

Dec 30th 1932.

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Dear Mother.

We have decided there is more to having Soudani guards than meets the eye. Mahomed Hasan came round the other day to ask if they might have a little fire for the one on night duty to warm himself by, & as there is a bitter cold wind across the desert at night now we thought the request reasonable & have arranged for some mimosa wood to be bought for their use, & as it takes time for the tree to be felled & cut up we said they could have a little of the wood our bath water is heated on in the ^{meantime} so. the night before last being exceptionally cold, Amice & I thought we would see if they had a good fire before we went to bed about 9.30. we walked all

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round the house & there was no sign of a guard. so we went over to their tent where there was a light showing, we called. but there was no reply we did not go in as we did not know what sort of undress Soudanis retire in, so we went back to the house & inquired if the guard was in the men's room with Sardic. another blank — so we decided to test the Soudanis vigilance, Amice got out James the revolver & we went to the tent & fired him off outside. still no reply — so finally we sent Sardic & Ahmed Ibrahim, who was visiting him, to go into the tent, They went, & found the Soudanis so sound asleep that they had to shake them to rouse them & they never even heard James go off. so then there

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was rage & fury. & the Ombashi was told to come & report in the morning.

They arrived - two of them very crestfallen & the Ombashi apologized & said that it was the third man's turn for night duty but he had had to go to Sohag to collect the month's pay. & that he himself. the Ombashi would do two nights guard duty rather than such a thing should happen again.

So Amice told him that if one of the men had to be absent he must report to the house here, & the others must arrange to share his duty.

Last night our night guard was very much in evidence. so much so that he kept us awake with his stumping to & fro & coughing & yawning & rattling & clanking his gun.

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 some good laughs about it.

I have sent the endorsed cheque to the bank. I think it will arrive in good time. my income tax paper arrived to-day. also the Humorists. the latter were the most welcome!

Nannie thanks you very much for the Home Chat.

Please thank Pat very much for her letter, & tell her I will write to her a little later on. I have such a little spare time, & such a waiting list of letters, I have rather a scramble to fit my Arabic lessons in just now as it is Ramadan, I had to write a letter to Sheikh Sarbit to alter the time of my lesson. & I explained that I had not been able to prepare any Arabic owing to so many letters for Christmas. & there had been guests staying etc. it was quite a long letter for an Arabic one & he said there wasn't a single mistake!!!
 Love to you both & Pat from us both
 your affectionate daughter Myrtle.

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