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"Gotham"  
Woolner Road,  
Lahore.

July 21st. 1944.

Dear Madame,

Please pardon this typewritten letter but all my best friends declare my handwriting to be a positive burden to the flesh.

After a nightmare of a journey from Mandi to Lahore life is beginning to resume something of its former comfort.

The commodious Parry Transport refused to move an inch after Jogendranaggar. The train from Nagrota also declined to budge an inch after some few stations and we were halted for some five hours under the midday sun. At Pathankote the Lahore train had long departed, so a halt for the night became inevitable. The train left at 7.0a.m. in the morning for Lahore, stopping at every station. But troubles never come alone. Fortunately I had bolted the doors of my compartment or I should have had half the Kangra valley villagers invading my privacy. As it was they clung tenaciously as monkeys to every available projection. Those not thus accommodated settled down upon the roof.

Then, how infinitely remote did the joys of Naggar seem! Like some dream out of a Golden Age wherein there moved a most gracious and gifted *châtelaine* administering fragrant powers of healing. And as thus communing I continued to look back upon those past few days it seemed I had lately been privileged to live in the pages of some sweet Arthurian tale wherein the twin magicians, Merlin and Morgan le Fay, that great clerk of necromancy, dispensed wondrous spells undreamed by Nicholas Flamel, Abraham the Jew, or even Paracelsus. Yet, Madame, the wisdom of these last was harboured in your house, for Svetoslav thrust a copy of Abraham the Jew into my hands until I grew as covetous as Richelieu when he beheld this same book for the first time and rushed away to build him a laboratory, there to decipher and experiment those strange manuscripts.

But no stint of Eastern wisdom have you either in the Ritôd Roerich. For there ever the merry and kindly Monsieur Georges with a wave of his hand can summon a strange lama from the very heart of Altai Himalaya who through the symbol language of countless sacred banners unfolds to us the inner mysteries of good and evil as to astonish even the Manichaeans,

Truly, Madame, what infinite riches in a little space! And as thus I reflected, while the monkey men clambered noisily overhead I thought how very amply compensated I ought to feel in my Purgatorio since within there still remained so rich a Paradiso - verily I had seen and tasted a dolce far niente far beyond Renaissance dreams of the good and beautiful.

And coming to this last I send you a modest souvenir from the days of my first youth - those days of first fine careless rapture which hereafter - try as we may - we never can recapture, days when I could bask in the fragrance of coloured majesty made by Florentine lilies.

It is a little thing enough beside the manifest and manifold delights and charms of Naggar, but if you should catch a little fragrance, maybe but for a moment, from the casket of past youth it will perhaps remind you of how even in these absurdly mean and wretched times a similar fragrance can mount to heaven, the fragrance of that incense the mages alone keep glowing perpetually for those so fortunate as to pass through the gates of Altai Himalaya.

And now I must end what I fear is a ridiculously garrulous epistle.

I should be most grateful if you would kindly convey to Professor my very keenest appreciation of the feast he spread for my delight with his Himalayan pictures, and how very sensible I grew to their appeal in majestic form, colour, and association.

Above all would you thank him again on my behalf for the ever so kindly thought of this souvenir which has already taken up a place among my most treasured possessions.

And lastly again my most devout thanks to yourself who poured out so lavishly every gift of hospitality conceivable into my lap until I was really overwhelmed.

My very best wishes and salutations to all at Naggar.

Yours very sincerely,

*Eric Dickinson*

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"Gotham"  
Woolver Road  
Lahore

Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1944

Dear Madame Rivard,

On my return I found your very kind letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> August. It had not been forwarded as I was moving about a lot - Bombay, New Delhi, Bishnagarh, Jaipur, and then back to Lahore where I arrived a few days since. My typewriter was left in Bombay & not yet received so please excuse this dreadful scrawl.

"The Seat Perilous" has only now really been exchanged for one that may be said to be as comfortable on walking as on sleeping.

Out of that paladin Sir Galahad, dear Madame, please you to remember the words of the lady

"You doubtless remember about  
the first fine canvas rap-bird  
you never may see before."

Would you, dear Madame, be  
so very kind as to convey  
my sincere salutations to  
Professor Roerich and to my  
very dear friend Coctostan  
& Monsieur Georges. The  
information he wished me to  
hand over to the Oxford University  
Press representative in Bombay  
was duly delivered, and I trust  
he is now well in touch with  
Naygar as he promised me to  
lose no time in communicating  
with Monsieur Georges.

You will be pleased I think  
to hear that the O.U.P. has  
accepted publication of the  
Kishangore album. I think  
it will perhaps see the  
light of day sometime in  
1926.

at the Queen's right-hand who  
replied: "Madame, ought she, for  
God's sake, to fight to be so good  
a knight-?"

How right she was, for you  
so very generously out-styled  
one must yet ride without  
shield or scutcheon. Let us  
then however leave him knowing  
him most deeply conscious of  
your so gracious tribute.

I had confirmation only the  
other day of your terrible  
deluge. I do trust now all  
has returned to a far less  
harrassed state of things.

I have appreciated more than  
I can say your truly  
generous words on the subject  
of my little Italian <sup>pen</sup>  
disposit. Your words are  
indeed an incentive to try yet  
once again, though I am always  
haunted by Browning's words

I met Soctoslar's friend the  
Swiss post J. H. Cousins while  
staying a few days in  
Jaipur who sends his very  
best wishes. I hope soon  
we may welcome Soctoslar  
in these parts, and I wish  
too we might welcome you  
all. If this is not to be  
then let it be, as you also  
think it may, in some not  
too distant time, where the  
sun drenched loggias of Kizole  
look down, carrying the eye  
to the wonder of Dhanu-dhar's  
dome.

I am, dear Madame, your  
devotee admirer,

Very sincerely yours,

Eric Dickenson