

look at me, but I know what he is thinking: 'How can you be so unkind? How dare you make your mother so sad?'

But I can't apologise.

Tuesday, 27 April 1943

Everyone in the Annexe is still **quarrelling**. There are air raids and bombs every night, and nobody can sleep well.

Our food is terrible. We have plain bread and coffee – not real coffee – for breakfast. We have lettuce or green vegetables, and bad potatoes. That's all.

Saturday, 1 May 1943

Yesterday was Dussel's birthday. He pretended that he wasn't interested, but when Miep arrived with a large bag of presents from his friends, he was as excited as a child! He had chocolate, eggs, butter, oranges and books. He arranged them on the table and left them there for three days, the silly old fool!

He already has plenty of food. We found bread, cheese, jam and eggs in his cupboard. He hasn't given us anything, but we've shared everything with him.

Sunday, 13 June 1943

Father wrote something for my birthday – it's very funny! It's about me, and my hard life in the Annexe, under the authority of parents who are always telling me what to do! I had some lovely presents too, specially a big book of Greek and Roman stories, and sweets from everyone – people gave me some from the last of their stores.

Tuesday, 15 June 1943

Next month we have to give back our radio to the authorities. It's an official rule, and all over the country people are trying to find an old radio to give in so that they can keep their real radios in secret. It's a shame that we have to give in our beautiful big radio, but Mr Kleiman will give us a 'baby' radio which he has hidden at home. We'll put it upstairs. It's not allowed, of course, but we're not allowed to be here either! Our radio with its wonderful voice really helps us. We tell ourselves, 'Let's try to be brave and **cheerful**. Things must get better!'

Friday, 16 July 1943

There was a break-in last night, a real one! This morning, Peter went down to the warehouse and saw that the doors were open on to the street. We stayed quiet, and didn't use any water or do anything to make a noise. We waited until eleven-thirty, when Mr Kleiman came upstairs. He told us that burglars had broken in and stolen some money. Luckily, they didn't find much so they soon went next door to look there.

The Allies are arriving in Sicily!

Monday, 19 July 1943

A lot of bombs fell on North Amsterdam on Sunday. Whole streets went in the raid, and they can't even dig out all the bodies yet. They've already counted two hundred people dead, and many more are hurt. The hospitals are full.

Monday, 26 July 1943

There was a terrible bombing raid yesterday. It started at about two-thirty in the afternoon. Margot and I were upstairs, but the guns were so loud that we went down again. The house shook, and the bombs kept on falling. I was holding my 'escape bag'. But walking on the streets is as dangerous as an air raid on the Annexe. I know that I can't really leave. After half an hour the planes flew away, and the smell of fire was everywhere. There was thick smoke over the city, like fog.

Later, after dinner, there was another raid. The bombs came down again like rain, and we heard from British reports that Schiphol Airport was bombed. We could hear the noise of the planes all the time, and we were very frightened. My legs were still shaking when I lay in bed that night.

At midnight, more planes! I ran to father's bed and did not fall asleep in my own bed until half-past two.

But at seven o'clock in the morning we heard some wonderful news about Italy! Mussolini has gone, and the King of Italy is leading the government there now.

Tuesday, 3 August 1943

We just had a third air raid. I am trying to be brave. Mrs van Daan used to say, 'Let them fall!' Now she is the most cowardly of us all. She was shaking like a leaf this morning, and even burst into tears.

Our bodies are very stiff now. We stopped our exercise programme a long time ago.

Friday, 10 September 1943

Every time I write to you, something special has happened. Usually, it's unpleasant. But this time, it's wonderful! The news was broadcast that Italy is out of the war! The British are now in Naples. The Germans are in North Italy.

But there is some very bad news too. Mr Kleiman is going to have a very difficult operation on his stomach, and he'll have to stay in hospital for at least four weeks. He's so brave! He's always cheerful and smiling, although he's usually in pain.

Friday, 29 October 1943

Mr Kleiman is out of hospital now, but his stomach is still bad. He had to go home again today because he wasn't well.

Mr van Daan has sold his wife's best winter coat. She wanted to keep the money to buy new clothes after the war. Mr van Daan could not make her understand that the money has to be used for the Annexe. They shouted and screamed at each other – it was terrible.

I'm OK, but I'm not hungry at the moment. People say, 'You look awful, Anne!' Sundays are specially bad. It is deathly quiet then. I feel as though I am being pulled down into hell. I am a bird without wings who can't escape. A voice inside me cries, 'Let me out! I want to go into the fresh air. I want to hear people laughing!' I don't answer the voice, but just lie down on the sofa. Sleep makes time go more quickly.

Wednesday, 3 November 1943

We've decided to start our fire at seven-thirty on Sunday mornings, instead of five-thirty. I think it's dangerous. The neighbours may see the smoke, and what will they think? The curtains are a problem too. They cover the windows completely, but sometimes someone here will decide to take a little look outside. Everyone complains, but the answer is, 'Oh, nobody will notice.' That's how things start to get dangerous.

We are not quarrelling so much. Only Dussel and the van Daans are enemies at the moment. Dussel talks about Mrs van Daan as 'that stupid cow', and she calls him 'an old woman'!

Monday evening, 8 November 1943

We all have different moods here, up and down. And my mood is sad now. Miep says that we are peaceful here. But it's like a small circle of blue sky. We eight people in the Annex are in that circle, but all around us are dark clouds and danger. The circle is getting smaller, and the darkness closer. If we could fly up into that blue sky, into heaven . . . Oh circle, open wide and let us out!

Sunday, 2 January 1944

This morning I read through some of the old pages in my diary. I was very ashamed when I saw what I had written about Mother. Why did I feel so angry then? Why did I hate her so much? It was true that she didn't understand me. But I didn't understand her either. I'm older and wiser now, and Mother is not so nervous. We try not to quarrel with each other. But I can't love her like a child any more.

Thursday, 6 January 1944

I realized what's wrong with Mother. She says that she sees us more as her friends, not her daughters. That's nice, but a friend is not the same as a mother.

I think the changes in my body are wonderful. Whenever I have my **period** (three times now), it's like a sweet secret inside me. There is pain, and mess, but I look forward to it again.

I need a friend, and I'm going to try Peter. I want badly to talk to someone. I had a chance to talk to him yesterday; I looked into his dark blue eyes and it gave me a wonderful feeling.

That night in bed I cried and cried. Must I *ask* Peter to be my friend? I don't love him, but I do need him. If the van Daans had a daughter, it would be just the same with her. So I've decided to visit Peter more often, and to make him talk to me.

Wednesday, 12 January 1944

I'm crazy about dance at the moment! I practise my steps every evening, and I've made myself a modern dance dress from Mother's clothes. I tried to turn my tennis shoes into dance shoes, but it didn't work. All the exercise is helping – I'm not nearly so stiff now!

Saturday, 15 January 1944

I won't tell you all the details of our quarrels in the Annex. But we are not sharing our food in the same way now – we've got our own stores of meat and oil, and we even cook our own potatoes. Mother made a wish, 'I don't want to see Mr van Daan's face for two whole weeks.' Unfortunately, her wish is not likely to come



Edith Frank, May 1935.

true. Does everyone who shares a house become like this? Or are we just unlucky?

Thursday, 3 February 1944

Everybody is thinking about the Allied invasion! What will happen to us if the British invade Holland. The Germans say that they will let the water from the sea into the country.*

Each person has his or her own idea.

'We'll have to walk through the water.'

'Don't be silly! We'll have to try and swim. We'll swim underwater, and then nobody will see that we are Jews!'

'Oh, rubbish! Can ladies swim when rats are biting their legs?'

Next question: when the invasion comes, will the authorities make everybody leave Amsterdam?

'We'll leave the city with all the other people.'

'No, we mustn't go outside! The Germans will send everyone to die in Germany.'

'All right, we'll stay here. Let's ask Miep for some extra blankets. And some more food. We've got about sixty-five pounds of beans at the moment, and fifty tins of vegetables.'

'What's in the stores, Mother? Tell us.'

'Ten tins of fish, forty tins of milk, three bottles of oil, four jars of butter, four jars of fruit, twenty jars of tomatoes and nine pounds of rice. That's it.'

Our stores are still quite good. But we do have to feed the people in the office too.

'Let's make little bags for our money that we can hide in our clothes if we have to leave here.'

* Holland is very flat, and the water is carefully controlled. Once, most of the land was naturally under water.

And so it goes on all day. That's all I hear – invasion, invasion, only invasion. I'm very calm about it. I don't care now whether I live or die. I'll just keep on with my work and hope that everything will be all right in the end.

Wednesday, 16 February 1944

I had to go up into the attic, through Peter's room, to get some potatoes today. When I was going up the stairs, he stood up and took my arm.

'I'll go,' he said. But I told him that it wasn't necessary.

On my way down, I asked him, 'What are you studying?'

'French,' he replied. I asked if I could look at his lessons. Then I sat down on the sofa, and began to explain some French to him. We went on talking pleasantly about other things too, and finally he spoke about the picture of film actors on his wall. It's the one that I gave him, and he likes it very much.

'Shall I give you a few more?' I asked him.

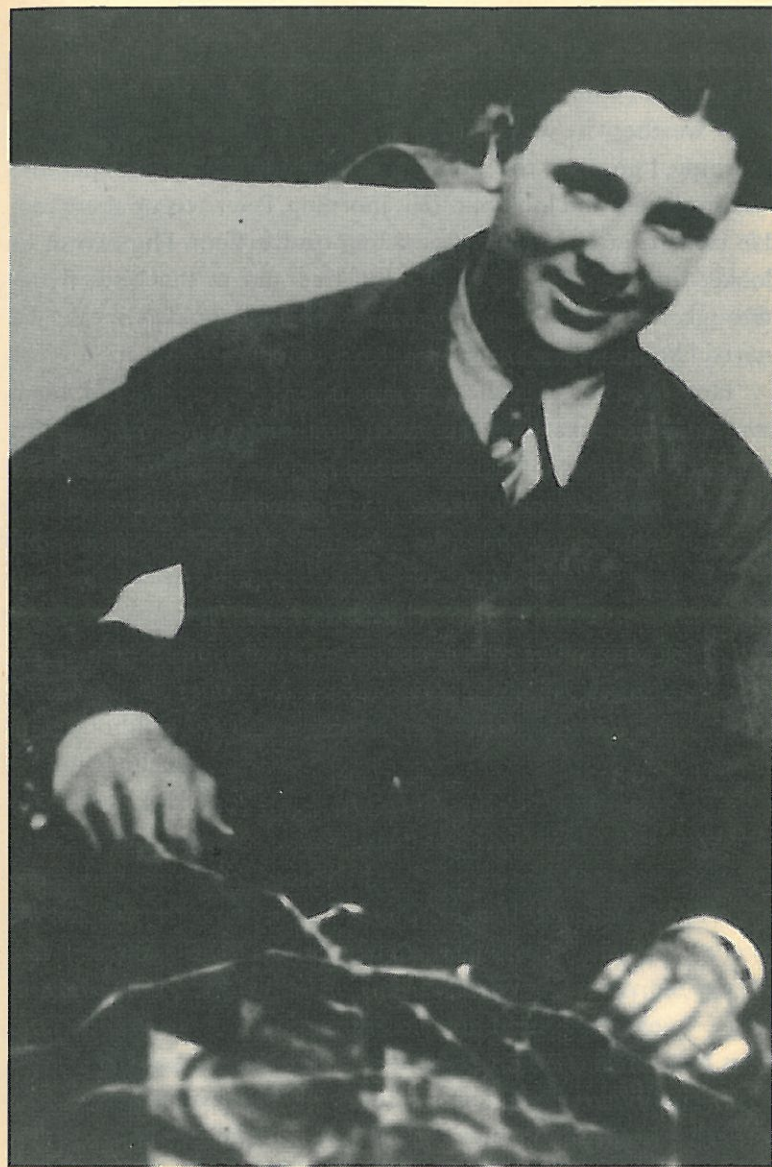
'No,' he replied. 'I prefer this one. I look at it every day, and all the people in it have become my friends.'

Peter needs love, too. That's why he holds Mouschi the cat so tightly.

Friday, 18 February 1944

Whenever I go upstairs, it's always so that I can see *him*. I have something to look forward to now, and life here is better.

Mother doesn't like me going up there. She says that I should leave Peter alone. She always looks at me oddly when I go to Peter's room. When I come down again, she asks me where I've been.



Peter van Daan.

Wednesday, 23 February 1944

The weather is wonderful, and I feel better. Almost every morning, I go up to the attic for some fresh air – we can open the window there and look out. This morning, Peter was up there too. He came over to where I was sitting on the floor. The two of us looked out at the blue sky, at the tree and at the birds flying through the air. It was so beautiful that we couldn't speak. We stayed like this for a long time.

'How can I be sad when there is the sun and the sky?' I asked myself. God wants us to be happy and to see the beauty of this world. It will help us in all our troubles.

Sunday, 27 February 1944

I think about Peter from morning to night. I dream about him, and see his face when I wake up.

I feel that Peter and I are not really very different, although we seem to be on the outside. We both have strong feelings inside, which are difficult to control. Neither of us feels that we have a mother. His mother isn't serious; mine is interested in my life but she doesn't understand me at all.

Saturday, 4 March 1944

This was the first Saturday for months that wasn't boring. It was because of Peter. I joined the French lesson that Father was giving him. I was in heaven, sitting on Father's chair, close to Peter.

Afterwards, we talked together until lunch-time. Whenever I

leave the room after a meal, Peter says – if no one else can hear him – 'Goodbye, Anne – I'll see you later.'

Oh, I'm so happy! Perhaps he does love me! And it's so good to talk to him.

Friday, 10 March 1944

We have more troubles now. Miep is ill, and Mr Kleiman is still away from work with his bad stomach. Bep is trying to do everything on her own.

Last night, somebody knocked on the wall next door while we were having dinner. We were very nervous all evening.

The police have taken Mr M. away. He's the man who sells us potatoes, butter and jam on the black market. It's terrible for him and also for us. He has five young children and another baby coming.

Tuesday, 14 March 1944

I'm sitting at the van Daan's table with a handkerchief over my mouth. Why? Let me start at the beginning. They've arrested the people who bring our ration tickets, so we don't have any fats or oils. Miep and Mr Kleiman are ill again, and Bep can't go shopping for us. The food is awful. Lunch today is potatoes and some very old vegetables out of bottles. They smell terrible, which is why I have the handkerchief! We've got to eat them too – I feel sick when I think about it! Half the potatoes have gone bad, and we have to throw them away.

If life here was pleasant, the food would not matter so much. But it's the fourth year of the war, and we are all in bad moods.

Saturday, 18 March 1944

I've written so much about myself and my feelings, so why shouldn't I write about sex, too? Parents are very strange about sex. They should tell their sons and daughters everything at the age of twelve. But instead of that, they send them out of the room when anyone talks about sex, and the children have to try and find out everything by themselves. Then, later, the parents think that the children already know it all, but usually they don't!

Soon after I was eleven, they told me about periods. But I didn't know where the blood came from, or what it was for. When I was twelve and a half, one of my friends told me some more. She told me what a man and a woman do together. Well, I had already guessed! I was quite proud of myself! She also told me that babies don't come out of their mothers' stomachs. Where everything goes in is where the baby comes out!

Children hear about sex in bits and pieces, and that isn't right.

Although it's Saturday, I'm not bored! I've been up in the attic with Peter. I sat there dreaming with my eyes closed, and it was wonderful.

Sunday, 19 March 1944

Yesterday was a very important day for me. At five o'clock I put on the potatoes to cook, and Mother gave me some sausage to give to Peter. But he wouldn't take the sausage, and I thought it was because of the awful quarrel that we had recently. Suddenly, my eyes filled with tears. I took the plate back to Mother and went into the toilet to cry.

I decided to talk to Peter. After the washing up, I went to his room. We stood by the open window as it grew dark – it's much



Miep Gies and Bep Voskuijl. Amsterdam, 1945.

easier to talk like that. He didn't refuse the sausage because of our argument, but because he didn't want to look too greedy! Then we talked about so much together. It felt good; it was the most wonderful evening I've ever had in the Annexe.

We talked about our parents, and our problems with them. I told him how I cry in bed. He said that he goes up to the attic when he is angry. We talked all about our feelings. And it was just as good as I imagined!

We talked about the year 1942, and how different we are now. He thought that I was a noisy, annoying girl at first! I thought that he was uninteresting! I told him that we are like two sides of the same coin. I am noisy and he is quiet. But also that I too like peace and quiet. I said that I understand why he goes away to be alone sometimes. And that I'd like to help him when he argues with his parents.

'But you always help me!' he said.

'How?' I asked, very surprised.

'Because you're always cheerful.'

That was the nicest thing he said all evening. He must love me now as a friend, and I'm so grateful and happy for that.

Wednesday, 22 March 1944

Things are getting more and more wonderful here. I think that true love may be happening in the Annexe! Everyone has made jokes about us, saying that we might get married if we are all in the Annexe long enough. Perhaps those jokes aren't so silly at all.

I'm sure now that Peter loves me too, but I don't know in what way. Does he just want a good friend, or a girlfriend, or a sister?

Oh, when I think about Saturday night – about our words, our voices – I feel very satisfied with myself. For the first time, I don't want to change anything that I said.

Thursday, 23 March 1944

Our black market ration book men are out of prison now, so things are better here.

Yesterday a plane crashed quite near us, on top of a school. Luckily, there were no children inside. There was a small fire, and two people were killed. The men inside the plane were able to get out in time, but the Germans shot them immediately. Local people were so angry – it was a cowardly, horrible thing to do! We – the ladies of the Annexe – were very frightened. I hate the sound of guns.

Tuesday, 28 March 1944

Mother is trying to stop me going up to Peter's room. She says that Mrs van Daan is jealous. Perhaps she's jealous too. Father is happy about it; he's glad that we're friends. Mother thinks that Peter has fallen in love with me. I wish that it was true.

I do want to stay friends with Peter. We have our difficulties, but we have to fight against them, and in the end they will make everything more beautiful. When he rests his head on his arms and closes his eyes, he's still a child. When he plays with Mouschi, his cat, he's loving. When he carries the heavy potatoes for us, he's strong. When he watches the air raids, or walks through the dark house to look for burglars, he's brave. And when he doesn't know quite how to behave, he's sweet!

Wednesday, 29 March 1944

Mr Bolkestein, from the Government, was speaking on the Dutch

broadcast from London. He said that after the war they wanted everybody's diaries and letters about the war – they would be an interesting part of history. I might be able to write a book called *The Secret Annex*. People would think that it was a detective story! But seriously, ten years after the war people would find it very amusing to read about us, the Jews who were hiding. How we lived, what we ate, what we talked about. But although I tell you a lot about our lives, you still know very little about us. For example, how frightened the women are during the air raids. Last Sunday, 350 British planes dropped their bombs on IJmuiden, so that the houses shook like grass in the wind. Or about the awful illnesses that people are catching here.

You know nothing about all this, and it would take me all day to describe it. People have to wait in line for vegetables and all kinds of other things too. Doctors can't visit the sick, since their cars and bikes are stolen at once. There are so many thieves around that you ask what has happened to the Dutch – why are they stealing so much? Little children, eight- and eleven-year-olds, break the windows of people's homes and steal whatever they can. People don't dare to leave the house even for five minutes, because everything may be gone when they return. The public phones are stolen, and all the parts of the electric clocks on the street corners too.

Everyone's hungry. A week's food ration doesn't even last two days. We're waiting for the Allied invasion, but it's so long coming. The men are sent to Germany, the children are ill or hungry, and everyone wears old clothes and broken shoes. It's too expensive to repair shoes, and if you give your shoes to a shoemaker, you may never see them again.



263 Prinsengracht, Amsterdam. Front view.

Friday, 31 March 1944

Just imagine, it's still cold, but most people have had nothing to put on their fires for a month now. It sounds awful, doesn't it? But we are hopeful about the Russians, who are doing well. They've reached Poland now, and the Prut River in Romania. They're close to Odessa too.

The German Army has invaded Hungary. A million Jews still live there; there is no hope for them now.

Nothing special is happening here. Today is Mr van Daan's birthday. He received several presents and a cake. The cake wasn't perfect, because we can't buy the right things to make it with, but it tasted wonderful anyway!

People are not saying so much about Peter and me now. We're very good friends. We spend a lot of time together, and we talk about anything and everything. I couldn't talk to other boys like this. We even talked about periods. He thinks that women are



Mrs van Daan, Mr van Daan and Victor Kugler, left. Amsterdam, 1941.

strong enough to lose the blood, and that I am too. I wonder why he thinks that?

My life here is better now, much better. God has not left me, and He never will.

Monday, 3 April 1944

I'm going to describe our food rations. Food is a difficult and important problem not only for us in the Annexe, but for everyone in Holland, all of Europe and even further away.

We've lived here for twenty-one months, and often at any one time there was only one kind of food to eat. For example, one kind of vegetable or salad. We would eat it with potatoes, in every possible way that we could think of.

But now there are no vegetables at all. We have potatoes, and brown beans. We make soup – we still have some packets and stores to make dishes which are a little bit more interesting. But it's beans with everything, even in the bread.

The most exciting moment is when we eat a thin piece of sausage once a week, and put some jam on our bread – no butter, of course! But we're still alive, and much of the time the food tastes good too.

Wednesday, 5 April 1944

For a long time now, I haven't really been interested in my schoolwork. The end of the war still seemed so far away. And if it isn't over by September, I won't go back to school, since I don't want to be two years behind.

Peter filled my days, nothing but Peter. Nothing but dreams and thoughts, until Saturday night when I felt terrible. I sat on the