

University Union  
Glasgow

My dearest Sister,

4th August 1917

I am feeling a bit lonely to night: As I begin writing, I note it is 5 minutes to 12. I have been to Town (Sauchiehall Street) and perhaps it is the happy crowds of people one meets there that form a contrast and make one realise how much 'alone' he is. It is really a funny life one leads when he is away from kith and kin, and stays in apartments or lodgings. See what it means - you practically live alone, eat alone, sit alone and so forth alone, so there is ample scope of being homesick isn't there. This is specially the case during vacation when one is not pressed with work and can therefore afford to think a little. We shall not complain any further however, seeing it's no use doing so, and after all more than three years of it are gone and therefore the worst must be past and gone.

And how is my little Harriet? I have not heard from you for some weeks now - that is - in other words - that I have not had a letter from home - South Africa. Everybody at Mother's



Owes me a letter - father mother, Selej. not to mention Mr & Mrs Nothoela. I wonder if these dear people have forgotten me. poor me! Nana ke itelele Si Harriet.

Go divalang mo lefatshing ja Beoana.<sup>2</sup> We are having some fine days - that would not disgrace S<sup>th</sup> African summer just now. The only pity is that the summer here is so short and we have always the gloomy prospect of a dreary winter at the end of it.

I have not gone anywhere for holidays as yet, and I don't know if I will go anywhere. Everything has become so dear that travelling is quite a luxury. Boarding houses etc have always charged holiday-makers more even in normal times, because they were much in demand, but just now, matters are much worse and one can't get board and lodging under £2 per week at least. The railway fares also have been put up by 50%. I am sure things aren't so bad in S.A, are they? If this war does not end soon, I am afraid it will reduce many people of whom I will be one - to pauperism.



I think it will be best for me to finish  
this letter. My spirits are so low tonight  
that if I write longer I shall be finding  
fault with everything and everybody, and that  
cant possibly form very good reading - can  
it.

Dumedisā Mame 'thata' ~~we~~ are gone, ke letile  
karabo ea sae. My love to everybody and  
yourself

Your affectionate brother

Thodiri



University Union  
Glasgow

24<sup>th</sup> March '18

To Harriet

My dearest little girl,

It is very long since I wrote to you last - you must be quite angry with me. All the same you will be glad to hear that I am keeping very well, and when I have said that I have practically said all there is to be said, for here I notice I must stop for a time and think hard what I shall tell you next.

We are on our Easter Holidays just now, the University having closed on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We shall be re-opening somewhere about the last week of April - I don't know the date - as it often happens, we know the date of closing all too well, but very few bother about the re-opening date.

It is the 24<sup>th</sup> March today. This is the date on which I landed at Southampton & got to London from home four years ago. It seems very long ago - doesn't it. The next 24<sup>th</sup> March ought to bring me a degree in medicine, for if all goes well I shall be finishing here exactly a year to day, between now and then



I shall be the most anxious person on earth because so far, it has been a struggle for life. This war has made things so very hard, that to me it is almost a wonder that I should still be a student in this University, but it would not have been possible but for some strange luck, but luck is not a dependable ally. Therefore little girl, hear this — I am fully aware of the difficulties at home, but something must be done. Kopa Bre gave a round cheque came ka bonako, otherwise I shall be forced to give up at the last moment, and that would be the greatest blow to me and my hopes.

Le pana, I should be today in England doing Practical Midwifery. I had arranged to begin there on the 18th March, but as my money has not been sent, here I am, and that is some valuable time lost which may make a difference as to whether I must qualify at the right time or ~~not~~ be delayed. I am really quite furious just now over this affair as I had made all arrangements, booked a place for myself in a special for maternity hospital, and here at the last moment — No money. Just now I am worth <sup>less than</sup> ~~nothing~~ nothing — Hopeless condition for a medical student to be in.



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If "Bechuana baka thona" think, by any chance that after all this suffering they shall have medical attendance, ~~and~~ medical advice and treatment from "ngoana oa rona" free of charge, I fear me they are labouring under the greatest delusion conceivable.

How is everybody at home - and how are you my dear little girl!

What is the Sepetopile doing with himself?

Regards & love to all

no one



University Union  
Glasgow

My dearest Harriet -

15th July 1918

How are you keeping? I am waiting to hear from you. I get very few letters from South Africa now partly, because there are only a few mail boats by reason of dangerous sailing, but mainly, because I never had many correspondents out there.

How is father keeping? And how are the boys? How miserable it must be at home now without our dear mother. It is really very hard to conceive. Grief must hang on every thing and in every place that mother has been <sup>in</sup> her life. This is too great a misfortune that has befallen us Harriet. But we can still love and cherish the memory of our beloved mother. It rests with you in the mean time, my dear girl, to inculcate that same lesson on our brothers and little sisters who are young and can't yet think for themselves. Beovana never visit the graves. I wonder if we shall imitate them. I hope not. For visiting our mother's



last resting place will keep us longer in memory of her and this we shall be glad to do if we loved her as I know we all did.

Goodbye now my dear little sister I hope you are keeping well. ~~It~~ Convey my love to father and to Sijetopi and if Noora and Mottidi are about to them also, and love to you also

Modiri  
—



University Union  
Glasgow

8th Oct. 1918

My dearest Sister,

I have not heard from you for some time now - will you please write soon and let me know how you are keeping.

I came back from Manchester on the 5th September to come and prepare for my examinations in Medical Jurisprudence and Public Health which I was expecting on the 2nd of this month. But what do you think, when I got here I found the exams were coming off on the 19th Sept; that is fully 2 weeks before the ~~expts~~ expected time. I had therefore to settle down and work like a Trojan, and you will be pleased to know that when the date of the exams came, I was prepared and got through. Now - we re-open on the 14th of this month, and I have a very busy six months before me as



I shall be sitting my Final exam in Medicine, Surgery and Midwifery in March. The exam will begin on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1919 - so you see I have really less than six months, and I shall need every hour of that time practically. This means that if you don't hear <sup>very</sup> often from me, you must pardon my silence and remember that I am very busy - Do you understand now my dear? Perhaps you would do so better if you were to see the pile of books which I must get through about three or four times before March comes round.

Mr Moroka has just finished his course in Medicine and is going home ~~was~~ to Thaba Nchu this week. Perhaps he will be in South Africa as soon as this letter. He has been in this country since 1912, and is therefore reasonably anxious to get back home - so much so that he is going



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to run the risk of sailing in these dangerous times. I hope, however, that ~~he~~ he will get home alright. He is a great friend of mine. He has promised to make a visit to Mafeking, and if he should come there, you will please remember that he is my friend and give him a good reception.

How are Morara and Sepetogi keeping?  
Is Mokoheke still at Kraaipan?

Did I tell you that I met Rev Sharp in Manchester? They were very nice to me.

I must conclude now. Much love  
from

Modiri



University Union  
Glasgow

My dearest Harriet

19th May 1918

I thank you very much for your letter of the 4th 2nd April. Ke itumela jontwa pa lothe losa Fshele sentle. Lenna pesa eoya sentle.

I am sorry to hear that Miss Anna Moshola has displeased so many people who love her and would do their best for her — that is to say her parents in the first place and, us in the second. I hope that Mr Mzumuloa will look after her and protect her. If he does that, there will really be no reason why any one should be displeased as Dikukudu is a man of good birth and average education and I believe, good means. I regard him as my brother and therefore what is good for me is equally good for him. Further, I was not engaged or rather Anna was not engaged to me and I believe Dikukudu did not know my intentions towards her. The only thing I can blame him for is ~~that~~ (if it is true) that he seduced one girl there before. I thought he had married her, but evidently that has not been the case.



As for Anna, I don't think I can blame her, in fact I don't find fault with her for making her own choice. As you know my dear Harriet, I ~~am~~ <sup>have</sup> always been against our national method of arranging marriages, whereby the parents do the whole business without consulting the tastes of their children - sons or daughters. I don't know whether Anna knew or not that she was intended to give me her hand in marriage, but whether she knew or not, I really can't find fault with her for choosing some one else but me, and whether she is married to Dichukudu or not, I shall still take the same interest in her, she will remain my sister, and if I can do anything for her, it will be a pleasure for me to do so. This is why I hope that Dichukudu will take care of her. I am only sorry that she might have hurt her father's feelings, and disappointed our hopes as fathers, Sisters yours and mine. It was the wish of our dear mother that Anna and I become joined in marriage. If for no other reason, it was my intention to satisfy that wish, in honour, in respect and for the love of our dear mother's memory and the great desire to carry out what she desired when she lived.



But that ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> not all. I further intended to ask Annas hand in marriage because I believed that she was the best choice that our parents could have made, and I believed she would have suited my tastes and I would try my best to suit her tastes. Further Anna was, I believe, intelligent, and I might have been able to give direct her ~~to~~ education to bring it into line with mine so that we might understand each other better. In fact; I meant to send <sup>her</sup> to this country next year. All this is now past my dear Harriet. I believe that if my mother were living she would not be displeased at me if I stated my intention not to ask A to become my wife. I therefore believe in my conscience that I am not opposing my beloved mothers will, nor my fathers, nor Seljes; nor yours — in stating that I shall not now ask Miss Mosholas hand in marriage.

Now my dearest Harriet, I pray you dont arrange any more marriages for me, and allow no one to. I shall for the present be content to marry my profession and marry all my people. You must take me seriously my dear; marriage does not occupy any part of my mind just now, and if you are wise you wont prepare disappointments for yourself.



As for Rev. Moshvela, I trust he will understand my action and justify it. My intentions were honest and honourable, ~~and~~ and now I trust that he will not be hurt. ~~At~~ Of course, his feelings will have been most hurt by Anna's action, especially in his position as a minister of the Gospel. Our affectionate relations need not however be disturbed ~~the~~ in the slightest by this small ~~thing~~ ~~rather~~ unpleasant incident.

Then Aunt Mafikeng. She must be disappointed at Diebukudu, especially after what became of Emma. She should see to it that Diebukudu either marries or supports the girl he first seduced, or if he really loves Anna, marry her properly and take care of her. If Diebukudu loves his mother and loves the girl there should be no difficulty in this, I conceive.

Please convey my love to Sefetogi and ask him to write me soon.

You may let Sis Selge read this letter.

Goodbye now my dear - much love from  
Modiri

P.S.

Has the photo which I directed to be given to grandfather Chole been sent yet? Ask father please.



University of  
Glas.

14/10/20

My dearest Sister

I received your letter -  
Harriet in which you tell me of  
the passing away of our dear  
Old Grandfather - Choele - well  
my Harriet I have been living  
in one continuous dread of  
hearing this sad news since I  
knew our grandfather was  
not keeping well - but, oh,  
I did hope that at least  
he would live a while  
longer - live until I come  
home to see him and he to  
see me. I did hope that I  
might again hear his dear voice  
But alas, it was not to be.  
our dear grandfather has been  
taken away by the hand of



Of Death. I cannot help thinking of  
 Our beloved Mother. Somewhat, Harriet -  
 it has always pleased to me that  
 I would be best able to see  
 mother's likeness in our grandfathers  
 face, and I must confess to you  
 that I have thought much  
 more often of our grandfather  
 since our beloved Mother left us.  
 I have wished more than ever to  
 see him - and yet somewhat I  
 feared that I would not be so  
 blest. Too cruelly have been my  
 fears fulfilled - too cruelly have  
 my hopes been disappointed. Our  
 dear Grandfather too is gone to  
 the unknown. Life cannot reverse  
 last forever - It grieves and I fully  
 recognise that our grandfather had  
 lived the full span that is  
 allotted to man on earth, and I  
 know that while it is only natural  
 to feel the sad at the happen-  
 ing of even what was in a



way expected, yet, for that reason  
you cannot feel as sad as I  
do. I did so much long to  
see the dear old man - but  
disappointment of a grave kind  
seems to marked on my path,  
& my hopes seemed to bud  
only to be crushed these.  
How very much I miss my  
Dear Mother and now I must  
also miss my mother's father  
I may never never hear their  
voices again - no more can I  
ever see their faces. These  
are cruel thoughts that must  
thus plough my heart and  
my mind.

I must close, my dear  
little sister. My love to you

Mother



## HUME STREET NURSING HOME,

TELEPHONE 1964 DUBLIN.

HUME HOUSE,

DUBLIN.

My Beloved Sister, 28th July 1920

It is so very long - much longer than usual - since I had a letter from you, and I am feeling very much annoyed at your long silence - especially as nobody has written me from home, so much so to say you will have nothing to do with me - that of course I know cannot possibly be the case, but I would not even like to think your interest, your love and solicitude for me are less than usual. How are you my little Harriet? How is Bakobany getting on? I hope he is better & that he has derived much good from



his sojourn at Petersburg. Are you  
 home now. All the same Harriet  
 & I can never think of you without  
 a severe feeling of regret, dear.  
 You know I have always loved  
 you so much & you have always  
~~been~~ and are such a particular  
 favourite of mine that I feel  
 I would go to battle with  
 the Fates or Providence or  
 whatever you chose to call  
 it - for not having made your  
 life happier than it is! I  
 am not desirous of finding  
 fault with any one - especially  
 now, when misfortune has over-  
 taken all parties, and it is our  
 duty - yours and mine - to do  
 our best to help. Least of  
 all am I trying to make you  
 brood over that Series "of



misfortunes. No my dearest. The way  
to get on is to look up and  
forward and to never submit  
to disappointments and misfortunes.

Indeed, my Harriet, it often  
happens that those very things  
which seem misfortunes are  
our making - or at least, we  
rise renewed and re-invigorated  
and our strength increased, from  
the effect of what seemed  
to be a catastrophe. But to  
do so, it is necessary, above  
everything that we be strong,  
we must have a character a  
moral strength and a dogged  
determination that we shall  
not give way before misfort-  
une. You, my little girl,  
have some of these qualities  
which make up a strong  
personality. I must pray you  
to give those qualities a full



and free exercise. When I come home, Harriet - I think, in fact. I believe that my presence and my undying love for you will give you so much additional strength, that you may smile at what has seemed to be misfortune, and mind you, dear, I shall not have you ~~you~~ hang your head under my circumstances. Now write to me soon like a good little sister that you are. I am longing fearfully for you Harriet, and must really hasten my return home. I am arranging to leave this country in October - this is the end of July. Good by - dearest & accept loving love from  
 Your affectionate brother  
 M. J. P.



University Union  
Glasgow.

18th April 1919

My dearest Harriet.

I have not written to you for quite a long time, but I don't think you expected many letters from me during the recent months as you know how busy I was preparing for my Final Professional Exams. It is so nice to have one's labour rewarded accordingly. I have no doubt you ~~have~~ will have received the list of the graduates which I sent you and will have seen that my name was among the number so that at last, after five years' endeavour, I have got my ~~was~~ m



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There were 55 people who presented themselves for that examination and as you have seen, only 29 got through and of these 29, some commenced 6 years ago others 7 years ago & so on. In fact the 2 chaps who passed with honors began in 1913. and of those who passed with commendation, only 2 began in 1914 that is at the same time as I did. It is not a common thing to finish medical studies exactly in 5 years. most people take six years. Others take 7 others 8 and others 15 years. It is still less common to get through the course without ever failing once or twice. But I have good luck to finish exactly the prescribed time without



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failing once. This is of course is not purely a matter of good luck. It is in fact largely due to attention and steady work. Being a poor man's son, I made up my mind to waste no more time than was called for and therefore to waste no money. You know, in the universities, when you sit for an exam, you pay for it - anything from £6.6 to £40. And when you fail and have to sit again you have to pay again. So you see a person who makes it a habit to fail can very easily become 'broke'.

There is generally great excitement when students pass their Final exam! Some celebrate the occasion by becoming drunk, others by giving parties and so on. This is the case every year, and this year was no



exception to the general rule. I, too,  
was of course glad to finish my under-  
graduate days, but I could not be  
excited as others. I don't remember  
ever being excited in my life, but  
the completion of undergraduate days  
is such a great event in ones life  
that I quite believe that if mother  
had been living I would be excited  
for once in my life. As it is, so  
far from being excited, my <sup>very</sup>  
joy at finishing was mingled with  
sorrow and bitter grief. Today, it  
is the 18th April. I cannot but recall that  
this is the date on which our dear mother  
died last year. What a blow that was  
dear Harriet. How very different it  
would have been if our dear mother  
was alive to hear of my success. How  
very much I would have rejoiced over  
it myself. But alas! alas this pleasure  
has been ~~ouelhy~~, sadly denied us.  
The greatest joys that we may hope for



VI

must hence forward be alloyed with grief and pain, for they cannot but remind us of one dear one who would have rejoiced.

You must write to me soon, my dear Harriet - I am very lonely in this place, especially since my friend Dr Mosoke left for home. I have no opportunity of hearing or talking to you now.

I shall be leaving Glasgow in a few days, but my address still hold good until I tell you otherwise.

I may be here for a good few months more - Isnt that cruel? I am longing to see you & I am sure you are pining for me - arent you little girl.

I must stop now - with my love to you.

Ke modern

Apr 1914



Muir. Muir

Glasgow

15.11.20

My Dear Sister

How do you do! Will you kindly forward enclosed letter to Metchidi? I have never written to the dear little girl so I thought it was never too late to mend. So will you make sure that she gets the letter now?

I expect to be home soon, but I don't know how soon. So far I have no definite word of any boat. I am very anxious to come home - I need hardly tell you that this country is becoming very difficult to live in. It is much worse than war time.

Dunder Water - Love to all & yours self

Your affectionate brother  
Muir

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