HOTEL AMÉRICAIN
Abbás Hilmil Blvd. El Menhir, Egypt 8-6130-5

Air Mail

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Dear Rose,

Here we are at the site the same site that your father's expedition occupied almost 65 years ago, and things could hardly be any better. The weather is about average for the season - it'd be about 105° in the shade, if there were any shade — and aside from the occasional sandstorms, our camp has remained a merry one. Abdul and the boys are having a wonderful time, and we're all hitting it off just fine.

I guess it's true what they say about us all being brothers under the skin. Notwithstanding the archaeological importance of the find and the profits it may accrue, the greatest treasure I'll bring back from this journey is the wealth of understanding I've gained through our brisk cultural exchange of customs and ideas. The other night, for instance, I treated the fellows to their first omelettes, and you should have heard the exclamations with which they greeted this new culinary experience. For my part, I'm rapidly acquiring a taste for kumiss, a refreshing native beverage made from fermented

camel's milk. At first the flavor seemed strange to my western palate, but of late I've grown exceedingly familiar with it. In fact, I'm enjoying a stoup of kumiss right now. I shall be sure to bring you a bottle or two of this zesty concoction upon my return.

Of course everything can't be perfect. We've had a slight delay while we wait for the new navigation box to arrive. (I may have forgotten to mention in my previous letter that the old box became damaged just as we were setting out.) Nevertheless, such is the spirit of camaraderie and good fellowship here in camp that the boys voluntarily continued digging on the off chance that we might locate the pyramid without the aid of scientific instrumentation. This steadfastness in the face of adversity is truly heartwarming, and I've rewarded the crew by giving them today off.

This has given me a chance to get off by myself and relax. The strain of command must be telling on me — just now, as I was sipping some kumiss, I began to feel lightheaded, and my knees buckled slightly. Or perhaps I'm just intoxicated with the awe-inspiring vastness of this solitude that surrounds me. In any case, I shall have to lay this letter aside for the time being, until this numbness leaves my hands and the landscape stops writhing around so violently... Hello — I've been staring at the same grain of sand for last hour and have you ever heard it said

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that if you move one grain of sand you
change the course of history? well here goes nothing—
There, I done it, hope I've made the world a better
place to live in..... My my don't I feel strange
tonight I wonder what's come over me but wait!!!!!
there was something very important I meant to
tell you about this wasteland Oh yes now I remember
Did you ever stop to think that T. S. Eliot's name
is an anagram for "toilets"? I think I now
understand what he was trying to tell us all,
Rosetta— must be the desertsuns played
mischiff with my eyes for now as i gaze across
the moonlit dunes who are in no way related
to Lorna dune i see they've turned into crashing
curling waves in an endless sea to shining
sea how they cast strange shadowshapes of wild
arabian demons who are coming for me
with my final summons in the kitchey with dinah so
possibly its the pumiss thats causing these tiny
little spots to dance and swirl before my
eyes like granes of sand through an hourglass
so are the daze of our life savings blown
on a hopeless expidision thats gonna get
yors truly killed just so i can watch these
spots as they grow and grow and get funiner and funier

until theyve changed into gnarled blue men
about two foot tall with evilgrins behind their
twisting bristly green wiskers that hang all the way
to their shinnyshinshins as the three little pigs
used to say in Dighton eeway eeway eeway all the
way home home on the range
where there's no place like home there's no
place like home is where the heartbreak of psoriasis
is that A shadow i see moving or cood
it be abdul returning cood it be mack the
knibe cood it be desert sickness what cood it be
-this cotton mouthed icysweating brainfeverish
rubberarms and legs and lead for the hills
are alive with the sound of musicher and
Sicker may be it's something i ate guess
i shouldve left that last deviledhammeatball alone