

Wednesday, 9pm. Suks in the bathroom. 31/5/78 Republic Day.

My dearest Jo, *Jolene*

Your lovely letter, undated, and envelope arrived here last week. Thank you so much. It was a lovely surprise since both your parents are such lazy sods. They never reply to my letters.

Who gave you the idea that I was in hospital? This is not true. I am very well, only freezing in the Lesotho cold and missing all of you very much. But mostly your Daddy. I wish Vorster would give him a passport. Also my friends Mogam, Bones & P. It will be such a joy to see all of them.

Will you kiss Lisa for me. 4 years on the 27th. She is a big girlne? I have given up writing to your mother, she is a fat lazy ig. She likes phoning, but refuses to write. As for your father I give up. They are just too lazy.

No Sukhthi sick? No she is not. Where did you get all these ideas. We are very cold & frost bitten from head to toe. When you Jas, Lisa & Mamma come up for the holidays we shall be fine.

Our new car is lovely, thanks to Uncle Bas. It just has a whistling sound which is very annoying, but otherwise she is fine.

Do I like reptiles? I am not sure. It is the first time I have had to think about that question. Snakes I am terrified of. The last time I saw one of those fellows was in Umzinto when I killed a puff adder. If you think I am pulling your leg, ask Ma. Dade was even more afraid of them than I was. Crocodiles? what I hear of them does not make me want to put my arms over them. I guess that I dont like them. Hell but you have given me some homework. What other reptiles are there? You tell me.

Yes darling we are still living in the flats. Its a place to sleep, eat and bathe in. Its only lovely when Bas, Mummy and all of you come along. It will be even better when Daddy comes.

Is Mater pregnant? Now how the heck did that happen? She is still a baby? Babies dont have babies do they? How can a baby look after a baby? Tell your father to do something or else Mater is not going to be very strong. How is Gavin & Melissa? Tell them to work hard at school, I want all my babies coming first in class. Tell Jas I am waiting for her first report. You know my Sha gave me the best reports. Sahdhan was a poop jack at the beginning. He has improved now. Suks is working very hard. So lets see who gives me the best report.

When is Lisa going to send me some of her drawings? I have so much wall space waiting. Lynette sent me some lovely posters of Scotland, the UK India, Spain, Portugal. We have even got a red Scotsman in the Loo hoping it will warm up that joint. Get Mary Ann to send me some drawings too. I promise not to put hers in the Loo, I know that Lady wont be pleased if I do that. But thats the best place to appreciate good works of ART. Ask your Dad. He spends half his life there.

When we lived at Scala, my Loo was filled with Tables, Parts of the body animals, birds. Sha & Sanna did most of their learning there.

Atha is ill? She is my Dads sister. I dont think you know her. She is a great lady. I am very proud to be her neice. I had hoped to see her when the trial in PMB was over. But sadly I had to leave & today I hear she is dying. She must be about 85 years or thereabouts.

I was about 9 years when we left Pentrich a suburb of Pietermaritzburg. I remember oh so vividly how Atha used to return from work. She had 5 children, Betsy, Grace, Mannesah, Effie & Shack. Betsy was teaching in Dannhauser for £5/-/- and came home during the holidays, Grace was not very well & stayed at home & taught sewing at the local school one day in the week, so did Atha on her afternoon off. Mannesah was studying at an evening school perhaps he worked during the day. Shack & Effie were at school.

Atha worked as a servant for Mrs Lister for £5. too. I remember her for she was sick with asthma. She used to cough all night and go to work in the morning. She was a very proud lady, she did want anything for nothing. Her husband turned away his whole family in a drunken fit,

and my father driving a donkey cart went and fetched this family in their night clothes, while her husband burnt their home. What an awful shock to anyone? and what pain?

I can never remember her complain. I cannot tell you how many years she worked, but Dade said that Shack was a baby. Shack was 3 years older than I. So she must have worked for some 12 years.

When Man started teaching after years of night study Atha left work & went to stay in Pmburg. Then she lost Betsy who was a big girl when she died. Years later when Man had passed his degree & was a headmaster he died suddenly in a motor accident.

This very proud lady has suffered much pain. It is with deep regret that I sit here not being able to be with all of you at this time. Why I had permission to go & see her when I was house arrested & she was ill. I can remember her when application was made for my admission. How proud she was?

Will you all be of comfort to her in her last days & to her family when she is no more? Please.

Today was Republic day. I hated it when I was at home. Those stupid idiots would make stupid speeches that no one else than the herrenvolk appreciated. But this morning when I awoke with the radio Springbok, I heard the announcer mention it & the Comrades marathon. I was sick for the quiet of the Durban street on a holiday. Remembered that hated race & how at the intersection of Alice street we were held up as the runners came in & everybody cheered them, Black & White. The harsh stigma of the race was lost we cheered human endeavour, not black or white. The stupid fools that sponsor the race. What idiots?

I remembered too Harold Strachan.

Bas as if he knew I was miserable phoned me, and while I wanted to keep him talking he had work & cut me off. I spoke to Deb & Chris, Nas & O What a joy. Bones I am sure was asleep. She usually takes time off for the slightest excuse or concocts one, but here was a holiday. the bugger P I am sure was on duty. That girl she is a monster for work.

Oh yes thank her for the tip to keep me warm. I washed the old pantie hose, snipped off the foot & crotch & put it over my head, it hugs the body not so bulky as the Spencers & damn cheap.

Jo kiss everybody for me, two for my ~~da~~ bro, your dad.

Love you all, and miss you.

Keep well,
Phyllie

UKZN
Gandhi Luthuli
Documentation
Centre

Love Phyllie

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