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24 December 1939

Antwerpen

My dear Susie and Joe,

It is a long time since I have written to you. I truly don't know what I am to write. With me it still remains the same; I cannot earn anything, I can't get away from here either, I ask myself what the end will be. I hear that many things (articles) are sent from here to England, but I do not know what and how. Also many diamonds are sent to London. Perhaps Joe could ask our people in the Diamond club of London whether they do not need someone here for purchasing a business dealings?

I hope things are good with you. Greetings and kisses most heartily from your,
Papa.

My dear Susie and dear Joe, [copied from previously translated letter]

We received your letter and I am curious to know if you let yourself be photographed. I hope that the photos were successful. I cannot imagine that you have aged. Here my dear everyone nowadays has passports—grandmother [Hana?], Bertha[?], and many other persons all have them. Today a year has passed since Joe was with us for Christmas. What fun it was and how cold it was. Here the town is lit up and for the new year there [will be] a big ball as always. This week I have met Letty in town and we went together to Innovation[?]. Her little girl is becoming very attractive. The husband of Letty has had good luck. He goes every Saturday for 2 days to the house not far from here. Today M [?] came with P [?] to see his sister who is well. I invited M [?] with us next week to _____ with the New Year since that will be a little fun with us. [What a shame that you] and Joe are not among us. Let us hope that next year we will all be together and there will be peace. Little new here. You know Susi that your [?] shop is still for rent. You can imagine that there is [not much going on in town] and there are shops for sale everywhere. I hope you are well and that you had a chance to celebrate Christmas a little. Did you taste the Christmas pudding?

Many kisses from your mother who loves you. Best wishes for Joe and his family as well as for the family Wulff. Greetings from the grandparents and from Philip and all.

M [?]

18 November 1940

My dear Susi and Joe,

We received your letter addressed to Berta. I am sorry that you have received so few letters from us. I wrote you a very detailed letter in September which you would no doubt have enjoyed. I hope that it has reached you. It consisted of four large pages. Today I do not have such patience. You need not worry about us, we are quite well and we are in need of nothing. I send you greetings and many kisses, from your Papa.

We were so pleased after a long time to get a letter from you. Your dear lines happened to arrive on our wedding day. Unfortunately we cannot be together for this day, but we hope that we will hear only good news from each other. I am, thank God, well. I bought myself a few attractive things. In our family everyone dresses well. We spend time as

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[best we can?]. I do a lot of knitting for that is a pleasant way to pass the time. Uncle [?] is well [?] as his wife and Philip [?]. Ruth, the sister from [?] is also with them. I hope, my darling, to get a letter from you soon. Many greetings to the entire family and a thousand kisses and [?] for your dear Joe, from your Mama
Many greetings for the dear grandparents.

20 July 1941
Ignace Mamel
Chez Mme. Th. Pianelli
Quartier de la Tririte
La Biotat[?] (B.d. Rh.)

Dear Susi!

I have visited your parents and the other relatives and they are very anxious that they have received no new news from you since January last year. Similarly there is no news from Uncle Simon and his family. Since there is no mail from there, they asked me to write to you and you can write your letter to my address, as above, where I live together with Henriette and Charles, and I would pass them on. Your parents and the relatives and we ourselves are well, and are waiting for the end of the war so that we can again move into our home.

How are you? Hopefully you and Uncle Simon and his family are also well. You probably know that Uncle Henry and his family [under the aegis of the grandmother?] departed at the beginning of the year for the Dutch Indies. Since then we have had no news. Do you perhaps have some report from them?

It would please us so much to have some news of you all. Meanwhile we send you our greetings.

Uncle [presumably Ignace?]

1 March 1942

My dear uncle Ignatz and family,

A few weeks ago I wrote you a letter and hope that you have meanwhile received it and have also let my parents read it. Mother and all of us are, God be thanked, as usually well. We spend our time pleasantly. My dear husband continues to work at our factory, where we now have much work and good earnings. We are missing absolutely nothing and I am very happy here. Uncle Simon and family also are well. The week before this one we were at Heini's for a visit. He has a very attractive home and a 6 month old daughter, a sweet little girl he is crazy about. My sister-in-law has a charming son and we have much fun with him.

How are you, my dears? I hope you are well both in times of business and health. Have you had letters from my dear parents and the rest of the family? Since the last good letter from them I am no longer so very worried about them, and only hope that all should

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be good for them and that they should have nothing to complain about. Anyway, I am longing for more news from them—the sooner the better. I often see Mr. M.M. Lehrer [?]. He is much better than previously and he is very friendly with Uncle Simon. Do you know how his parents are? Everything here is as always. I hope that these lines will find you in the best of health. I send you all my greetings and many kisses for my dear parents. With greetings from my family to all of yours.

From your loving, Susi

Hotel Normandie –Nice
11, Rue d'Alsace-Lorraine

Nice
6 June 1942

My dear Susi and Joe,

As you will see from this letter, we are in Nice. It is very beautiful here. Your mother finds it especially nice and says it is more beautiful than [Blankenberghe]. For the time being we are spending our vacation here. If we cannot find a possibility to come to you, we are thinking of staying here while the war lasts. Now it depends on you to help us to get away from here. If you cannot succeed in getting the necessary visas we have no possibility to get there. We are not in need of things, we were able to save sufficient. I cannot complain about the last 2 years, we were pretty much spared, only it cost me a great deal—more than you can imagine. I only arrived here yesterday and have no more patience to write further. It all seems like a dream. I kiss you and Joe and greetings to all.

Yours, Papa

My dearest Susi and dear Joe,

Finally I can write to you from here. We are happy that we have managed to come so far. Your letter to Letty pleased us very much and we will be able to visit Uncle Jas and Letty. We are very eager to come to you. Hopefully you will be able to be successful and we will be able to spend pleasant times together. See to it that you get the necessary papers from your side “over there.” We cannot arrange anything over Portugal from here. Make careful inquiries and write immediately whether we have any expectation to get over there. What do you hear from your side? Write to me about the family. There are many acquaintances here and it feels good to recuperate here. I hope to get a long letter from you. Greetings to the entire family and greetings and kisses for you and your husband, from your, Mama.

PS-When you write, send the letter to “poste retante” since we are thinking of moving to another hotel, but we do not yet have the exact address.

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29 July 1942

Nice

My dear ones,

Read your letter of the 17th and learned with pleasure that you are well. From us, we can up till now can also report the best. You need not be anxious about Berta. They are doing pretty well. [Asiv?] has earned a lot. I have spoken to Berta every Sunday at [Reisie?] They do not want to travel to [Terien?]. The family is too large, it costs a lot. Serge is a splendid fellow, on the street everyone turns around. I don't know if you are aware of the fact that your business, apart from the furnishings, was liquidated right from the beginning. The money is well invested. Berta takes care [of it]. Unfortunately at the time it did not bring much but it comes to the same. [?] We have been very well till now but unfortunately the situation changed entirely that continue [further existence] was no longer possible. For me, the situation was very costly but I now am glad that I am here. You write I should visit Stein, but that is a difficult problem. I cannot get a visa. I will see what can be done. I would so like to visit Susi and would not save costs, but at the moment it is hopeless. Over there I could also do something. Here life is very expensive [and on top of it the casinos[?]] you know that we cannot leave [it?] I gather from your letter that you are content, but you do not seem to have advanced much and yet over there are the greatest opportunities.

Ignatz has had very disastrous bad luck and God must help that he and [Charl?] stay alive. You need not send him any most postcards because _____ deported to uncle Meilech and no there are no more means of getting help. Meni [von?] David is here in a work camp. If it is possible to send him a parcel, since I cannot. He does not need money. His address is Emanuel Mamel, 701 G.T.E., Miramas, B.D Rh., France.

I did not know that one could send parcels from over there. I will write to Susi also to send [me?] parcels. You cannot imagine what a joy it is [to receive one?] [Only things] that are good for health and useful things for daily living. I send hearty greetings to you all,

Leo

18 August 1942

Nice

My dearest Susi and dear Joe,

We were so pleased today with your letter and the pictures. Dear Susi, I find you have become much slimmer but it suits you well, and in the suit you really look like an English lady. The picture with Joe is also very nice. Thank goodness you both look very well and very happy. I have shown the pictures to my friends here and everyone thinks that we resemble one another. I also have developed a narrow face and only weigh 57 ½ kilo. What do you say to that, my darling? Since [Blanken?] have lost 10 kilo and now have a good figure. I will inquire if it is allowed to include pictures. Then I will get myself and Papa photographed and send you one. We spend the time quite pleasantly. If only one had a calmer head, for constantly one hears something new. I hope God shields

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us that nothing bad occurs to us. We hope to visit the Steins as soon as possible! The grandparents are well. Papa left a good sum of money so that they should be taken care of for one year and I had much in the way of the best provisions so that they are able to manage for one year. Now they live in the same street on the other side of the street on a handsome ground floor as the house was too big and to rent [to friends it is not agreeable]. I hope you have received our long letter (also for Uncle Simon) in which I wrote at length about Berta, that she is very well. We do not hear good news from [over there]. Out of the entire family, we are the only ones that managed to get out!

Uncle Joe was with us once. Now he would like to come with wife and child but cannot get permission. It has become very hard to get this.

Up to now we have received no parcel from you. We have done what was required concerning the loss of our luggage. Hopefully we will get some compensation. There are many acquaintances here—the handsome Hermann, Leo, who married a woman with 2 children. Still—a big player!

This week Mme. Feigenbaum was here for a visit. She lived where Uncle Joe lives. She immediately asked how you were. She looks like a young girl. The blonde son-in-law is in London, the little [son-in-law?] in Portugal!

I am glad that the family over there is well. Send many greetings. A thousand kisses to you and many good wishes to Joe. Your Mama.

My dear Susi and Joe,

Am glad to know that you are all well. It is getting boring for me. It is already two months that we are here. I am not used to the endless laziness, but what is to be done [except to] wait and [drink tea, though there is none]. I kiss you many times and heartfelt greetings for dear Joe and everyone.

Papa

September 14, 1942

London

My best loved Mama and Papa,

I hope that you spent pleasant holidays and that you prayed for good things. Here the weekend flew by very fast and I thought of you all the time and prayed that the war would long be over by next year and we would be together. Yesterday we visited Heini. Fanny was also there and everyone was very desolate. It seems that Rushie is where Uncle Ignatz is, Heine will write to you himself. His parents also are not well, and it is terrible that one can do nothing about it. This week he will go somewhere with Joe where he thinks one might be able to help you. And Joe will introduce him somewhere where one perhaps can help the Steins. This is the sole matter in which we all are interested: to assist the family to move! Dear God shall see to it that we may be successful, for we are very nervous in the present days!

Here everything is as always, God be praised. We are in good health and have nothing to complain of. My dear parents-in-law gave me a wonderful birthday gift. A golden double bracelet and necklace. And I received it already for the holidays. Believe

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me, I would gladly do without it all if I could have you here instead. But [one] must not lose courage, with patience it will come to be.

Have you received my letter for the grandparents and given it to them? What do they write to you and do you correspond with _____ about it? Who would have thought that the family would be scattered. Considering that we always stuck together. Have you heard anything concerning the repayment of the baggage? How is Eva? Any luck with the Casinos? I hope, dear parents, that though apparently you have sufficient means that you remain careful not to use too much. I know the temptation, it is nothing new with us Hamels.

Here we play among ourselves and Joe and I continue to go out as usual and are so very happy with one another. Ruby is home this week and has a wonderful little son. Everyone spoils him, but he is a very good and fine baby.

We are all very well, if only this war would come to an end. We are all in the best of health and we are lacking nothing. My dear parents, if only I knew the same about you, I would feel lighter in my heart. That is why I implore you, dearest Mama and Papa, write to me often and regularly, it is unimportant whether you have something new to report or not. For as soon as I wait longer than a week for your letters, I become terribly nervous. So don't forget that.

I wish you again, in the name of the entire family, a good and healthy and happy new year and may all of your wishes come true. I greet and kiss you a thousand times, as does Joe and also greetings for the entire family, from your loving,

Susi

London 19/9/42

My much loved Mama and Papa,

The last letter I have received from you was from the 18th of the month [?] and I am once more very uneasy about you. In the present time a letter everyday would not be too much, and that is why ask you, my dear parents, to write more letters. Uncle Simon would also like to hear more about his daughter. Last week he met Nallie (Berger) and it seems he saw Ignatz and Ruschie there and himself was very lucky to get out. It is possible that the Steins may also be lucky [if only you could be amongst those?]. Unfortunately it seems that I can do nothing from here, and it is only up to you alone. May God look after you and be with you, if you could perhaps undertake something. With us, thank goodness, nothing has changed. In terms of business we are very busy and my father-in-law gave a good sum of money to Rudy [?] and Joe for the new year. So you can imagine, my dears, that nothing is lacking and we live as if in paradise. Ann [?] my daughter-in-law, also has a very good job in a big law firm. She does not feel like marrying not during the war. She now keeps a diet and has become much slimmer. So far as I am concerned, I am somewhat astonished how think I have become, but so long as I am healthy, I am not complaining. Joe remains exactly the same—cheerful, loving jokes, and the best husband one could wish for. As soon as he hears something regarding the possibility to help your situation, he runs around to find out the details. Dear Mama and Papa, we could all be very happy, if only we were together!

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How are you feeling otherwise? Hopefully you are in good health and are keeping your eyes open in case by chance you could move! Do you get letters from the family over there? It must generally look very bleak, but one must not lose courage for then everything truly is lost.

I have no more news for today and will end in the hope that very very soon I will hear from you. The entire family sends best wishes as do Uncle Simon and family.

Be well, the war will hopefully soon be over. I send you greetings and kisses and remain with love, your children,

Joe and Susi

Red Cross Message

Sender: Mrs. Susanne Pantzler

Dearest grandparents. Happy to read your message. Hope health is good. Keep courage. Anxious about Lotti and Leo. Here all in good shape. Husband at home. Kisses for all.

Joseph, Susi 15 Feb. 1943

Addressed to Mrs. Pressel (Helene)

Anvers

Belgium

Stamped date 23 March 1943

Undated message

My dears,

We were so pleased to receive news from you. Bertha has become a beauty. She has led a wonderful life. She has no need to work. Three times a week she has a work woman and every day a child minder for Serge from morning till evenings. The boy is delightful and handsome. Since he has the nanny he has become very well-behaved and is very lively. She gets on well with her parents-in-law and with [Lana?] There are always events there. Bertha created a great event for Serge's birthday. She dresses herself very elegantly. Let us hope that they continue well! We often, as formerly, met at [?] No one of the family [?] is here. You may perhaps know that Julius married last year; he got a very fine wife.

It is very beautiful here. Many acquaintances from over there. We would so like to visit Susi, whether that is possible remains a big question. We received from her today an 8 page letter. God be thanked that she is well. Do you Frieda often see our Susi: do you also get together with the Berger[s]? Has dear [Annie] not yet found the right one. She was [after all] our supergirl!

Let us hope that we often hear only good things from one another.

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Greetings, Charlotte

I will send the letter today to [?]