

~~SECRET~~ DDP  
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RETURN TO GREECE  
~~XVI~~ (S) ~~XXXXH~~

After the Truman Doctrine had been in operation for about four years, Mark and I were invited to return to Greece as the guests of the Greek government to see what had been accomplished with the money that had been provided. The Greek ambassador to the United States, Alexis Kyrrou, came to Louisville to extend the invitation, <sup>which</sup> ~~he said~~ ~~the invitation~~ also included David, ~~who was now~~ <sup>take</sup> ~~them~~ twelve, if we would like to bring him. Naturally we accepted.

The offer ~~of the trip~~ came at an opportune time for Mark, <sup>who</sup> ~~he~~ had had a recurrence of the hives and needed a vacation. In fact, he had suffered from the hives off and on since the first attack when he returned from the Balkans, but this <sup>in early 1951</sup> last was the worst. He went to New York to see an <sup>allergy</sup> specialist ~~in allergies~~ who had been highly recommended ~~and~~. ~~He~~ <sup>the doctor's</sup> arrived at ~~his~~ office punctually at the appointed hour, only to be told by the receptionist that the doctor was out.

"Out?" Mark exclaimed in considerable irritation.

"Isn't this the time I was told to come?"

"Yes, Mr. Ethridge, and it is too bad the doctor is <sup>not</sup> ~~in~~ but he had to go uptown to see his allergy

specialist about his hives. He had a severe attack last night."

~~¶~~ However, Mark finally did see the doctor, <sup>who</sup> and ~~he~~ put him in the Harkness Pavilion for a thorough checkup ~~to see if they could locate the source of his complaint.~~ After a series of tests, the doctors said that, while there were certain foods to which <sup>Mark</sup> ~~he~~ was allergic and he had some minor local infection, the real root was tension. To effect a cure he had to give up some of his activities and <sup>get</sup> ~~have~~ some rest.

So <sup>Mark</sup> ~~he~~ wrote President Truman to that effect and asked to be relieved not only of the chairmanship of the United States Advisory Commission on Information, but <sup>(also of)</sup> his membership on it. The President accepted ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> resignation with a very warm letter. ¶ Either <sup>Mr.</sup> ~~President~~ Truman's memory was short or he didn't take Mark seriously, for just a few months later, <sup>received</sup> before Mark got around to taking it easy, ~~he~~ <sup>got</sup> a telegram from the White House, asking him to call on the President at 12:15, Friday, April 13, <sup>1951</sup> Mark felt in his bones that the date, <sup>Friday, April 13</sup> couldn't bode anything good. And it didn't. ~~The~~ <sup>Truman</sup> President <sup>a committee for</sup> asked him to head Psychological Warfare. (a committee?)

¶ The offer was such a shock, Mark couldn't answer immediately, <sup>but</sup> three days later he wrote the President a long letter, a few paragraphs of which I'll quote:

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"Since I talked with you, and later with Averell Harriman, last Friday, I have been thinking over the tender of the place you were kind enough to think I can handle and I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that I must ask you to let me pass this one up.

X  
"Aside from the reasons of health, which continue to be a factor with me...there are other considerations I believe you will equally respect. One of them is that I have been away from Louisville and my family, which includes a twelve<sup>^</sup>-year-old boy, a good part of the last six years on missions for the government. Both my family and my job<sup>1</sup> and I must work as a salaried man<sup>1</sup> have suffered and I feel that I should stay here for a while.

"A more compelling consideration, however, is that while I recognize fully the importance of what you have asked me to do and have a real conviction that it has been needed, I do believe I can be more useful during the next year as part of the Courier-Journal and Times organization than in the job which you tendered me. There are too few editorial voices that speak, as we feel we should, for a sound and effective foreign policy and against what may be a rising tide of either isolation or muddle-headed thinking. I want to be a part of the fight against both and it seems to me that the most effective place for that is here."

Still, Mark needed to get away from the papers for a ~~little~~ while and the invitation from the Greek government seemed heaven-sent. Ambassador Kyrou asked us how we would like to travel to Greece. Would we like to take the Queen Elizabeth to France and fly from Paris to Athens, or would we like to make the whole trip from New York to Piraeus on a Greek freighter? Knowing how poor the Greeks were, we chose the freighter. Then, too, Mark and I had never been on a freighter and thought it would be ~~a~~<sup>#</sup>restful and interesting experience.

So it was arranged that we would take one freighter of the Prudential Steamship Lines to Greece, have a visit<sup>there</sup> of fourteen days, and then take another freighter that would stop at Athens, pick us up, and, after unloading cargo in Istanbul, Ismit, and Iskenderon, <sup>all</sup> Turkish ports, <sup>bring</sup> us back to the United States. Ambassador Kyrou estimated the whole trip would take about seven weeks.

We found the freighter very comfortable. We had the <sup>cabin</sup> ~~apartment~~ of the president of the Prudential Lines, <sup>Mr. Stephen D. Stephanidis,</sup> and we ate in the officers' mess. We made one stop going over at Genoa, where we were met by Greek officials who wined and dined us in fine fashion. We got the same royal treatment when we reached Piraeus; more <sup>the port of Athens,</sup>

visit to whom?  
see Piraeus below?

cabins?

see? above

Ethridge

government officials, bowing ~~to me~~ and making welcoming speeches and kissing my hand. Then they escorted us to the Grande Bretagne <sup>H</sup>otel and up to our suite of two large rooms, which were filled with flowers <sup>and</sup> baskets of oranges, Greek candy, and pistachio nuts.

See p. 363

Every day ~~for two weeks~~ we were taken on an extensive tours about the country to assess the progress <sup>of</sup> that had been made since the Truman Doctrine went into operation.

See p. 362

The first phases of our aid <sup>had been</sup> ~~were~~ military and <sup>immediate</sup> ~~quick types~~ of relief assistance <sup>of</sup> food, shelter, and clothing. Next, under the guidance of the Economic Cooperation Administration, Greece <sup>had</sup> restored her roads and recovered her agricultural vigor. Barren alkali areas were <sup>being</sup> irrigated and rapidly ~~being~~ turned into rice paddies <sup>of</sup> indeed, so rapidly <sup>that</sup> that Mark judged <sup>that</sup> by the next year Greece would have all the rice she would need for home use.

<sup>she</sup> ~~she~~ had <sup>also</sup> begun regaining her place as a maritime nation. She had restored her canals and harbors. She had begun systematically reclaiming her forests. She had her shattered railroads back in operation.

~~That the Greeks had undertaken all these projects~~

It was not just <sup>with</sup> ~~by accepting~~ American money that the Greeks had undertaken all these projects.

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They had taken the ball handed them by ECA and carried it forward by their own energy and spirit. They were rebuilding their homes with their own materials and by their own handicraft. They were even matching from their own taxes each American dollar spent by ECA. The Truman Doctrine was working magnificently.

CR  
Larkin

Besides viewing these many improvements, Mark, David, and I had a busy social life, climaxed by a family luncheon with King Paul and Queen Frederica and their three children: Constantine, who was David's age and who became the king after Paul's death, but was deposed and is now living in Switzerland; Sophia, a very pretty girl, now the wife of King Carlos of Spain; and the youngest, Irene, *all of whom of the perfect English*

*See note  
p. 360*

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*Irene  
Larkin  
now?*

*I don't  
know*

At lunch Mark sat on the Queen's right and David on her left. Once, when David said something amusing, the Queen quipped, "You little ninny," and ruffled his hair. It was an excellent lunch, but *with and* ~~all I can remember~~ *ed best* ~~about it now were~~ the fat white asparagus and big ripe strawberries with thick cream.

*(C)*  
*(C)*

When we finished eating, the Queen excused *her* ~~the~~ children, suggesting *that* they show David through the Palace. Then she began to talk seriously and

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*See?  
at  
children  
p. 360*

animatedly about Greece's political situation.

She despised the prime minister, Alexandros

Papagos. At one point she exclaimed, "He's

nothing but a goddamn son-of-a-bitch."

The King, sitting at the other end of the table by me, smiled indulgently and said, "Mr. Ethridge, that's what you call the Queen's English."

About a half-hour later we joined the children, and David in the drawing room and said our good-byes.

Quite formally the King and Queen wished us farewell and a safe return to the States; but there was nothing formal about the children's good-byes to David. Hanging over the balustrade above the front door, they yelled over and over, "Come back, David! Come back!"

In the late afternoon of the same day Mark and I went to tea at the home of Princess Helen, who was the Grand Duchess of Russia and the aunt of King Paul.

Mark wasn't a bit enthusiastic about going to the party; tea is one drink ~~Mark~~ <sup>he</sup> cares nothing about. However, the invitation was almost a royal command.

When we arrived at the Princess's home in a suburb of Athens, we were ushered out into the

David also one of the children X  
cup 359

1/2  
2/3  
3/4  
4/5

Assume  
The Great  
children  
spoils,  
Greece!

why  
X  
leaving  
in  
Greece?

garden where the Princess was serving tea to a half-dozen other guests. Mark had to take a cup too <sup>9</sup> there was no polite way out of it. <sup>9</sup> As we were sitting about, sipping ~~away~~ and chatting pleasantly, I heard light footsteps approaching and, glancing up, saw a fairly young-looking woman in <sup>a</sup> ~~one~~ ~~of those~~ short, full, peasant-like skirts and low, round-neck blouse, her legs <sup>were</sup> bare, and skimpy sandals on her feet. A neighbor, I thought, who didn't know about the party. But as she came closer, I saw it was no neighbor. Not a peasant, either. It was the Queen, <sup>and</sup> She was as surprised to see us as we were to see her. She had just dropped in for a quick visit with Princess Helen, she <sup>l</sup> explained. The servant hadn't told her the Princess had company.

After the Queen, rather breathlessly, finished the explanation, Princess Helen asked, "My dear, will you have a cup of tea?"

"No thank you," <sup>the Queen</sup> ~~she~~ replied promptly. "I'll have a Scotch and soda."

Quick as a flash Mark decided that if a Scotch and soda <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ good enough for the Queen, it was good enough for him.

Frederica was even more relaxed and lively than she had been at lunch and told several amusing stories on herself. She loved to drive her own car <sup>4</sup>

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only one follows



a small, bright-red American sports model, and with no guards in attendance. One day a traffic light stopped her on a downtown Athens street right next to the twin of her car, <sup>driven by</sup> a young American soldier, ~~was driving it.~~ He looked over at her and asked, "You like that car?"

"Very much," she answered.

"How many miles do you get to a gallon of gas?"

She started to answer, but at that moment the light changed and she moved on. However, not before she caught a shocked look of recognition on the soldier's face. And not before she flashed him a reassuring smile over her shoulder.

When our <sup>#</sup> two weeks in Greece were up, we began inquiring for the freighter, the Moline Victory, which was supposed to pick us up, but it was nowhere in sight. There had been a slight delay in New York, we heard. It had been late returning from its previous trip, and besides, was loading an extra-heavy cargo. Our situation was embarrassing. The scheduled parties were over; the flowers were dead; the rotting fruit wore a halo of little flying insects. We simply had to leave; but <sup>to go</sup> where ~~to~~? Istanbul was the logical answer, <sup>because</sup> the Moline Victory would dock there after it stopped at Piraeus. So we took an overnight ship

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all this permitted to happen in the hotel? see P. 358

to Turkey, ~~And~~ we never regretted that decision.

The United States ambassador to Turkey was George Wadsworth. As soon as he learned Mark was in Istanbul, he invited us to visit him in Ankara, which had ~~fairly~~ recently become the capital of Turkey. While there Mark saw what he claimed was the greatest show of bravery ever witnessed. He <sup>him</sup> said it made glad the Turks were our friends.

This demonstration of courage took place <sup>at</sup> during army maneuvers just outside Ankara at which Ambassador Wadsworth and Mark were guests. Apparently the ambassador must have whispered that Mark was a very close friend of President Truman, for he got the red-carpet treatment. He sat in the second row of the little grandstand on a hill above a wide valley.

The maneuvers combined artillery, tanks, airplanes, and infantry. The infantry was advancing in three files before lining up for battle, while the artillery and air force were bombarding a position some yards <sup>in</sup> front of them. Through an error, a live shell fell short between two of the marching files. It could have easily killed twenty or thirty infantrymen, but not a soldier broke rank. Not one. They kept marching forward calmly as if nothing had happened. And, fortunately, nothing serious had. The shell

He ok  
or they?

~~burst in soft rock, just throwing up a lot of <sup>small stones</sup> rock and dirt.~~

The Moline Victory was so long coming that Mark finally cabled Barry, suggesting the Courier send him enough money for the three of us to fly home. <sup>(simply)</sup> Barry ~~but~~ wired Mark not to worry. Nevertheless he did. The papers were getting along too well without him, he said.

Finally the Moline Victory came and after eighteen unbelievable days of slow, primitive, clumsy unloading into lighters, ~~when they were available,~~ we got ~~the~~ word it was ready to sail. Hurriedly, we packed our belongings and went aboard. But we needn't have hurried <sup>for</sup> there were three more days of unloading.

<sup>At last</sup> ~~Then~~ we sailed around the long coast of Asia-Turkey, making three <sup>#</sup> and four <sup>#</sup> days stops to load and unload in the fascinating towns of Ismit and Iskenderon, and another at Gibraltar to refuel and repair the boiler. When we finally arrived in Louisville, we had ~~been~~ gone three and a half months instead of the seven weeks we had planned.

No sooner were we back than Mark had a letter from President Truman, asking him to serve on another committee. Again he had to refuse, but hoping to make his refusal more palatable, he told the President

Ethridge

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the Greeks were crazy about him. We had found that the most insignificant peasant knew about the Truman Doctrine and what it had meant to Greece.

Mark wrote ~~me~~:

"I wonder if Jack Peurifoy [the United States ambassador to Greece at the time] or somebody else has told you that the Greeks refer to you as 'Baba' (Uncle) Truman. There is certainly no lack of warmth on their part toward you. They express their grat<sup>i</sup>tude with their mouths, their hands, their feet, their eyes in their customary volatility."

OK here or [ ]?

X+T