

Gresham House  
Cairo  
April 25<sup>th</sup> 1932

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Dear Mother,

I have some definite news for you at last. I am sailing from Port Said April 27<sup>th</sup> on the Burma. Henderson Line. due London May 11<sup>th</sup>.

We have been to the Red Sea after all. we made up our minds quite suddenly. we had finished the work, & there wasn't a suitable British boat for over a week & the weather had turned a little cooler. so we talked of the trip longingly at supper Monday & decided to attempt it after all alone in spite of the perils of the Arabian desert that we had been warned about. Tuesday we packed up. took a good supply of water & petrol & all Joey's spare parts, also a long roll of chicken wire netting to drive over in case the sand was too soft & the car began to sink in & off we went. We stayed the first night at Nag Hammadi at the <sup>head</sup> of the big sugar factories, a French man. & the next day plunged into the unknown -

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we were very relieved to find the awful dangers of the Arabian desert had been very much exaggerated there certainly were bad patches of sand. & we could see big holes where cars had stuck, but Joey didn't make any fuss about it, & there were a few difficult turns & steep passes. but there was a definite track all the way. (140 miles) & there were several wells where one could get water. so after our experience of what desert travel can be like, we felt we were on a regular high way. although folk in Cairo were very amazed to hear we had gone alone in our own car & driven ourselves. even Rex said "jolly good stunt that." Of course Sardic was with us with his beloved gun. but he is not yet experienced enough to take the wheel on such a trip when one has to be as economical on petrol as possible, & avoid over heating the engine - we spent the next night out in the desert near one of the wells. & were on the shores of the Red Sea the next day. It was glorious. golden sands with strange shells

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a fringe of mountains of red granite, purple porphyry & orange sandstone in the back ground. & then the deep blue sea, paling to delicate green over a <sup>white</sup> coral reef. There is a tiny village on the shore called the Quassir it is one of the places where the pilgrims embark for Mecca. There are also some phosphate mines being worked there. We paid our respects to the Mudir & politely refused a pressing invitation to stay in his house. & then drove along the sea shore & made our camp among the sand dunes. Sardic had never seen the sea before & was loud in his exclamations of amazement, but he rather mistrusted it. He washed his face in it & in the usual Arab way wringed his mouth, & was very upset to find it so salt. In less than five minutes Amice & I were prancing over the coral reef in bathing dresses (adapted to Arab ideas of decency) the sea in the shallows was as hot as one usually has for a hot bath at home. & when we wanted to swim we had to clear purple jelly fish out

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of the way. But on the reef we met some native fishermen & talked to them. They were so delighted to find we could speak Arabic & they had the most charming manners. They showed us many strange sea creatures & we bought fresh caught fish from them: which we cooked in a petrol tin over a primus. Sardinic nearly had a fit when we insisted that they must be boiled in salt sea water. However he found them very good to eat, we invited a specially courteous fisherman to eat with Sardinic, & fragments of conversation that we over heard from the other side of Joey caused us much amusement.

We slept on the shore. under the full moon, with the sound of the lapping of the waves on the coral reef to lull us to sleep.

We were up at dawn & swam before breakfast & then had another exploration along the shore & started on our return journey about 10.30. & reached home the following day. very burnt. very dusty. but very satisfied with our adventure.

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Since then it has been one mad rush to get packed & everything stowed away & say goodbye to all our friends. Sardic nearly wept at our departure, I never saw anything quite so sad as his face when the good bye smile faded away -

Now we are tasting the gaities<sup>sic</sup> of Cairo. tonight we dine with Lady Rowlett. tomorrow with Rex. the next day I sail.

Would Father call in & see Mr Pearce when he is in town & ask him to let me have all the necessary insurance papers for Lady Godiva ready for me to fill in & sign as soon as I get home. I think I had better insure for 6 months from May 11<sup>th</sup> (I believe it would cost just as much to insure for only five) & I may want to use her up to the end of October.

Lots of love to every body  
your affectionate daughter  
Myrtle.

Amice sends love. she will return by a later boat as she has a lot of things to do here.

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