August 22, 1923.

Dearest Elisabeth,

A crowd of "Boys" - under direction of the too picturesque "deck boys" - are folding up the carpet behind me, to the accompaniment of the usual voluble chatter, many little jokes and much laughter. Where that tradition of the quiet solemn Chinaman arose I cannot imagine. Ours are as voluble, gesticulating and full of laughter as Italians. They are temperament.

During the great storm yesterday they worked like Trojans, incessantly mopping the corridors, putting the piled up cabins and public rooms in order, waiting on passengers, always chattering to one another at every chance.

That storm will probably be written up in the papers as soon as wireless sets are repaired enough to send in the news. It was an experience never to be forgotten, impossible to describe, yet we all will attempt it.

We had seen the last mountains of the cloud wrapped Hawaiian Islands melt in the mist the night before. The North star hung low, and Scorpion was high in the south a most unfamiliar sky. The warm breeze freshened during the night so that before morning your mother was drenched when the top of a wave paid a call. Our stateroom is thirty or forty feet above the water. The boy in answer to our bell said, "Too bad! make dry to-molly. Dry sheets get. Dry pillow case, no got." People on the deck below had barrels full of water poured in on them, if they had refused to close their port holes. In the morning it was bright with a fresher breeze. By noon it was half a gale, the sea began to rise and most of the decks were too wet for comfort. Then things began to happen. The barometer dropped an inch in a few minutes. The sky was covered with clouds, the wind began to sing and then to howl. Rain fell, spray flew, water beat in at every crevice and more and more turned pale and sick. We went down and had a good but athletic lunch. By this time the big seas were running solid green over the ports. Just as we were drinking our black coffee the first big sea struck us. We kept our places by holding on the curtains. Chairs went coasting, all the dishes sailed, Mother got the ice water pitcher sailing straight through the air, a second drenching. Tables were torn out of the floor and the diners made dog piles in the corners. It was too near serious to even seem funny at the time.

By this time typhoon almost unknown in these regions was announced. The velocity of the wind was incredible, a hundred miles an hour, touching a hundred twenty and more. It was stifling, strangling sticky hot. As usual some foolish and sick young women and men opened their ports "just for a breath" and were half drowned by the inrushing seas.

How did it look you may ask. There was nothing to be seen. The air was so full of lying water that often we could not
see ten fee. I caught occasional fleeting glimpses of mountainous green seas towering above us, thru crests fairly beaten by the solid wind. I saw great masses of water carried over the decks. We saw nothing. It was something terrific to be heard and felt, always hiding itself behind the dense screen of flying water.

For a time the wind came from behind us, then there was something of a lull, just towering green seas, the barometer dropped to 28.4 and the storm burst with renewed fury in reversed direction. We now met it head on. Nothing to be seen only the howling of the wind, the motion of the vessel as she shudderingly shook off the deck loads of water, the crash of some loose trunk or article of furniture, a shriek somewhere, another crash, the chattering orientals everlastingly mopping, a call for the doctor, for there were many minor injuries.

In the midst of all a bright eyed girl about fourteen came running in with an exhausted sea bird to see if the doctor could take care of it. Through it all the incomprehensible heat. Even the electric fans could not stir it to life. Nobody read, nobody cared if he or she was soaked. Six or eight inches of water did at last clear the smoking room. Everyone wanted to see but no one saw anything, but horizontal flying spray and ghost like rollers. By seven the barometer was up to 29.3, the sea running higher but the wind a trifle less violent. We went to bed right after supper almost tired out by the effort to keep balance and the excitement.

At midnight, Hittie roused me to see the stars and open the upper port. The Southern Cross or some similar constellation and canopus I think glowed peacefully. An hour or two later some one came in and opened the lower port. We slept till seven thirty and woke to a perfect day, a cool breeze, and a cheerful rippling calm blue sea, a most amazing transformation.

Now electricians are putting up a new wireless, carpenters are repairing broken woodwork, a new mast has been stepped, carpets are drying and children playing in the wet sand.

We have had an experience, a real typhoon, an unseen force of which we were the plaything in a staunch easy ship and we are thrilled.

Some day I may go back of this to mysterious th'o mist wrapped cloud draped mountains of the Hawaiian group and our wonderful drive about the city, along the beach to the Aquarium and up the mountain. All I could write would be flowers and fruit, fish, all miracles of color.

Love

Father.