

Brindisi
Sunday

My dear Pippa

We are now at Brindisi where we arrived at two o'clock this afternoon. We shall leave very early tomorrow morning after getting the mail. I have just been ashore but there is not much to see. Most of the houses have been built up one and a half storeys and then left off - apparently without bothering about a roof. We met a military funeral in the market-place a long procession with two bands, flags, coffin &c. The only other object of interest is

the theatre where I am going
tonight to see *La Traviata* -

... It was rather rough getting
in to Gibraltar and we only
stayed there two hours so there was
only time for a stroll through the
village. I also saw the 101 ton gun
in the distance - it is painted a
most deceptive green.

We arrived at Malta at
midnight and went away again
at halfpast nine next morning. (I
don't know what day because it
is impossible to keep count) (Saturday
is a guess) The night was happily
spent in listening to the melodious
strains of a donkey engine hauling

up cargo. At about 5 o'clock our
emotions overcame us and Peter
& I arose and landed with another
youth whose name I don't know.

We marched at the head of a very
fine procession of all the men horses
cabs dogs and goats of Malta -

We saw all the places of interest
in the town except the tomb of
Oliver Strachey which we could not
get at because a service was going
on in the church - I then proceeded
to buy some nougat - The man
showed me some and gave me a
bit to taste which was very good,
so I bought two boxes - These

When I arrived on board I hastened to open one of the boxes - of course there was no nougat in it, but a horrible brown mass of stickiness. Other box ditto. This is how the wily Maltese amasses a large fortune. The amusing part of this little story is that the man told me he made ~~the~~ his nougat expressly for exportation.

We have had very good weather on the whole but it is by no means hot. The time is spent in eating and playing games and eating and reading and eating and walking up and down the deck and eating and sleeping - a most exciting life. We have a splendid band on board

of two corsets 2 flageolets
 two trumpets for playing in the
 base I dont know their names and
 a big drum. This band plays
 'The Maid of the Mill' twice a day
 on week days and 'The Lost Chord'
 on Sundays once. I will now
 relate the ~~exciting~~ tale following
 humorous incident called
 The Lurline.

The Lurline is the woman I have
 told you about. She is the most
 frightful coarse and vulgar looking
 brute that has ever travelled 1st
 class on a P. & O. steamer. She sits
 opposite to me at meals and takes
 away my appetite, but I am digressing
 She generally marches up and down

in many coloured raiment and spoils the 'beautiful view of the sea'. Well on ~~the~~ Thursday(?) evening we had a concert in the music room which ^{has a hole} ~~is hollow~~ in the middle of the floor and looks down into the saloon.

Towards the end of the concert the durline came into the saloon and took up a position ~~at~~ under the music room. ~~and~~ Presently she ~~&~~ went up to the doctor who was sitting around with several other people and launched forth into the most terrific abuse of the ladies above for laughing at her whenever she appeared. The doctor

tried to appease her but in vain and she went off muttering threats against everybody. The same night at about one o'clock the inhabitants of my cabin were awakened by a voice in the passage complaining (but not like a nightingale) for an hour and a half did this misguided woman stand outside talking like this (only more so) 'Its a shame the way (pronounced wagh) I'm treated I dont think theres anything strange about my looks I'm sure; but its not them I mind poor silly giggling foolish girls in its the doctor (poor man he hadnt done anything)

he that calls himself a gentleman I
suppose - What ~~is~~ is the matter
with me its true I have been an
actress in Boston but what of
that? &c &c &c for an hour or
more - It is supposed she
has run down for she has
been very quiet the last day
or two (she is sitting now
about two feet off me; ^{Peter}
she haunts me.

Thiss we pass the ^{my}
time on board - as a ^{mark}
rule it is very dull. How are you
getting on? Give my love to everybody
and write to me 'early & often!'

Goodbye
yr loving Ralph 692

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Pamela!!