



## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*There are, today, about nine hundred passengers on board The Crystal Serenity. That is the highest number of passengers on board this luxury cruise liner since I boarded it on January 15, 2005 , in Los Angeles . Passengers come from France , Brazil , Croatia , Serbia , Mexico , Argentina , German, Turkey etc, etc, etc. The trouble that I have with these passengers is twofold: I cannot pronounce their names most of the time; and, I cannot remember their names even when I can pronounce them, which is not very often. They have names such as Hoeffun, Kennimer, Zevallos, Kodaly, Janos, and Smarzewski, just to name a few. How do you pronounce those names? Anyway, I suppose it does not really matter if I cannot remember their names because it is for them to remember my name, not I, theirs. As the Chief Lady of Hongkong, I cannot remember the names of all of my people, but my people have to remember my name. Because of the problem of the funny names, I have devised a method to remember the names of those people whom I am likely to see and greet more than once. For every person that I think might be useful to me in the future, I have assigned a little Betty nickname, which helps me to remember them. Here are some of them:*

### **Frankenstein and His Witch**

*Frankenstein is an American, who is about seven feet tall. He has long grey hair, which is out of control all of the time, and, as such, it sticks out from his head by about ten inches. I think he must use a hair gel to cause his hair to stick up in all directions like twigs on a small bush, or a young Japanese maple, with its wired branches, reaching for the sun. His hair is spotted black and grey and I always wonder whether or not, at night-time, it is florescent. His walk is strange, too, as one would expect from a Frankenstein: He always looks straight ahead, never peeking from side to side. It is almost as though he has an attention deficit because, once his eyes are trained on an object, that is the direction that he will travel. He looks something like a programmed robot in some respects. I estimate his age is about fifty-five years and, according to my butler, he used to play professional basketball. That is the reason, I have been told, that his legs are so long: Basketball playing increases the length of one's legs and causes one to have a penchant to flow or slide rather than walk.*

### **Frankenstein's Witch**

*She is, also, an American, aged about fifty years. She has jet-black hair, obviously dyed, and wears copious quantities of make-up over her face, neck and ears. She highlites her eyes with black eyeliner. Her eyebrows are bushy, which matches Frankenstein's twiggy hair. While Frankenstein's Witch wears black clothes, most of the time, Frankenstein wears white flowing clothes except when he is floating, in which case he dresses in blue.*

### **Jesus Christ and His Apostles**

*This is a Spanish man, aged about fifty years, who is always in the company of his family (Apostles), all of whom have similar facial features. But Jesus Christ, himself, has long, flowing, grey hair reaching to his shoulders. The hair is clearly permed with little wavelets on top of his*

head, cascading down and ending in multiple ringlets. But he is losing his hair, just above his forehead, so he combs some of his hair in order to cover the shiny spots. He is about six feet tall and, when he walks, it is always in a straight line, with his right hand, held at shoulder height, the index finger and the middle finger extended, but slightly bent as though he were bestowing his blessings on his flock. He always dresses in white, flowing robes.

### **The Horror from Germany**

This woman is a German national, who would be perfect to play the part of a female commandant in a World War II Concentration Camp. She is about fifty years old, too, and is always poorly dressed. She is very bossy. When she speaks in German to the serving staff (I speak German, you know, so I understand what she is saying), her sentences are always commands: 'Bring me coffee!' 'I want orange juice!' You never hear her say 'please' or 'thank you' because she speaks in the manner of a whip-in-hand Griselda of a German World War II Concentration Camp. She is married to a bald-headed German lawyer, who follows her around as a male dog follows a bitch in heat. But in this case, the Horror from Germany is not in heat, but is just a bitch.

### **The Gorgon**

She is a young American woman aged about twenty seven years, having yellow, strawlike hair, reaching all the way to the small of her back. I haven't tugged at her hair, yet, because I think it may well be a wig. Nevertheless, she parades around the ship with her straw hair, flowing in the wind, exposing a pure white face. My dear Grandchild, you have to see it to believe it: Her face is covered in a white powder, which resembles flour; her lips are painted in a bright red; and, her eyes, eyelashes and eyelids are plastered with layers of black mascara. If the lights of the ship were turned off, completely, this Medusa would be clearly visible. If you recall your Greek mythology, Medusa was one of the three sisters, known as the Gorgon, but Medusa was different from her sisters in that her hair was made of snakes and anybody who looked upon her face was turned to stone. I am happy to report that I have not yet been turned to stone. If looks could kill, however, the Medusa of The Crystal Serenity would be a candidate for an Alfred Hitchcock movie.

### **The Red Battery and Her Back-Ups**

The Red Battery is a woman, who weighs about three hundred pounds. She can walk quite well when required, but she claims to be handicapped. The Crystal Serenity, on being told of her alleged problem, gave her a little, red, battery powered car to use on the ship. Unfortunately for Captain Glenn Edvardson, this American lady is not a good driver and keeps hitting things. Sometimes it is a door, sometimes a pillar, and sometimes people. When walking through a corridor, one has to be careful because the Red Battery makes very little noise when it is driven, and one can be injured if hit in the rear by it especially if the handlebars catches one in between one's buttocks. To her credit, however, I must tell you that she has a very loud, screechy voice, which pierces through the night: 'Get out of the way, I am coming through!' What I don't understand, however, is that sometimes, in the middle of the night, I hear her voice: 'Oh! My God! I am coming! Woo...eee!' But I know that she is in her stateroom and not driving her Red Battery. What do you think it means, My Dear Grandchild? She is travelling with her sons and in-laws so that if the Red Battery runs out of power, they can push her around.

### **Snow White and Her Dwarf**

Snow White is an elderly American lady who likes to dress in long, white skirts and red blouses. She is about four foot eight inches tall. She fancies herself as a professional dancer. As a dancer, she is really very bad because she has a hump on her back. When there are dances on the ship, she always attends them and because she is a terrible dancer, Ambassador Hosts always dance with her – because nobody else will (an Ambassador Host is a paid employee of The Crystal Cruises, whose job it is to accompany single males and females and to do what is necessary and when required). Snow White has a particular Ambassador Host whom she likes, especially, because he is about her height without a hump.

### **The Mad Japanese**

*She is a Japanese lady, aged about sixty five years, who has been on many cruises, especially on The Crystal Cruises. She is single and is about five foot, one inch tall. She is clearly lonely for male company, but she only speaks Japanese and none of the Ambassador Hosts is Japanese. For this reason, she is always in the company of Japanese officers of this vessel in Silk Road , the Japanese specialty restaurant. One can always tell when the Mad Japanese is in the area because you can hear: 'A, so desu ka?' Interestingly enough, she cannot weigh more than eighty pounds, but she eats more than I do. I have been wondering whether or not she wears a tight corset because her belly should be much bigger, considering all the food she takes in.*

*I could describe many of the other guests, but I think you get the picture, don't you, My Dear Grandchild. Some are complete grouches, some are a pain, some are just plain rude ... and some should learn to bathe more frequently. But enough for today, I shall talk to you next week.  
Love to you, all.*

*The Chief Lady of Hongkong*

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