terribly 'before the war' and I am not enthusiastic for us – I am very pleased for the FW (*maybe the Felix Warburgs*).and especially the children.

It seems that there is a contradiction between Fedia's letter and what Paul said, as concerns the obstructions. I hope that Fedia is right.

In any case after mature reflection I beg you not to worry about what you will eventually leave here. I need it and thanks to Paul I can take it on upon myself – we will talk about it. My writing, I admit is atrocious but as for once the telegram was telephoned!

Bravo on the answer from Dima to his father. When that goes from Bousi to Lia it is normal but from one baron to another, it gains humor. I was coming for the Casanova – ask Volo or Yania (*Jean Halperin*) to find the price in Orange.

Yes. We had a note from the Omesson – don't look for it.

The little one (he) is sleeping better since it is cooler and the little one (she) also. She is still a little 'green' and Lia is taking advantage of our trip to sleep a little I think. Tenderly, Alec

## August 12, 1941

Alec

Thank you for Fedia's circular. I find the note from d'O (*may be Olga Meyer, sister of Carlo*) amiable and certainly sincere. There are still quite a few decent people. I am waiting that Natasha do what is necessary. By cross checking was we are able to know quite a bit from you letter. From our side, we are not asking for more nourishing things – besides since quite a while the parcels are absent – not that this is very troubling at all!

For Mania, Menblion? seems to me to very difficult because of the new visitors permits and because this 'hole' is a bit sad especially around November. Finally, we will see.

Katia writes that Loulou, the aunt fo Renee, had the same annoyances as Anna, Mania, Sioma but much longer and it seems even that they are not yet finished.

On the subject of the PS. I had understood, and the fact that Fedia has things in hand is the primary consolation. – whether there is a lot or not and whethert the trunks are more or less closed with presents and locks is less important.

I repeat that only the telegram from Fedia's fridns, addressed to Marseilles and a favorable answer to my prayer here can precede the payment of the tickets – all the rest follows and I hope with the least loss of time possible.

What you say about Tunis is very interesting and I am delighted for Vera's friends!

Excellent news from Antibes where the Asch (*Ashkenasy's and the Philippe de Gunzburgs*) and the Philippe are rejoicing at being together.

My health, thanks to the medecines based on ?of pork (sic) hold very well and I am feeling fine after a walk to the Gatinskis and Massaroch about 8 kilometers from here in full forest of Landes that we took yesterday. Lizok in her chair on the handle bars of Lia's bicycle as I had a rather lousy velo! Radiant weather, aroma of pine and ? and ral country that pleased Lilia but to think that one day we would have to be buried in a shanty like that – how that makes me bit downhearted!

Lizok picked mushrooms and in general the excursion was a success which happened just in time as this night there was a strong storm and it is raining.

Mania is getting over the insect bites from yesterday but has three news ones from which she suffers quite a lot.

The newspaper articles put me basically in a good humor about the final resolution but I am apprehensive about the intermediate period. Tenderly, Lialece

In Lia's writing

Delighted to have good news of all of you despite the weather. I think that you will be royally installed in the apartments downstairs at Vera's and that in Bale you will feel completely as if you were at home. Nothing very interesting here. We are impatient to know what will be the results of Alec's trip but he has to wait for the return of his friend as he needs his advice.

There, I finish by kissing you all. Lia

## July 14, 1941

Lia

My Dear: The last days I had so little time to myself that Alec took charge of our correspondence. Think that the two travelers arrived in good form. It is especially Alec about whom I am thinking as the day of their departure he developed a crisis of his illness and the trip probably did not do him much good. When he returns he promised me sincerely that he would take care of himself for at least 10 days.

For the little one (she) it was the first time that she showed so much joy and agitation for this trip. She was delighted and recounted a lot of things. I think that you will find her very changed especially as she doesn't stop talking and I wonder if you will understand her jargon intermixed with Lavardacian expressions.

From here nothing new. Mouks had to delay her arrival for tomorrow because of the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, and I even wonder how she will arrive as Livaden sends only his little bus doesn't not promise a seat.

As the telephone at the Philippes is on the blink, I can combine nothing else.

Alec will try and organize with you the question of "Mania" and I wonder at what conclusion you will arrive.

I finish having really nothing else to tell you.

Tenderly and kiss my daughter for me. Lia

## July 20, 1941

Alec

My Dear: This short note to tell you how much I felt 'at home' with you and how much your trip across a frontier touched me. I feel, in effect, much more 'grown up' with you far away and I promise you to be more reasonable and serious.

I am still a little hesitant since Fedia's telegram and do not really know if I should go and see my friend Roger Nathan. If you learn anything of value from Paul, please advise me – and thank you in advance.

Again, bon voyage – rest well and know that with a very real and profound affection and filial love go with you and that I regret that even in little things I will no longer be able to show you how completely you have won my heart during these 5 years that have been so charged with events and where you have known how to remain so admirably yourself – even while making order out of disorder giving us a marvelous lesson in stability. Alec

## July 20, 1941

Lia

My Dear: My family returned yesterday morning. They have talked all day of (Russian word) of the five days that they were absent.

Sadly Alec returned very tired and has quite a bit of pain. As Vallat has become our usual doctor now he is able to give good advice and yesterday he proposed a new treatment. We will see if this works better than the rather mediocre attempts, that have been tried up until now.

Alec gave me your generous gift for Michel. Really you exaggerate. First we really have what we need to pay for the treatment and then if we do not have enough it would have been the right moment to get the necessary funds by selling (?) the jewelry or silver. So we could have managed. Finally, as you say yourself, it is useless to try and change at your age and we will bow to your generosity. The gesture itself would have been enough for both of us and we would have appreciated it without the material side – more than we can say.

Mouks left yesterday evening. She looked very well after her stay at the Barsalou which did her a lot of good. Philippe and Antoinette seem to really take care of their property. Both of them did real harvesting, helped in the vegetable garden weeding etc. The nurse helps them a lot as well.

Yesterday I received a charming note from Robert May (*Aunt Ellen van Marx's uncle*) sent by Vera. Enclosed is the telegram from Fedia.

I do not expect to write to you before your departure and hope that the trip will go well and that your stay with Vera will pass in an atmosphere and in conditions that are absolutely normal. If Michel was a bit older we would have come to say goodbye but we are forcibly immobilized. (*by Michel's age not anything more 'interesting'*).

See you soon. I kiss you again once more, thank you for everything. Lia

## July 27, 1941

Alec

My Dear: Lilia and Bousi are at the station where they went to pick up Mania who, I hope had a good trip.

I am going to lunch and then go in the car to the butcher in Agen and then to the meeting of the Legion in which I still participate.

Thank Paul very much for the letters that we received in including one for my friend Tony (*Schuman, Seville changed during the war*) Lucy will forward to you a long letter from Sonia who arrived at her sons only Tuesday after a long trip and who gives good news about them.

Yesterday for amusement I weighed myself and I see that I am at 70 kilos, 15 less than before the war and even less than last year. I think that must be the real reason for my condition but Vallat's treatment seem to be working and I no longer have pain.

The Philippe's are coming tomorrow as they are thinking of going to the Midi on Thursday. Goric will be at their place on Tuesday but I do not know whether or not we will see him.

Lizok is very well and excited by the arrival of Mania. The weather is heavy these days give her a bit of a green tinge. The little one (he) on the contrary, becomes less and less ugly and Lilinka remains well. I think that with Mania keeping an eye on Lizok, she will be even better.

I apologise for coming back to the question of the deposits of the bills but it is important that there not be a delay from this side, please. I am thinking of going to see my friend Roger in another week, my friend Yves (*Vicomte de la Grandiere – father of Marie Charles Heap*) is there also.

Michel received a beautiful porcelain set from Alec P. (*Poniatovski I think*).

I leave you with all tenderness, Lialec

July 27

PS Mania has arrived, a bit wasted. She had light fainting in the train but a nurse near Lagard was able to take care of her. She finds that Michel is the portrait of me and very good.



## July 30, 1941

Alec

My Dear Sacha (*my grandfather was Alexandre and the diminutive of Alexandre is Sacha*) and Paul:  
We are expecting Goric this afternoon – he is coming with the doctor's taxi and will leave after dinner by bicycle for Port St. Marie to take his train for Marseilles. It is a short visit but still better than none. Thank you for the news. It gives us great pleasure as you realize, as it is rare in our day that news could lessen rather than augment the worries that one has. I will profit from the visit of my nephew to talk to him of some serious things as well.

I am also very very happy for Dima and Macha that the arrival of their cousins, if it happens, will not be a burden on them, on shoulders that are already very heavy. From our side we will do everything so that Elisabeth and Michel be able to join them. I think that Paul will have understood my wish that at least the question of the tickets does not complicate the trip. Enough on this subject!

Fedia's letter seemed to me to be good but tense. It is with full hearts that we are sorry for him and would so much have preferred that he be able, at least, to enjoy without these continual worries his existence that seems agreeable.

Emily and Ellen also write that that the sea shore there it is as beautiful as in the Midi – that is something.

Very sadden by the news that my sister in law's sister of Yelia ? (this for Vera) starving or more or less without news of their children Esthoniens (?)

Bousi seems to have look better and to fighting off with pills and her robust constitution, the bug that she has.

Mania is taking care of herself after a light poisoning that she arrived with and a blood pressure of 18.5 and she seems to be better.

I am going to Agen for an hour to try on a suit!! Strange times.

We are having wood from the forest brought in profiting of the last days of getting it for free but not too much, only enough in case... And that's it. Tenderly, Alec

## August 4, 1941

Lia

My Dear: We are more than delighted to know that you are so well and attentively taken care of. Mania has recovered from her – I do not know what – a little gastric poisoning I think. She was touched by your letter and in general your way of caring for her during your departure. Basically she is quite well here. Perfectly cared for at the hotel where the proprietors are charming and she fills her days easily being with the children. I do everything possible so that she is not exhausted but she is, as you know, always doing something or putting things in order even when it is useless.

Here the weather is disgusting but I think that I prefer even a bit of rheumatism to the torrid heat of the last month. The little one (she) is just about fine again. Mania cut her hair which she did much better than the coiffeur.

The little one (he) is very well and in good spirits when he has eaten enough. Otherwise he yells. In general I leave him where he is and I go away so that I cannot hear him as it is not just the meal that consoles him, But he has found a more receptive audience in Mania who takes care of him and in general has a more tender heart than I do.

Alec will not leave for the city of water (*I think Marseilles*) until the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month as his friend Roger will be absent until then.

Gorik's visit went very well. He looked well and perfectly happy. We passed a very sympathetic day together. Also we were very happy before that with the visit of Philippe. I have to say that I like Antoinette a lot although I have had so few occasions to be with her. I am enclosing a few photographs. As usual the "photographers" here are terrible and there is no way to get a set as one has ordered it. For this reason we will have to put off mailing the letter destined for the Clipper' (*I think that means that they were sending the letter by airmail to New York*) to include the snapshots of Philippe and Antoinette for the Pierres. Irene's letter made me more than happy. Hopefully all will work out for them.

I will close as Alec has gone to dress Lizok who is waking up and I have to prepare myself before the nursing. Tenderly, Lia

