



Mary Nestor Swift:
Oh, My Aching Back
or
A Honeymoon in a House on Wheels

By Victor Appleton II

Cover Art by Richard Neuman

Mary Nestor, former New York debutante and socialite has just married the man of her dreams, Tom Swift—inventor, scientist and owner of The Swift Construction Company.

She expected that their honeymoon would be a whirlwind of travel. Perhaps a cruise to Europe, perhaps a flight to the islands of Hawaii. Even a romantic stay in a top New York hotel with room service, caviar and champagne.

What she never bargained for was the first test of her marriage; a drive-yourself tour of the west coast of the United States. Plush car? Chauffeur? Hardly!

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This book is dedicated to women (and men) who grew up in luxury and then suddenly found themselves out in the real world. Many of you make it in life. Those who don't, go onto television programs such as The Bachelor or Real Wives of Brooklyn Heights or whatever. If you've made the transition, bravo! If you are still a pouty little baby, stop breathing; we could all use the air!

Oh, My Aching Back
or
A Honeymoon in a House on Wheels

FOREWORD

Pity poor, young Mary Nestor. She is deeply in love with a wonderful man. He will treat her as if she were a princess. She will want for nothing during their eventual fifty-one years together.

They will have a wonderful son who will step right into his father's shoes and become, if nothing else, even more famous.

They will also have a beautiful daughter. Smart, vivacious, caring and determined.

But, today, Mary is getting married. To her wonderful man. It will be a lavish affair with more than 200 guests.

She has promised me that she will keep a journal of their honeymoon. No! Not of everything. Just of the travels they will do, the sights they will see and the marvelous times they will have together.

Victor Appleton

On old family friend

August 13th

Oh my. Tomorrow is the BIG day. Haven't been able to sleep for days and weeks and months. Daddy says I exaggerate too much. Perhaps it has only been a few days.

My Tommy is so wonderful. I absolutely don't know how I ever managed to attract the most brilliant man in the entire universe. Really I don't.

Though I've only been to Shopton a couple times, he assures me that we'll have a nice house all our own. He has been living with his parents in their absolutely huge house right in the middle of his company, but we'll be moving into our own place a couple miles away.

I dearly love his mother and father, but I can't imagine living with them... not even for a week or two.

The only one of his friends I've so far met is Ned Newton. A particularly nice man if a bit reckless. Tom and Ned have had many adventures together in the past several years. I do so hope that his will stop once we settle down. It isn't that I don't want Tommy to not have fun, it is just that they have been in peril more than several times.

Ohhhh. I have to remember to not call him Tommy in front of his friends. He says he prefers Tom, not even Thomas.

Almost forgot. Had an absolutely wonderful "hen" night out with all of my sorority sisters last night. Ellie had engaged a beautiful hall and we had nothing but cakes and creams and other desserts. Hope all that didn't go to my waist, I'm already a little tight in my wedding dress.

I've never been out there. It is going to be magnificent, I just know.

The ceremony is all in a haze right now. I hope I remember it some day. Perhaps once I see the pictures. He must have taken a million. I was so nervous that I almost, well, almost embarrassed myself. Far too many "do you's" and "marriage is..." things. It went on forever. Sorry. It went on for almost a full hour.

By the end, I was drenched in flop sweat. Tom didn't seem to notice. He didn't even sweat a drop. Guess it's from all his exciting adventures. I remember him standing there so serious. He was the most gorgeous man I've ever seen and looked perfect in his tuxedo.

Anyway, this has been, as they say, the best day of my life. Tomorrow afternoon we depart for Denver. Overnight there and then on to Los Angeles and a transfer to San Diego. By this time tomorrow night I will be dipping my toes in the Pacific Ocean.

August 15th

Our first morning. I got up a little before Tom so that I could call down for room service. He is showering right now and the food should be up here in ten minutes.

All my butterflies are gone today. I feel different. I feel married. I like this feeling! Oh. Shower is off. Have to go for now.

Our first breakfast together as MAN AND WIFE! WOW!! Everything tastes so much better today. Father told me that women have strange chemicals inside that make them giddy. Maybe this is what he meant. We had ham

steaks and scrambled eggs and fried, diced potatoes with orange juice and coffee.

At college I absolutely fell in love with coffee. Mother would never let me have any at home, not even this last week. I've told her that I am fine at this height so that any "stunts your growth" that might happen would be alright. I fit right under Tom's arm now and would never want to be any taller.

Tom has gone down to pay for the room. I finished packing and we are off to the airport in a little. Mother, father, and my aunt and uncle will be seeing us off. Please, please, please, mother, don't cry.

We're on the plane now and Tom has decided to nap. I've only ever flown between New York and Boston so this is an adventure. A bit bumpy, but I'm telling myself that I will be okay.

Tom's folks sprang for first class tickets for us on the flights out and back. They really pour on the service. I even had a little sherry with my dinner. It's a strange taste—wonder if I'll ever take to it. Oh, well.

I have found my absolutely favorite new thing—watching Tom sleep. His face goes all soft and relaxed and kind of little boy like.

Perhaps it's those chemicals of daddy's.

August 16th

We only got to see the airport here in Denver. But, looking out of the big windows toward the downtown, I probably am not missing anything. Huge mountains in the

distance that Tom tells me are the Rockies, but nothing except flat everywhere else. The tallest building here seems to be the airport terminal.

Finally back in the air. Los Angeles is only a half dozen hours away. It's very strange to know that flying from New York to Denver takes sixteen hours, with stops, but by the time you land, it is only fourteen hours later.

When we land we will need to run for the next plane. Tom asked the stewardess and she explained that we have to get from one terminal building to another, but we will only have about thirty minutes.

Tom asked if she could arrange to have a car take us and she sort of laughed. It seems that the airport has been outfitted with moving walkways that go more than twice as fast as just walking. And, she said, that if we also walk, we will be going four times normal speed.

Good thing Tom understands all this. Oh, goody. Our breakfast is coming.

Now is San Diego and a small motel near the airport. We got in too late for whatever the accommodations are that Tom picked out, so we will stay here tonight and then move on tomorrow.

Later: We took a city bus to the pier area right next to downtown. There is no real beach near the downtown area, but we were able to watch three Navy ships head out to sea. They are so sleek looking. But, from the pier they look ever so small. I wonder how the men on them live? Must be very cramped. I'm glad Tommy never had to go through all that.

Dinner tonight was fresh pacific fish. We don't get most of these kinds back home. I had a fish called halibut and Tommy had a platter of crab, clams and oysters. I tried one of each. Give me regular fish, like my halibut, any day over the oysters and clams, but that crab was so sweet and tasty. Yum!!

August 17th

Tommy took off—darn. I've got to get use to calling him Tom. Tom. Tom. Tom. Tom.

Anyway, Tom took off in a taxi a little while ago. He said he had to get our transportation. I never asked him, but I sort of thought we would fly between cities. However, a romantic drive up the coast, being able to stop anywhere we want to and just look, that will be wonderful! I hear a car pulling up outside.

Later: How to explain this. #mmmmmm. Tom came back this morning with our transportation. It is also going to be our accommodations for the next twenty days. He brought back a little car and a little trailer. A little, silver trailer. A camping trailer with what is suppose to be a kitchen, a bedroom, and a sitting room all in one room.

It does have a private toilet room with a tiny shower in the back.

I only hope that when the preacher said "for better of for worse" that he was referring to this little trailer as the worse. We're spending the night at the beach. It's in a small town called Torrey Pines. Nice little town with a

couple of restaurants. We tried one called Pancho's Villa, a Mexican style eatery that seems to specialize in foods that burn your mouth.

I insisted that we go to the store before returning to the trailer so that I could buy breakfast makings. It appears that I will get to try out the little kitchen inside a bedroom tomorrow.

I have to tell you that this isn't precisely what I imagined, but I'm game for practically anything. In fact, after the initial shock, I have kind of taken a shine to our little silver honeymoon cottage. Tom even carried me over the threshold this morning. A little difficult since the door is only five feet tall and he is over six.

August 18th

Did I write that it had a bed? Oh, yes. It isn't so much a bed as it is a table that can be cranked lower and the cushions on the benches to either side get flopped over it to form what might look like a bed at first glance.

It ends up being about four feet wide, which is okay for me and makes snuggling into Tom's arms all the easier. The problem is that it only comes out to about six feet end to end. Or side to side I might say. Tom evidently likes to stretch his arm out when he sleeps and he can't do it in this "bed."

I made my first married breakfast today. I've never cooked over a gas flame. Our kitchen back home has an electric range. Gas is going to take some getting use to. I burned the first eggs and bacon. Now the trailer

smells of burnt port fat. Yuck!

Tom took the little car back to the store for more fixings. When he got back I was very careful and it turned out mostly okay. He must really love me because he told me it was the best he had had in a long time, and he said it with a straight face!

I have the feeling that all my journal entries are going to be late at night. We never discussed this, but it turns out that Tom is very happy falling asleep about ten PM and I generally remain awake until midnight. Always have.

Following breakfast we hitched the trailer back up and headed north. I have to say that the Pacific Ocean is so much nicer looking than the Atlantic. It just seems warmer and bluer. I've always felt that the Atlantic is a cold, gray thing.

Los Angeles was huge but so uninviting that I asked Tom to just keep driving.

We got to a wonderful town called Santa Barbara in time for a late lunch. Tom asked if it would be okay to stop here for the day and night. Fine by me. We walked all around the little downtown area. Then we drove over to the marina area and had a delicious steak and shrimp dinner at a place overlooking the ocean.

I forgot to tell you last night or even the day before that, but the sunset over the Pacific is just the most incredible thing. The sun turns all orange as it dips into the water. Then, just as it disappears you see a little flash of green!

Even Tom can't explain why it does that. Magic?

Anyway, dinner tonight was wonderful. Our waiter told us that the beef comes from a herd just thirty miles from town and is so fresh that it was butchered this morning.

I really didn't need to know that much about my meal, but I could taste a world of difference between the meat back home and this.

August 19th

Not a great night sleeping. We made love out on the beach last night. The trailer came with several blankets so Tom and I took one over behind a sand dune. The sound of the ocean and the smell of the water really was nice. Mother would be aghast but it was beautiful.

It was much better than our "moments" in the trailer.

Anyway. We headed out and up north today on the scenic ocean highway. We stopped and took a tour of an enormous home once owned by the Hearst family of newspaper fame. Now, I've seen some amazing homes out on Long Island and on Cape Cod, but they just don't hold a candle to this one.

It's high on a hill overlooking the coast and has several swimming pools, giant rooms and the most ornate furnishings I've seen outside of a museum, which it really is now. It also has a number of smaller homes built within what I guess you'd call a compound.

Wow!

Tom assures me that he'll buy me something just as nice some day. He's a fibber, but he's MY fibber and I LOVE HIM!!!!!!

After that, we drove up the coast stopping at a small town called Solvang. Had pastries at a bakery there that actually melt in your mouth. Tom reminded me that I had a nice figure and shouldn't spoil it for at least the first year of our marriage, so I only had two.

We made a mad dash up the coast arriving into the seaside town of Monterey just after eight. Tom found a sandwich cafe and we picked up a couple tuna sandwiches.

Not what you think. Not what I expected. These were made from solid steaks of tuna meat that had been quickly grilled and served on a chewy type of french bread with lettuce and a home-made mayonnaise with fresh garlic from a little agricultural community nearby.

It was heavenly.

My only hope is that we can find another spot on the beach and then have a reasonable night's sleep.

August 20th

Hope number one achieved. Hope number two dashed by the bunching up of the cushions under us as we tried to sleep.

Tom's tolerance for the uncomfortable seems to be a bit higher than mine. I'm starting to notice that my back is slightly achy when I get up in the mornings. A good walk and some stretching and I'm right as rain, but it sure does cramp the sleep attempts.

We spent a lot of the day here in Monterey walking around the historic town. We even saw the actual

cannery that Steinbeck wrote about in his book.

It's going to be hard going back home. I am becoming addicted to the bounteous seafoods out here. For lunch we had abalone steaks—some sort of giant clam that they pound out thin and flat and then sauté.

At dinner Tom had a huge bucket of clams. I swear that I'm NOT exaggerating to say that it was a clean, two gallon bucket filled with them, and about a half pound of melted butter on the side for dipping them into.

I had my first scallops. I have had scallops before back home but they are anemic little things compared to the amazing two inch wide and two inch thick monsters they served me. These were SCALLOPS!

We were both too full to have a "special moment" tonight but I set the alarm clock to get us up at five. We'll see.

August 21st

We have been married for a whole week! Can you imagine it? I've been marching around telling everyone who will listen about it today.

While some people smile and congratulate me, there are some others that stare at me as if I were strange. Wonder why? Surely, they felt like this once.

Today it was up to San Francisco. I made Tom promise that we will spend a couple days here and he agrees. We located a nice traveler's park near the ocean and arranged for a spot for three whole days. Tom took us on the cable cars and down to the Fisherman's Wharf. It

is all so bright and airy and busy and fun. I can see why people flock here to live and vacation.

We must have heard a dozen different languages being spoken by all the tourists. I wish I had studied languages. I am really curious what they were all saying.

I noticed a huge difference between people in New York as versus the people out here. Here they smile and say hello to you. One man even set his shopping on the ground to assist us in finding a place we wanted to see. That just doesn't happen back home.

Another thing that we both noticed, although Tom brought it up first, is the temperature and weather. Here it is well into summer and it is still very temperate in the city. A little morning fog that goes away before noon, leaving the air clean and mild. And, it doesn't smell like New York. Makes me glad we are moving to upstate New York and away from the city smells.

I saw a man standing in a small park today. That doesn't half describe it. He was all made up with silver makeup and silver or grey clothes and stood stock still for as long as we watched him. Like a human statue. Or the Tin Man from that Wizard of Oz movie. When he finally changed poses I clapped for him. Tom handed me a dollar and told me to place it in the man's jacket pocket.

As I did, he said out of the corner of his mouth, "Thank you, lady. You're a real champ."

One thing San Francisco has—oh, don't ever call it Frisco. That's an insult. The only person who hasn't been nice to me growled when I called the city Frisco. Live

and learn. Anyway, one thing that it has in abundance are hills. Hills and more hills. Tom loves hiking up and down them. My legs are a little shorter so I have to take more steps, but it is good exercise in a beautiful setting.

We checked out several of the historic old hotels in the city and Tom surprised me by securing a night tomorrow at the beautiful Saint Francis Hotel.

It will probably cost a small fortune. I've never gotten around to asking Tom how rich he is, but I guess he wouldn't get us a room at an expensive hotel if he couldn't afford it.

My back will love the break. Our little love trailer isn't playing very nice with us. We ran out of gas for cooking yesterday while I was trying to make coffee. Tom had to drive around for an hour before he found some place that could refill the little tank.

There is a bit of a breeze tonight and the temperature has dropped to under fifty. Too chilly to head outside. Besides. Last night we were almost discovered by a group of revelers out for a night time game of tag. Tom is the most gentle man I know and that gentleness shines through. I'm glad I waited for him.

August 22nd

Have you ever been devoured by a bed? Ummm! This hotel has the thickest feather-filled mattresses I've ever been on. You climb in and sort of sink down. More later.

Today was another sight-seeing day in the city. Tom didn't want to see the Golden Gate Bridge today as we

will be crossing over it tomorrow on our way north. I did catch a glimpse of it between buildings when we were up on Nob Hill. It is magnificent! And practically orange.

We spent more time at Fisherman's Wharf. This time we arrived early enough to get a reservation at a nice restaurant featuring, you guess it, seafood. More crab and those huge scallops along with a bottle of wine from a vineyard we will be passing as we drive up the coast tomorrow. Wonderful surprise in the wine. Ditto the food. Tom tells me that there are several vineyards up north that are giving the wine producers back east fits. Evidently, out here they are making wines that are much better than east coast wines.

Tom agrees that we should stop at the winery and maybe purchase a few more bottles and perhaps arrange to have some sent home.

All I can really say about San Francisco and the entire surrounding bay area is that it is someplace we must come back to some day. And, soon I hope.

Without a trailer, please.

Tom had to make a call back to his business today and that took more than an hour, so I went shopping downtown. Beautiful department stores line both sides of Market Street. And, trolleys come by every two to three minutes so you can get from one end to the other quite fast.

After Tom met me downtown he suggested a ride out to The Presidio, a military outpost on probably the most beautiful setting ever. If it weren't for the saluting Army and Navy men I would have sworn we were inside

a huge private estate. Tom had an ulterior motive it turned out. His call was about a meeting with a man name of Barclay.

Mr. Barclay—well, today it is Lieutenant Barclay—is preparing to move out to Shopton with his wife and is looking for employment. Tom told me that he dislikes situations such as this where he is asked to meet a stranger who is practically going to beg for a job. But, it is the price of success he tells me.

I saw something in Tom's eyes today that I had never seen. Disquiet and anger. He hid it well and it passed in moments, but I could sense that he was more bothered by this upcoming meeting than he let on.

It all turned out to be a tempest in a teapot. Tom and Mr. Barclay hit it off immediately. Mr. Barclay's father is an old friend of Ned Newton's uncle. He and his wife had already set things in motion for him to leave military life and move to Shopton where he had a job offer. Unfortunately, the job fell through and he is too close to his release date to turn back.

I like his wife, Dianna. She is a year older than me but I can see that we will become friends. Her plans are to have a little boy and girl beginning in two years and about three years apart. I told her that I want a girl and then a boy on about that same schedule.

We laughed about arranging marriages right now for them. Gosh. I haven't even spoken with Tom about children. Oh, my. What if he doesn't want any. Darn!

Back to the hotel and the bed. Not only am I going to have a most wonderful night's sleep, but Tom and I have already had a special moment and I believe he may want

another.

Being married is the most wonderful thing in the entire world. And, I am not exaggerating on that point.

We stayed in tonight and had room service bring up dinner. We both decided to take one night off from seafood, so Tom had their braised lamb with local vegetables while I had a pork chop stuffed with a creamy french cheese and then baked all wrapped up in corn husks with fresh herbs and baked. A dull fork could have cut both our dishes with ease.

We also ordered a bottle of wine from a vineyard that is suppose to be only a half mile form the first one we want to visit. We may be shipping a lot of wines home.

August 23rd

Back to the little car and our cottage on wheels. I almost had a tear well up when I saw it, after the night we had last night. Buck up, girl I told myself. You are with the man you love and a little thing like this is going to be a humorous story some day.

Probably in about fifty years or so!

The drive up the coast was not actually on the coast. The main highway runs inland by a number of miles. Oh, Tom told me that there is an actual coast road, but that it is not complete and is unpaved and too twisty and rough to take the trailer.

The two wineries turned out to be directly across the road from each other. One specializes in the darker,

heartier red wines while the other favors a version of a French grape that produces a slightly pink wine.

Yummy, both of them. We had discovered that the trailer has a little storage compartment in the back that is just about perfect for the two cases of wine we purchased plus a few extra bottles for drinking over the next week or so. Next big town or city and we go to the Post Office.

Eventually we arrived here in Fort Bragg. There is one motel and it is full, so it is another night in the trailer. After eight or nine days it is beginning to lose its luster. At least, emotionally for me. Even Tom has let out an occasional complaint about the bed. We ran out of cooking gas again today, but Tom figured out why. The little hose that connects it to the trailer has a tiny leak in it. He found it by mixing up some soap and water and then dribbling it on the hose. The bubbles coming out from the middle shouldn't be there.

A service garage had some special tape that will work for now. They put on so much that the hose looks like a black snake that has a mouse stuck half way down.

We had to drive off of the main highway to get here but it was one of the most scenic drives through tall trees. And, we are right on the coast, camping on the beach. They even have signs in the sand that tell you where the surf comes up to so you don't park and get all wet.

The little town doesn't have much in it so we spent the rest of the afternoon and evening sitting on folding chairs next to the trailer facing the water. Another fantastic sunset.

I tried to climb into Tom's lap. I wanted to cuddle. Too bad we weigh a combined two hundred fifty pounds and the chair is rated for two hundred, tops.

Guess we'll have to pay for that one. We did have a good giggle as it slowly collapsed under us.

I find that my favorite moments are spent in Tom's arms. He is a strong, athletic man but he knows not to squeeze too hard. I feel safe and warm there. Plus, I am finding that his scent sends a tingle through me.

Guess I'm in love, diary.

We built a fire and sat on the sand for several hours once it got dark. Golly. I just remembered. I never fixed us any dinner. And Tom's already asleep. I'll climb into the "bed" as quietly as I can and plan for a hearty breakfast.

August 24th

When I woke up, Tom was already fixing breakfast. He grinned at me, but never said a word about my goof last night.

He made breakfast with a great amount of love, but not much skill. Good thing mother taught me how to cook or we might starve. Still and all, we ate it and just sort of basked in each other.

Our drive today took back to the highway and up the coast. Had an uneventful meal in the little town of Fortuna and then raced the sun to get to Crescent City in Northern California before dinner time. A nice little local store had practically nothing we could cook for

dinner, but a restaurant nearby was only too happy to make us a fine dinner and package it for us to take back to the trailer and our view of the ocean. I've had some mighty fine chowders in my life, but their clam, abalone and conch chowder takes the cake. Huge chunks of the meats and a very creamy potato that I had never heard of. Forgot to write the name down.

We found a camp ground within a few hundred yards of the beach. Given that it is so near to the end of summer vacation I really expected to see a lot more people about. By nine, we had the beach to ourselves.

I am smiling right now. Can you tell?

As it is a warm night and there appeared to be few if any bugs flying around, we dragged the cushions out of the trailer and will be sleeping under the stars.

It can't be any worse that the cramped, sliding when you don't want them to, platform they sit on inside.

Oh! Almost forgot. As of today, we've been married a whole ten days, Hurrah!!

August 25th

I was right. A much better night. I woke up around three and Tom did too. He kissed me and that started everything off.

More smiling. A lot more!

When we hit the road, Tom suggested that we get up into Oregon and then stop as many times as we wanted to rather than to try to get to a specific point. Seems

like there is a beach to explore or camp on about every 10 miles,

We did stop at the first town over the border, Brookings, and bought all the food we might need for the next couple of days.

It seems like we stopped about every half hour or so and spent another fifteen or more minutes walking around seeing the sights.

By nightfall we had stopped seven times and barely made it into the town of Bandon as the night fell on us. I made us a burger dinner in the little kitchen while Tom opened one of our bottles of wine.

Good wine and a very nice night. Again, under the stars.

August 26th

We decided to take a tour of a small creamery in Bandon. They also make a cheddar cheese. One tourist couple we met who were heading down the coast told us that an even better cheese was made in the town of Tillamook about five hours farther north.

It took us about eight hours to get here. Lots of stops including a fishing town called Coos Bay. A hundred or more fishing boats in the harbor by the time we got there. We found out that they leave port at about three in the morning and are mostly back by noon.

We'll do the creamery tomorrow as we head north. One of the ladies back at the Bandon Creamery told me that she would suggest going all the way to Astoria, Oregon and then head inland to Portland. She says that the

coastal roads in Washington state are atrocious and wouldn't drive them unless forced to. And, the ferry ride across the Columbia River is suppose to be so rough that even the crew gets seasick. Ugh!

I told Tom about this and he spent a half hour looking through our maps. In the end, he said we should ask someone else as we got farther up the coast.

Tillimook has a quaint little downtown but seems to be mostly devoted to cattle ranching. We'll see tomorrow.

Tonight I made a fish stew that mother was always going on about. We had purchased several types of fish down in Bandon along with enough ice to get them up here safe and chilled.

I don't think I quite had everything necessary for the recipe. Guess I'm going to need to learn about what you can and can't use as substitutes for certain foods. Tom kissed me and told me it was delicious, but I know I forgot something. I'll have to dog-ear this page to remind me to ask mother.

We had time to take a walk around the estuary here where about a hundred different bird species either live year around or stop on their migration route. It reminded me of the time daddy took us all on a bird watching trip out to the end of Long Island.

Both places have a lot of different birds, but here they have a greater variety of shapes and size. Even the pelicans are different here. Maybe half again as large as ours.

A cool breeze came up at about nine putting an end to our desire for a third night under the stars.

I'm not sure that it is possible, but this trailer is shrinking the farther north we go. I thought I'd found a great place to put my left foot the other night, but it seems to be too small tonight,

Tom has begun making grumbling noises in his sleep every time we sleep indoors.

August 27th

My new favorite cheddar cheese comes from the opposite side of the country from where I live. We spent several hours at the Tillimook Creamery. They've been in business a lot of years supplying Oregon and parts of Washington with one of the smoothest, tastiest cheddars I have ever had.

You can climb up onto a small platform and watch them make the cheese while a nice lady tells you all about the process and the company. I guess I never knew what all went into it. I also didn't realize that it has to sit around for weeks and months before you can eat it. We bought some for the trip. They also let us taste some of the rubbery white curds, fresh out of the vats. Tom laughed when he bit down. They squeak in your mouth.

The lady who described the process to us also told us that the woman in Bandon was correct. "Take the road into Portland, across the bridge, and then up to Seattle," she told us.

She also suggested staying at least a night or two in Portland with a couple of side trips. We'll see.

Even though we've seen practically everything there is to see around here we have decided to spend another night.

It is a little warmer so we've spread out the cushions outside.

August 28th

We were up and out of here by nine this morning. Our cheese lady had suggested a nearby restaurant for breakfast. She was right. We had the fluffiest omelets ever. Mine had fresh crab and shrimp in it. And, of course, Tillamook cheese.

Heaven!

Tom had his with mushrooms, locally grown and something I'd never heard of—morels—along with diced tomato and spring onions.

I ate half of his and he returned the favor. Thick brown toast with butter from the creamery, too. Don't know how they manage to get better milk out of their cows, but it is the best.

Our drive up to Astoria, an old fishing town and the place where a lot of long haul ocean ships unload, was uneventful. We stopped several times to look out at the ocean. I saw several seals or sea lions or whatever they are. Tom didn't look fast enough and they slipped into the water. Wish I brought a camera.

Hard to believe that we would be leaving the coastal road and all of this splendor behind, but a trucker at the restaurant also told us that he would never drive up the Washington coast.

I think that we will have to stop in Portland for a few days. My back is killing me. If it isn't the dratted bed,

it is all this sitting in the little car as we drive from place to place. There is one little spring in my seat that seems intent on poking me in the right side of my bottom.

Tom told me that I have TB. I was aghast until he told me that it meant "Tired Behind" although he used a rougher word than that! I've never heard him use such words, but it did make me giggle a little.

The drive up the Columbia River was a lot of fun. Many ships going up and down the river. Tom says that they mostly go to Portland which has a lot of terminals on two different rivers.

A couple hours later and we came around a corner in the hills. Oh my goodness! The entire area surrounding Portland is magnificent. Practically everywhere you look are huge mountains, mostly snow-covered even this late in the summer. As we drove in I spotted three, but the man at our hotel assures me that there are up to five that are visible from various places.

Can you imagine? Tom told me that these are all active volcanoes that have just been dormant for many years. They could erupt almost any time. Golly! Hope they hold off until we get out of here,

Since we arrived in mid-afternoon we couldn't find a parking place at first. As we drove past the hotel for the third time, the doorman hailed us and Tom pulled over. He asked if we were staying with them and Tom said yes, so he told us to just pull right up to the curb and they would take care of the car and trailer.

Plus, they would unhitch the two so we could take the car out at any time. Nice, nice, nice people.

Oh, boy! A real bed tonight and tomorrow and even the next night.

I am certain that Tom's back is bothering him more than mine, but he is so stoic about these things.

I noticed another something new about Tom today. He seems to have some sort of inner music playing while he concentrates on the road. When I asked him what he was thinking of, he said, Debussy. I think it's a wonderful thing to be able to concentrate on the road and still be able to listen to some sort of inner music.

After we checked in, we walked all over the downtown area. Portland evidently has the largest downtown for a city under 150,000 in the entire United States. It is huge. And, restaurants aplenty. We had been informed that our room included a two-for-one dinner in their steak and seafood house, so we saved up our appetites for tonight.

It was worth it.

Fresh everything. A shared shrimp "Louie" was followed by prime steaks cooked exactly the way we wanted them. A huge baked potato that they said comes from the eastern part of the state and a salad of garden fresh greens. To top it all off, the dessert was a baked, local apple with a condensed wine glaze and three types of cheeses on the side.

We just spent the last two hours going over a stack of books, maps and brochures in our room describing everything there is to do nearby. I think that tomorrow we are going to take a trip up to the biggest and closest mountain, Mount Hood.

First, however, I am going to soak all my aches away in the big bathtub our rooms comes with.

Later: I was going to wake Tom up, but I am just too relaxed.

August 29th

I hadn't noticed it, but Tom had ordered room service for breakfast. I've never had fruit salad made from whole fruits that were just sliced and diced minutes before serving. It included a local honey drizzle and fresh mint. Yum!

We left the hotel armed with maps and directions and headed up the Columbia River to the small town of Hood River. It is a very narrow and twisty road, but you can stop part way there and see the most amazing water fall. Not huge like Niagara, but Oregon's Multnomah Falls is absolutely breathtaking.

Back on the road to Hood River. Turning south we went up the valley there and through the most amazing array of fruit orchards. Apples, plums and pears all hung heavy on their respective trees.

And right in front of us rose Mount Hood. In fact, it rose a little too much for me to take in. I even felt a cold chill run down my spine as I saw it looming up above us.

The brochure said it was only a little under 12,000 feet, but I'll swear that it must be twice that high!

Our road took us to the east of the mountain and then we connected with another highway that we took along the south side. Tom suggested stopping at the lodge there. I've seen large wooden structures before, but nothing to this scale.

And inside it is just as magnificent. This is a hotel and restaurant and the main lodge for the thousands of skiers that flock to the mountain each winter. I've never been skiing, but if I lived in Portland I'd sure take up the sport. Tom was enthralled by the mountain.

We sat on their huge patio sipping peach flavored iced tea made with, naturally, local peaches, and Tom just stared at the mountain.

The snow level was several thousand feet above us, but measuring poles driven into the ground showed that it frequently got to a depth of greater than a dozen feet right at the lodge.

After an hour, Tom did something he had never done yet. He stood up, pulled me gently from my seat and hugged and kissed me. And not just for a second or two.

He backed away with tears in his eyes and told me how much he loved me and how much he wants to spend all our lives together. By the time he finished we were both in tears.

I love him so much it almost hurts.

In fact, that moment sort of blinded me to the rest of the day. I know we drove back to Portland and had dinner at a seafood house called Jake's, but everything has been a blur since that moment at the Lodge.

I'm going to sleep, now. Not as feathery as the hotel in San Francisco, but soft, warm and comforting, just like my Tom.

August 30th

It's Monday and the final Monday of our honeymoon. We had a wonderful night's sleep and woke up refreshed and made wonderful love.

I made up my mind today that I will never leave this man. If that sounds a little naive, then phooey on you, diary. I will remain by his side through everything our wedding vows demand and then some!

Tom took me to see a movie today. The main street here is full of beautiful, ornate movie theaters. In fact, you can stand at the top of one hill and look down and practically see nothing but huge marquee proclaiming "Fox" and "Paramount" and others.

It was a nice movie with a happy ending and the theater was air conditioned. We spent the rest of the afternoon strolling around other parts of the city that we hadn't gotten to before including their China Town. What a delightful area it is.

Tom found a bookstore that specializes in technical books and located a copy of a journal from way back in 1904, something he has always wanted to find. Over two hundred pages of information and he got it for a quarter. It was all I could do to drag the big kid out of this "candy store" and back to the hotel to prepare for dinner.

Oh, and what a dinner. A small restaurant located right on the waterfront with the most unique style. The menu informs you that each dinner will consist of many specialities of the house that would depend on what was available that day and how the chef felt.

Nothing listed. You either ate what they fixed or you left. We ate. And neither of us had the same thing. I looked around and noticed that there was almost no duplication of plates at other tables.

Another unique thing is that every meal comes with a spinach souffle. Everyone gets it and you are expected to eat it. A matronly woman at the next table didn't eat hers and was rewarded by being "shot" with a pop gun.

"Don't do that again," she had fussed at her waiter. He told her in a very good Chico Marx accent, "Ah, Missus-a Pittock. Ya gotta understand that-a we only shoot-a the ones-a we love. And we really love to shoot you," he had finished sounding more like Groucho. "You're lucky we don't do what we use to before you started haunting this place."

She asked him what that might be and he told her that they use to slap non-eaters with an oven glove and challenge them to a duel. "And we only ever lost one waiter. Fellow by the name of Shakey Sammy."

She laughed at him, obviously a frequent customer being dealt with by a favored waiter.

We loved our foods and ate every bite of the souffles.

Tom and I walked back to the hotel arm in arm. I almost asked if we would stay another day, but I knew that Tom wants to spend some time in Seattle before we fly home.

August 31st

We slept in today. In fact, we are lounging around until we have to check out at noon, so I am adding a few jottings this morning.

Two daily papers have been delivered to our room each morning and Tom is sitting by the windows reading them. After a few nights on a real bed, my back is starting to straighten out. Oh, boy. Just in time for final nights of torture on the rack!

I swear that I'll never cook or sleep in something so small and cramped ever again. Never, ever, ever! Unless that is all that Tom and I can afford. Even then I'd tear everything out and put in a real bed.

Today's plans call for us to travel up to the town of Olympia, Washington's state capitol. There, or nearby, is another monstrous mountain, Mount Rainier. Maybe the mood will hit Tom and I'll get another of those wonderful hugs and kisses. Fingers crossed.

Later: Yep!

Later Still: We came all the way up to Seattle in the late afternoon. What a strange city. It is built, Tom tells me, on the top of the old city. From the looks of it, they don't have much room to grow, so they went up instead of out. Kind of a disappointing and generic skyline.

But, and it is a big BUT, there is a marketplace here that we will go to tomorrow. Mother told me that an

old college friend of hers lived here and absolutely swore by the flower stalls at the market. We'll see.

Tom decided (bless him) that we would do one night in a hotel and then a couple in the beast (my words for what is becoming our pie'd-a-terror, not his) before the final night of our honeymoon back in Seattle.

There are a number of seafood restaurants here, but we felt like something simple, so we walked a dozen blocks to an older part of town and had pizza. They do something different out here. The crust is sort of thin but still chewy and needs to be eaten with a fork. Instead of a heavy tomato sauce, they brush the dough with a very flavorful oil made from olives and then lay down fresh herbs before the cheese and meat or vegetables.

I was glad we had a walk back to the hotel.

Earlier today, Tom asked the manager if we could have a water-facing room. At first he didn't seem to "have" one until he saw Tom's drivers license. Even out here Tom's name is somewhat famous.

I am writing this from the huge Honeymoon suite on the tenth floor and looking out at the entire harbor area. Even as the sun goes down (by the way, the sunset isn't as nice up here as along the California coast) which happens far later than back down south, there are a lot of ships steaming around. Some coming in to port and some leaving.

Tom was tired tonight, but I just found out something that I can do to fix that. My secret, but I'm sure it will come in handy in the future.

Tomorrow we do the downtown and the market and then it will be off for a little back-wrenching (Oops. I mean sight-seeing) in our little box on wheels. I have been reading the local booklets and it seems that the northern corner of the state is filled with islands, waterways, and some great fishing.

September 1st

A very nice day in seattle. And, mother's friend was correct. The Pikes Place Market it an astounding place. Especially the fresh produce and the flower markets. They have flowers that I've never seen, BUT of the ones I have seen, these are generally enormous! Mums that barely reach fist size back home are seven inches across! Roses that by this time are small and sort of wilted looking are big, bright and full here.

We took a ferry to one of the larger islands from which we can drive to several other locations. Lots of wooded areas and lots of wildlife. I saw an actual deer today. Five of them.

There are a lot of people up here. Everyone has a little trailer attached to a variety of cars, some so big I can't image them fitting on the narrow roads here. There is one family a few spaces down in a trailer our size but with three kids. Can you imagine?

We ran into a very nice woman today as I was starting to prepare dinner. She came over, her name is Patsy, to see if I could spare some butter. Luckily I had plenty. She suggested that we pool our supplies and make a nice dinner for the four of us.

it was fun, except that her husband smokes and seems to believe that beer should be consumed every waking minute of the day. He appears to handle it, but I could tell that Patsy is sort of embarrassed about it.

We had some fish and potatoes and fresh fruits from today's shopping at the market, and she had a couple steaks and a bunch of vegetables.

Tom went off to the woods for a bit and came back with four thin but strong sticks, so we had kabobs. Patsy's husband, I never got his name because she kept referring to him as "my husband," offered Tom a beer but my wonderful man declined explaining that he had a slight kidney ailment and wasn't allowed alcohol. An acceptable fib, but there went my plan to bring out a good bottle of wine. Sigh.

Unlike any of the other spots we had stopped with the trailer, there was a lot of animal, bird and insect noise tonight as we sat outside eating. Something like seven beers later, Patsy's husband excused himself and headed into their trailer. She stayed with us for a half hour more but then also went to bed.

I can hear them talking right now. A bit loudly. Not an argument but a serious discussion that doesn't sound too happy.

It is at times like this that I marvel at my fortune in meeting, courting and marrying Tom Swift.

Tomorrow, we head back inland and explore the Puget Sound.

Tonight, we squeeze ourselves into the bed of nails for the next to final time.

I'm going to insist on a hotel with a masseuse when we get back to Seattle.

September 2nd

I am not sure what I expected but I feel that either the trailer of torture is getting to me or you really need to see the Puget Sound by air.

On the ground, not too exciting. Don't get me wrong... there are plenty of beautiful sights, but you just don't get too much splendor at ground level. Maybe from a boat?

I think even Tom is a bit disillusioned with it. He stopped at least a half dozen times to consult the maps. I think he was trying to figure out if we had taken a wrong turn. No such luck.

Didn't have that much to see at least until we reached the town of Bellingham and the magnificent views of a number of islands in the Sound. Too bad it didn't happen earlier in the day. Perhaps I am just fatigued and being unfair. Or, I am homesick and want to get back east and to move to Shopton and really start my life with Tom.

We tried to have what was suppose to be a quick lunch in Bellingham, but an unexpected flat tire on the trailer changed all that. Thankfully, the people up here are very nice. A man with a large pickup had a jack big enough to pick up the entire side of the trailer, and a lug wrench that our little trailer didn't have. The tire was popped off in pretty good time and he and Tom headed to a local place to have it repaired.

That turned out to be easier said than done as the tire had picked up a fairly large and sharp piece of glass somewhere and the entire tire was unpatchable.

Poor Tommy had spent most of the time they were gone talking with the rental agency who finally agreed that, since the trailer didn't have a spare, Tom could buy an inexpensive one and they would take the cost off our rental fee.

All in all it was probably a good thing this happened. We had forgotten to stop and ship back our wine and might have just left it in the back of the trailer when we turned it in. Only the search for a the non-existent spare had uncovered it.

I gave my man a huge kiss to reward him for being, well, him and taking care of everything, We bought lunch for the man who had helped and we were soon driving to the Post Office.

I never knew that you aren't suppose to send alcohol through the mail. Luckily, the man behind the counter put some new tape over the original, marked the box as "antique glassware" and let us ship it anyway.

Our spare was not rated to travel at full highway speeds so it took us an extra hour to get back to the drop-off station in Seattle. When they complained about the cheap tire, Tom reminded them that it was their order to buy the cheapest one available. They grumbled but we got the full price off our bill.

We pulled all of our stuff out of the trailer and the little car and called a taxi which brought us back to this nice hotel in downtown. No masseuse. Drat.

Tomorrow it is off to the airport and the flights back home. I'm going to miss all of this out here, but I am ready to leave.

September 3rd

We're on the plane. Hurrah!

Tom and I enjoyed a quick breakfast and a lengthy taxi ride to the airport, but we are onboard and in the air and heading home.

I'm looking forward rather than back. My life with Tom and a family, or not (I really do have to bring up the subject to him) and standing by him. It is going to be great.

Heading back this direction is worse that heading west. You lose so much time. We took off at around ten local time in Seattle and don't arrive until eleven Chicago time. Then we are due to leave more than an hour later for the final seven or so hours to New York and won't get there until almost eight in the morning.

They served lunch right after we reached altitude, but practically nobody was hungry. Just too early I guess. At least for us. There is a man sitting two rows behind us who is smoking rather nasty-smelling cigarette. A friend of mothers use to smoke something from Turkey that smelled like this one. She use to claim that it was made from camel droppings. UGH!

The stewardess just asked the man if he wouldn't mind smoking an American cigarette as the Captain was complaining of the odor in the cockpit. Tom leaned over and told me that was an old ploy since the cockpit air

comes from a different circulating system on this model of plane.

Later: We have landed in Chicago but found out that our connecting plane has some sort of technical difficulty, so we won't be flying home tonight.

Because we are first class passengers, they have offered to pay for our room for the evening and we will be heading downstairs to a bus in a few moments.

Later Later: We checked into a small hotel very near the airport. It might be a problem as the noise level is fairly high, at least right now. I understand that they stop outbound flights at around eleven, so we'll see.

There is a small all night cafe across the street and Tom has gone to fetch us something to eat.

Much Later: All they could provide for take-out food were burgers. Not even french fried potatoes. Tom was so apologetic about it. In the end I had to hold onto him tightly and swore that it was okay.

The burgers turned out to be fair to good. Tom had put ketchup on them. I forgot I had never told him that I don't like ketchup. There certainly is a lot we need to learn about each other.

September 4th

Not too much to say about today except that we missed our plane out.

I set, and Tom checked, the alarm clock in the room, but it failed to go off. As a result, when we did wake up at eight, we only had a half hour to get back to the airport and to the plane.

We didn't make it, not by a long shot.

So, today we spent the day in downtown Chicago. We are both very tired and didn't have as much fun as we should have.

Tom spent twenty minutes on the phone with the airline arranging for our flight. We will be taking off tomorrow at three-forty in the afternoon. Good. That leaves us enough time to get to the airport. Tom checked us out of the little place and into a nicer hotel closer to the city. There weren't too many amenities but I spotted a massage parlor a few blocks away. I was all set to go over when Tom took my arm and led me away. He explained what a "massage parlor" was.

Color me a very bright shade of red. I never knew there were such places. When I asked Tom how he knew about them, he told me that his uncle, a merchant sailor, had told him about that sort of place.

Heading quickly the other way we spotted a small Greek restaurant. The meats were tender and flavorful and the bread soft and warm. It was filled with loud people evidently anxious to be louder than the people next to them. As a result I left with a headache and a husband who really wanted to apologize, but I wouldn't let him.

Tom kissed my headache away.

September 6th

We arrived back in New York yesterday late afternoon after our series of flights from Seattle to Chicago and then finally to here. I was too pooped to write anything yesterday.

We spent the night at a hotel near the city and then got up bright and early to drive up to Shopton.

As we drove I looked around me. Different world east versus west. An hour out of Shopton and I almost started to have a fond memory of the trailer. Not quite.

What I did begin to miss was the splendor of the Pacific Ocean and the kindness of the people and the wonderful food. Gee. The thought of food made me realize that as of tonight I am going to be responsible for feeding my wonderful husband.

Luckily, I have a copy of mother's favorite recipe book.

Shopton doesn't have very many restaurants right now. In fact, there is an outright cry for a good place to have a dinner out.

I am writing this now as we have stopped at the Swift Construction Company so that Tom can check up on what's going on. I didn't have the heart to tell him that there wouldn't be anyone there. It's Labor Day after all!

Here he comes. More later.

Later: We drove a couple miles away on a freshly paved road and into a small and very new neighborhood. Tom says that there will be about fifty houses eventually and

a lot more streets. Right now there are eleven houses including ours on just two parallel streets.

When we pulled up to the two-story house that is to become our home I started to cry. It is nothing like I have ever lived in. Compared to my family's home it is tiny, but it has five bedrooms, a spacious kitchen, dining room and living room. It even has a nice den that Tom has laid claim to. It is so beautiful I could barely breathe. And, it's ours.

We have nothing in the house tonight except a borrowed Army surplus air filled mattress and some sheets from Tom's parents. That's okay. We will have each other tonight.

Everything will arrive tomorrow and we will officially set up house together. Our house and our life together.

On the trip up here I asked Tom what he thought of children. I am so thankful that he wants at least two. Probably a good thing because I am pretty sure that one of our special moments on one of the beaches became a magic moment!