

Dear Prassit,

After you left for Japan during the end of March I was ill of denga fever, which I understand is a common disease among Europeans when they come to the tropics to live. It is caused by the bite of a certain mosquito. This disease left me very weak, and I did not go to the beach, Hua Hin until April 16th. I found it delightful there until a very heavy rain at the end of April brought thousands of flies, which made life miserable for everybody. Even on the porch at the Hotel they were troubled with them. I still felt weak while there, and my hands and feet were slightly paralyzed. When I returned to Bangkok on the 19th of May, I was still weak. About the end of May, I seemed to get another attack, but very mild compared to my illness last March. I went to school every day, but it was very trying to work with a headache and weak feeling. I am now recovered and feel much better.

When I returned from the beach, I was surprised and delighted to learn that your parents had consented to let you remain in Japan to study music. I thank you so much for your interesting letters about trip, etc. I hope you will not suffer too much when winter comes. Perhaps you will enjoy the cold and snow. They don't have so much in Japan as in America, unless you go to extreme Northern Japan. Lesce is anxious to be on his way, and I understand will leave on the 21st or 22nd. He is taking this letter with him. He has been ill with a slight fever for several days, but is getting better now, and I am sure will be in good shape to go on the trip by the 21st. "Lovetime" is now showing with Franz Schubert's lovely music. I hope to go. It was at the Chalem Buri first, but I had not noticed the newspaper; therefore missed it. It is now at the Chalem Krung for 1 tical in the small auditorium. I hope they show it at one of the other theaters or at one of the double Sunday morning shows. I saw Evelyn Laye in "Evensong," and I enjoyed it so much. She sang songs from "La Boheme" and "Traviata" as well as some Neapolitan folk songs (Italian). I understand they are making more musicals with grand opera stars in Hollywood now. "Naughty Marietta" is worth seeing for its gay music and fine singers, especially the tenor and the lovely Jeanette MacDonald.

I hope you are making good progress in your musical course. I am glad that you have a German Professor, since they are very thorough in their work, even though they seemed to be too strict at times. Learning music is hard work as you know. Monette or is Monitt is practicing very faithfully on the piano, and has accompanied at the Y. M. C. A. programs several times. He is going to play for me on the 24th of July. He gave a piano solo two weeks ago. He played Hayden's "Gypsy Rondo" and as an encore he played Bach's (I have forgotten, but it is very beautiful) Something like his famous fugues.

My mother has not been so well, and was in bed for several weeks in April. Arthur, my brother, stayed at the house a few days, and my uncle came over every day. She is anxious to have me come home. I suppose I will have to go. If I could earn more money, I could send more home, but as it is now, I can only send 50 ticals, which is about 20 U.S. dollars, which does not go far. I am anxious to do my share in helping her, but I find I can do but little if I have to work for 150 ticals a month. I have asked the Government for an increase, since I have now worked for them 2 years. They have not given me a definite answer, but if I do not get any, I believe I must return at the end of this term, August 27th. There are many things I can do at home to help my mother, and besides I might get some position. I received a letter from an old friend who is in charge of the Americanization work in the Los Angeles City Schools, and she said there may be an opportunity for me to get something. As the situation stands, I think I ought to go home and stay with my mother until she dies. Her days are numbered, and the end is apt to come any year now, or one might say any month now. My father's death surprised me, and you never know when people reach the age of 70, as their life may be suddenly cut off.

My two brothers are so busy with their own work and supporting their own families, that they do not have time to come home and look after things, but only visit on Sundays. I can do much for her while she still lives, and I think I ought to go home. If I could earn more here, then I could afford to send enough money to pay for a housekeeper or nurse in case she is bed ridden, etc. Servants and nurses come high in America, and I shall have to play that role unless I get a good position which will enable me to pay for that service. I don't like to leave Siam just now, as I have met some interesting musicians. A Miss Johnson, the sister of a retired English teacher, who used to be the adviser to the Siamese Government in the field of Education. She plays the piano and violin very well. Then I met Mr. Degen, who used to play for the Siamese chorus your sisters sang in. He is a good pianist, especially for light music. He has composed many light piano pieces, and plays very artistically.



I am glad that Lesce is getting the chance to study in Japan. I believe he will be faithful to his duty and come back to Siam with useful knowledge that will give him a good living.

Kamut, as you know changed his school to the University of California. By doing so; he incurred great expense, as Sam tells me it cost 75 dollars (U.S.) a semester, which means 150 dollars a year, and in ticals it is an enormous sum (about 350 ticals). Lesce tells me that he spent so much of his money on sending telegrams asking for more money, that his father was worried. I wrote Kamut a letter and asked him to write a letter to his father and explain just how much it cost to go to that University, and what it cost him to live, etc.; so his father would know exactly whether he could afford to keep him at the University. Sam said that the Junior college was free, and if that was the case, Kamut should have stayed there for 2 years, and then go to the University for the last 2 years. I believe he was too hasty in changing until he had asked permission from his father, who is furnishing him the money. My mother is worried about him, as she is afraid he does not have money for food, since he spends it on other things, and does not seem to manage well. She did not expect him to pay his room rent until he got things settled with his father, as he did not have enough for that when he changed schools. I understand that he probably changed schools because the Government here promised to pay him or give him some help if he passed the first year of college work in America. I hope he passed his work at the University, but I understand, according to what he wrote me, that he was taking a very hard course with much laboratory work. He should not take too many hard subjects at one time until he is more sure of himself. He should not have to worry about money matters, as that interferes with his studying and peace of mind. He knows or ought to know exactly what his expenses come to every month, and then should inform his father, and his father knows how much he can afford to send him. If it is too much, he should go to the Junior college and finish his work there. Then he might be able to continue at the University, because his father will have saved sufficient money to help with the extra expense of college fee, etc. I told Kamut that he must not waste his money on telegrams, as he needs it for food, books, and necessary things. I hope his trouble will be straightened out, because I am anxious to have him succeed in his work in America and come back with a degree. Degrees are so important in Siam, and it is useless to return without one. If my mother was only younger she could run a boarding house, but one cannot expect her to be acquainted with those duties now. It takes a younger woman with experience to manage a boarding house, like Mrs. Cameron. A boarding house keeper has to know how to buy goods cheaply in large quantities, plan meals carefully, and advertise in order to have enough boarders to make it pay expenses and a little over for her work. I understand that Mrs. Cameron was clever in this sort of thing. I am wondering what Kamut is doing in his long vacation. I hope he gets a chance to visit a mountain camp, or could get some temporary work to help out his limited allowance. He must know by this time that he has to manage very carefully if his allowance is low. The more we get, the more careless we can be about the spending, but if it is limited we have to account for every penny spent. I am glad that living is cheap in Japan as that helps you out. It is too bad that we have a cold winter, as it causes so much suffering among the poor. The same in America. It cost much to keep the house warm in California. Laundry bills are high. Everyone has to do his own work, as servants come high. Here in Siam, and in Japan, living is about as cheap as you can find anyplace in the world. The same applies to China.

Well I believe I shall go home, as mother is anxious to have me come. She wants to sell the house in order to use that money for living expenses for her few remaining days. I should like to keep the house, and could, if I got a job near home. Taxes are very high in America, and if you can't pay them, the Government takes your property away. As long as my mother lives I think I ought to be with her. I am in a better position to do so than my two brothers who have wives and children to think of and must stick to their work in order to provide for them. They can help some financially, but they cannot do any work at home as I can, as they cannot neglect their own work. I have no important work as yet to neglect, and if I do get a well paying job, then I can afford to have a servant at home to look after her.

Mr. Degen told me that he wished we had met 2 years before when I first came here. He likes my violin playing, and I feel flattered. He says I play with so much expression. He can improvise wonderfully and play all those light opera songs I know without seeing the music.



He has composed some songs for a Siamese Revue which the ex-queen of Rama the 6th is directing or putting on, and a prince is also helping to direct. He wants me to come to the rehearsals to play the violin in order to help the singers.

Well I must stop now, as I have some teaching to do. Many best wishes for your great success, and I shall write you from time to time even though I am in America.

Yours sincerely,

J. Eric Anderson  
My U.S. Address, (in case I go home) is Mr. John Eric Anderson, 11989 Gorham Ave., West Los Angeles, California, United States of America.

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July 18, 1935

Dear Prasith,

I have some time to add a few more lines to my letter that I wrote a week ago. Lesce is sailing on the 20th, and is therefore taking my message to you along with him. Your sister requested me to write to you about this piano you wish to purchase.

Your father says he would rather have you rent one if you can possibly do it. However, if this is impossible, he is willing to purchase one. I was wondering whether it was not possible to borrow the use of a piano from a friend, which would save you much money. In America most music students rent a piano at a low rate of about one dollar a week. There are also many opportunities there for students to borrow the use of pianos from friends, or people who are traveling and do not want to store away their pianos, but would rather have someone use it while they are away. It is better for the tone of the piano to have it used than stored away in some storehouse. If you can notice in the advertisements of the Tokio papers, there might be instances of someone who wishes to leave their piano with a person while they are away. I am glad to hear that you are taking much interest in your musical studies, and hope you return as a capable musician who will be respected by your people, and that you will be able to get a high class teaching position, and private pupils (those who can pay you well). We all want to make a decent living, and, as you know, people respect us more when we do.

Lesce has been slightly ill, nothing serious, with a fever, but he tells me he feels much better and will be able to sail on Saturday, the 20th.

In regard to my plans, I think I must return, as mother needs me. I was planning to sail on one of the copra freight boats from Penang at the end of this term, (August 24th), but I understand that they do not take any passengers unless you are related to someone in the company, or a member of the U.S. diplomatic corps. I was rather disappointed to learn this information, as it was a cheap way to go home, and I want to go the cheapest way I know, as I need a little extra money to live on when home while waiting for a job there. The more I can save on the cost of transportation, the more I shall have to live on when I get home. I have not heard from Kamut since April, and the last letter from home was in the middle of May (written at that time), and mother wrote she was anxious to have me come home, and that Kamut was very busy with his studies. We ought to get a letter from Kamut very soon letting us know whether he passed his examinations or not. I hope he passed. I understand that he took a rather difficult program this semester. Too much laboratory work. I hope he was able to manage though. Kamut has given his father some worry about the money. He has been wasting his money on telegrams asking for more. I wrote to him to write back to his father a letter (not telegram) which would explain just how much it cost him to live, so that his father would know exactly how much he must send, and whether he can afford that or not. The trouble is that Kamut changed colleges last winter, and the University costs a great deal in the matter of school fee. It is 75 dollars a semester, which brings it up to about 175 ticals a semester, or about 350 ticals a year. Sam tells me that it was free at the Junior college. Kamut should have staid at the Junior college for 2 years in order to save the extra money it cost to go to the university for the last 2 years. Also his father may be in a better position to give him more 2 years from now than to give him the extra expense money now. However, Kamut should write a letter home to his father and tell him exactly how much he needs. Then his father will know whether he can afford to send that much to him.

I saw the film "Lovetime" and "Caravan" with Chaleo and Lesce. They like both of them as well as I. "Lovetime" was very beautiful with Shubert music. Nils Asther sang the "Serenade" very beautiful with his sonorous baritone voice. "Caravan" had many delightful gay gypsy tunes and Vienese waltzes.

I have met Mr. Degen at last. He is a splendid musician, particularly for light music, but he appreciates the classics too. I wish I had met him 2 years ago when I first came here. I would like to ask him to come to your father's house and play for us. He is very busy except on Sat. afternoons and Sundays, as he teaches 4 afternoons a week at the Navy English school besides his regular work at Suan Kularb, where he teaches English and German. Well I must close with best regards to your J. Eric Anderson.

Sincerely,



P.S. I believe I shall go home via  
Manila, P.I. and Honolulu on  
some cargo boat. I shall resign

on Oct. 1st. Mother wants me to come home.

I'm waiting patiently for a letter  
from Kamut telling us he passed his  
exam last term. Am worried about

him, and am afraid he can't manage  
on his allowance, particularly since he changed  
colleges. Sincerely, J. E. Anderson