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American Embassy
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Dear Namie -

There is a rumor, that train service, entirely stopped for the past two weeks will be resumed today. so I will try to give you a resume' of what has been happening. Since much earlier (July 6th) train service has been only intermittent and never on schedule. For two weeks prior to the 26th, cannonading and machine gun firing was often audible, most often coming from Fengtai at a distance of ten miles. On the 26th fighting moved up to one of the city gates. Changy. Men. and the city actually vibrated with the firing; on the 27th the city was in a state of alarm and Embassies started calling in their various nationals. The night of the 27th and the morning of the 28th were sleepless; booming of big guns continuously and with the break of dawn squadrons of Japanese planes overhead, at 6.30 AM. from my roof, I saw a Chinese plane fell a larger Japanese one. All Japanese nationals and Koreans had poured into their Embassy and other quarters reserved for them several days before. Now all other foreigners were fleeing for safety. All my neighbors had left. From the next house I phoned to our Embassy and got in touch with one of our Secretaries. I told him that I had enough food to last me three days, he urged me to come in bringing all food with me as he had none, and no cooks. Just then there was a loud rattle of machine gun fire only a few hundred feet away. I decided that it was safer to remain within my own walls which I did for 2 1/2 days. A few other foreigners were equally fool hardy.

Most of the American colony were housed in close rows of army tents on the lawn in front of the Ambassadors residence and in the garden by the barracks. the food was good, they had band concerts and movies, and for the first day or so the

majority considered it somewhat of a lark. Wealthy Chinese were paying any price for rooms in the quarter, and some who had deposited as much as a thousand dollars for a bed for a month never appeared. The Wagons Lits Hotel was charging \$65⁰⁰ per day. The Legation gates were sand bagged and guarded by the various national troops, no one was allowed in or out without a pass and ordinary Chinese could not get in at all. On Thursday bombing ceased and the Chinese were quietly jubilant over the false news of their victories at Fengtai and Lanfang. All shops however remained barricaded, all streets were sand bagged and in many trenches had been dug overnight. On Friday the firing started again and was to be heard from various directions outside the city. Thousands of refugees, mostly women and children were clamouring at the city gates. At Tungchow the Peace Preservation Corp had revolted and massacred the Japanese; they, in turn were being annihilated and were trying to break the city gates for protection. News came in of the ghastly sights on the road to the Nan Yuan flying field: thousands of Chinese soldiers and cadets, dead and dying; the road made impassable by heaps of dead horses, wrecked Chinese trucks (all packed), farm houses blown to bits and the wounded crawling off into the fields, (the Red Cross was non functioning) to die. Tsing Hua university, about 12 miles outside the city was deserted. Japanese troops entered but did not loot. The remnants of the Chinese army were fleeing in all directions pursued by Japanese armored tanks and within a few days were almost completely exterminated. Complete change of city officials was made, newspaper editors were and are being arrested — the same with university professors and teachers who are said to have "communistic" tendencies (ei: those who have been

actively patriotic). A factual demonstration of what has happened occurred yesterday when a procession of 300 armored trucks and tanks - Japanese - passed thru the city and were welcomed on their victorious way by the whole Japanese community who suddenly appeared again on the avenues each waving his white red-spotted flag.

During the most nerve-racking days of the "incident" a newly arrived American couple - he a professor of Economics from Cornell, fell in love with my house and offered me a years rent in advance for it. It seemed to me like a lucky break so I drifted in the current of events and accepted their offer. Yesterday they came to take occupancy and I had to move out. George Merrell 1st Sect of the Embassy has given me temporary shelter & as I am living in the lap of luxury for the moment, Mrs. Merrell was a Mrs. Choate of Boston, and niece of

Mrs. Moses Taylor of Newport, Murrakech etc etc; while I was in New York, she lived for a month in my house where Geo. M. forced a rapid courtship and married her.

All this leads up to my shockingly unpremeditated decision to start vagabonding again, as soon as there is some facility to travel to Shanghai. It is not likely that rail connection with the South will be resumed for some while - there may even be a long protracted war with the front along a Pasting, Tsinan Tsingtau line. Peking is, one gathers, even without inside or outside news, now virtually part of Manchukou.

Officially, I am, at last on my way to Bali. tho for unexplicable reasons I am suspicious of that little

island, and may cut it out for India, Persia, Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean; if unlimited funds were available I should at least give it a tour of inspection but I haven't exactly figured out how this trip is going to be financed anyway. There's no telling where I shall linger - it will be as my fancy listeth, eventually to get back to New York with a grand lot of pictures to exhibit.

This must sound to you to be shockingly unpromoted, but such is what two weeks of war atmosphere does to one. To me what is much more shocking is America's inaction in this affair, which can only lead to a war atmosphere on our own shores within a very few years.

A box containing my drawings and prints has been stored in the go-down of the shop of E. G. Punnett in the Hotel des Wagons-Lits, also a case of my few treasured possessions; these can be shipped on order. Many of the furnishings of my house I would not like to lose, for the present they are safe in the hands of my tenants, and no further decision can be made about them. I am thankful that I am not burdened with too many worldly goods.

The best bet on reaching me by mail will be of Thomas Cook. Singapore; no more American Express - as I am fed up with their inefficiency. Anyway I shall leave forwarding addresses with Peking Shanghai, Hongkong etc Thomas Cook offices. There is said to be a mail train going out from here today so shall send this off now; and write

again before my departure. Still no news from you since mid winter. Did you over receive packages sent? Aunt Florie writes that she had a grand time with you seeing the sights of Remons in your country side. Yours S. J. S. J.