

## Chapter Twenty-Nine

### Halcyon: July, 1939

It was just a week ago that Louise was concerned about their social lives, and what each of them had done. She noticed that they had both “slipped” at around the same time. In her letters she poured out her feelings, writing that she wanted to quickly forget those incidents. Louise continues to be busy in July, working at Pearl’s every week day, and preparing for the Temple Convention in early August.

It’s now early Sunday morning when she writes again, mainly answering Herb’s letters.

*I’ve still two letters of yours to answer, and so I guess I’ll do so now. It’s only 7:30 a.m. but there’s a tractor outside and it woke me up. So instead of lying here getting angry, I’ll put the time into good use.*

*Do you know that I love you? I do darling – very much. Oh darling – I just love those pictures – especially the one in which you are smiling.*

*You’ve been better than I lately when it comes to letter writing. I’ve been perfectly terrible. Honey, I am going to make up for it too some of these days. I mean it. I’ll tell you every single little thing I do. (July 2)*

She writes about what others are saying about Bernard.

*Honey, I can’t understand Bernard. Bob and I were both disgusted because he is content to live on relief – and then complain because they don’t give him enough. The relief people don’t like it either. They made him take a physical exam from the doctor – and nothing is wrong.*

*Well – Mother jumped on us both. So, here is the other side of it. He is not very strong – is doing fine work for the Temple, doing Otto’s work now, bookkeeping for the Temple Home.<sup>1</sup> He keeps Pearl’s yard up pretty well, is over at the Sanatorium – and the Temple has no money to be able to give him anything. And he has to have something to live on. Oh well, with it all, I keep my mouth shut. Because Fred too jumped on us. Bernard told me he got a letter from you – kind of a call down but he was grinning when he told me. (July 2)*

She comes to the end of her letter.

*By the way, I’ve gotten so disgusted with the time, energy, and money spent on my hair, in a few weeks I’m getting it cut short and having a permanent. But I have to save up some money first – because I have to buy Patty some candy too.*

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<sup>1</sup> The official administrative unit of the Temple of The People.

*Bob already knew about Dorothy. So – what was all the fuss about? I don't know.*

*Well darling – I finished your two letters and I've got to get up. It's 8:15 and though it's Sunday – I go to Pearl's today to get dinner. (July 2)*

A week passes by before Louise writes again. It's another Sunday evening.

*Well honey – here I am again, and I do hope that you don't mind the scarcity of letters.*

*Friday I received two letters from you with enclosure of \$150. Boy am I getting rich. Thanks honey – and it's going in the bank tomorrow. ... And darling, I hate to do this – but I'm going to borrow five dollars of it but I'll put the five dollars back sometime. Georgie's awfully sick and we don't know what's the matter. He's been drooping for days – won't eat anything. So I'm taking him to the vet tomorrow – and he might want to board him, so I will need the money. Do you mind? (July 9)*

She tells Herb what she's been doing lately.

*Tonight I went out with Bob and Byron. Or rather this afternoon. On the way up to San Luis we stopped at the El Mar and had a Tom Collins. Know something that you'll have to put up with when we're married? That is – when I order anything but a soft drink – immediately the question arises "Are you 21?" Anyway, I had to sign my name to something swearing I was over 21 and Bob and Byron had to sign as witnesses. I got my Tom Collins.*

*Then dinner and a show. Then home – and we stopped at Charlie Langdon's for another Tom Collins on the way. I got it without question – only I was looked at quite closely. Also they spotted my ring – so that might have helped.*

*I went swimming in the creek this noon – Byron and Bob watched me and took candid camera shots of me. Byron's got a 30-dollar camera. It's swell. Anyway – if those pictures aren't too bad, I'll send you some. (July 9)*

**Below: Louise swimming in Arroyo Grande Creek**



Tuesday night Louise writes another short letter, answering Herb's.

*Well, this is Tuesday night, and I promised I'd write. It is the only night I can this week I guess, but I'll write every opportunity I get.*

*You know, I don't know whether I like this business of going out so much that I don't have time to write to you. I wish I could get back to where I was last year.*

*Yes, Bernard told me you scolded him. But you must see the other side of it too. Look at me. I'm capable of working to earn money – but I'm staying home to help out Pearl, and living on relief – because Mother wouldn't get so much if I weren't a dependent. It's the condition of my health (which is really o.k.) that makes me a dependent. So darling – what's the difference? (July 11)*

Louise still ponders over when Herb will return home.

*I guess though, even if you didn't get to come home on account of being rated – its best. It wouldn't do us much good to have to live on what you were making. Or am I trying to kid myself? I think I'd rather have had you back six months earlier, impractical though it may seem. But love is impractical and I love you. No, I wouldn't want you to get disrated, but I'm kind of sorry you got rated. But only in a way darling. I know it's better for us this way. (July 11)*

*Do you still love me? I need your love a great deal, honey. Please don't let it die – ever.*

She closes this letter with more family news.

*You don't mind my keeping out \$5.00 do you? I took Georgie down yesterday morning – and left him there. He had an abscess on his sex organ and was all swollen. I'll get him Thursday, but it costs 50 cents a day, and I don't know how much the operation cost yet. I hope its not more than five dollars.*

*I'm getting a permanent tomorrow. A baby-bob – very short with soft curls, all over my head. I hope you'll like it.*

*Bob has a job about fifty miles from here, at a camp for delinquent boys – ages about eight to sixteen. Room, board, and experience – which is valuable. I hope he makes out o.k. (July 11)*

Another week passes before Louise writes again. It is now Wednesday, late in the afternoon. She writes while waiting for the Dower's dinner to cook.

*It seems like a long time since I've written to you, and longer still since I've heard.*

*Gosh Herb dear, but I miss you so and wish you were here. I love you a lot honey, and it's hard not having you with me. I dreamed we were married last night – too bad I had to wake up. ... Herb dear – do you still love me? You'd never stop loving me, would you? (July 19)*

Louise interrupts her letter writing in order to get dinner ready. Then she continues "Dinner is ready, but Pearl isn't home yet, so I'll take advantage of the opportunity and write to you."

*Anita and I are moving downstairs in the Guest House because upstairs belongs to the men, and as it is convention when a lot of guests come, we have to move. I think I'll stay down now, because in a short while – a few months, I'll be moving anyhow.*

*Six months isn't very long, is it? And after Convention, time will go very fast. Pretty soon I will be Mrs. Herbert Lentz – and you'll never be able to get rid of me.*

*Patty and I are going to do the cooking again this year – in the Lodge this time. It will be lots easier for us. (July 19)*

Adding to her anxiety, Georgie continued to need medical care. Just a few days after getting him back home from his treatment for that abscess, Louise had to take him to the vet again. She was concerned about the costs and how she would pay for his treatment. (July 19)

Later that evening after dinner, Louise continues writing.

*A couple weeks ago my left hip went out of joint. Dr. Harris fixed it – then a few days later it happened again. Last Saturday my right hip slipped out. Why I don't know.*

*I still go to the dances, but they have kind of fallen off. Anyway, I don't get such a thrill out of dancing anymore. I'm getting old, I guess. That's what Doc Harris said when I asked him why my bones kept slipping out of place.*

*Boy, I've nearly got an art gallery on my wall. All of you too, honeybunch. But don't let that stop you from sending more pictures.*

*You know, every time I wear the dress you gave me, everybody asks where I got the lovely dress. And I've worn it constantly since I got it. Oh well – they all have short memories it seems. (July 19)*

Another week goes by before Louise writes again. It's Wednesday.

*It's been a long time since I wrote, hasn't it? But time does slip by so, without being able to get much done.*

*Sunday the Recreation Center gave a barbeque at the County Park – and I went. I had a swell time. I played baseball (softball) – workup. The first time in six years, I guess. I climbed a mountain after eating. Then we danced and after that we went swimming. Well – I'm telling you; I was so sore the next day, every breath I took hurt. My ribs, arms – every place. I'm still sore too.*

*Did I tell you Georgie is back? And he sure feels swell. Peppy – and does he eat! It sure is nice to have him home again. I missed him a lot. By the way – I moved downstairs yesterday. And it sure is nice. I like it lots better than up.*

*I received three letters from you Friday, but as they're at home, and I'm at Pearl's, I can't answer them just now. And I've got to finish getting supper.*

*I'm going to the dance tonight. I'll finish this tomorrow morning and mail it, as a ship leaves on Friday – and I should have at least one letter on it. (July 26)*