Thursday 14th June 1942

Dear Kitty,

Well this has been the most daunting day of my life! Luckily, I'm still here to tell the tale and hopefully shall be from now on.

At about half past eight this morning life was going as normal: well as in we were all creeping around so the workers below couldn't hear us. Then it occurred. The clank of footsteps could be heard coming up the stairs. I knew they'd reached the third step from the top - it creaked like grandmother's knees. Immediately we all stopped, stood still and held our breath. Mother went as white as a sheet and made that face at me- like don't you dare make a sound! As if I would be so silly. This was our hiding place, our only chance of not being captured, our one secret that must never be told.

It was as if time stood still (though after I'm sure it was no more than five minutes) like the air had been sucked out from all around me! Nothing, no movement, no sound. Just waiting to hear if the steps would descend back down the stairs. My heart was beating like a drum; my ears were pounding as they listened for any sound that would indicate we'd been found. I stood like a statue staring at my mother, who was doing the same, making no movement no sound. One minute, two minutes, three minutes, how many had passed? Still we stood, frozen to the spot.

After what seemed an eternity the footsteps turned, making that gritty sliding on floorboards sound. Voices could be heard getting fainter and fainter. Whoever it had been had finished their chore and had moved on. My mind filled with the most dreaded thought. Who could it have been? Gestapo? Workers collecting something? I stared wide-eyed at my mother. The all-clear signal to move was given to me by my mother. I crept into my miniscule, confined bedroom at the back of the secret annexe and cautiously pushed the door to.

Collapsing heavily, the biggest sigh ever left my chest! I was sure that was the closest we'd ever come to being found. I can't even imagine what would happen to us if we did. How long do we have to live like this? There are so many things I miss: my school friends; visits to the park; theatre trips and just being outside!

It fills me with dread, what will tomorrow bring?

Anne

Thursday July 9, 1942

Dearest Kitty,

So there we were, Father, Mother and I, walking in the torrential rain, each of us with a schoolbag and a shopping bag filled to the brim with the most varied assortment of items. The people on their way to work at that early hour gave us sympathetic looks; you could tell by their faces that they were sorry they couldn't offer us some kind of transportation; the conspicuous yellow star spoke for itself. Only when we were walking down the street did Father and Mother reveal, little by little, what the plan was.

For months, we'd been moving as much of our furniture and apparel out of the apartment as we could. It was agreed that we'd go into hiding on July 16. Because of Margot's call-up notice, the plan had to be moved up ten days, which meant we'd have to make do with less orderly rooms. The hiding place was situated in Father's office building. That's a little hard for outsiders to understand, so I'll explain. Father didn't have a lot of people working in his office, just Mr. Kugler, Mr. Kleiman, Miep and a twenty-three-year-old typist named Bep, all of whom were informed of our coming. Bep's father, works in the warehouse, along with two assistants, none of whom were told anything.

Here's a description of the building. The spacious warehouse on the ground floor is used as a workroom and storeroom and is divided into a variety of different sections, such as the stockroom and the milling room, where cinnamon, cloves and a pepper substitute are ground. Next to the warehouse doors is another outside' door, a separate entrance to the office. Just inside the office door is a second door, and beyond that a stairway.

At the top of the stairs, is another door with a frosted window on which the word "Office" is written in black letters.

After passing through an alcove containing a safe, a wardrobe and a gigantic supply cupboard, you come to the miniscule, gloomy, airless back office. Elegant mahogany furniture, a linoleum floor covered with throw rugs, a radio, a fancy lamp, everything first class. Next door is a giant kitchen with a hot-water heater and two gas burners and beside that a bathroom.

Anne

Friday, July 10, 1942

Dearest Kitty,

I've probably bored you with my wordy description of our house, but I still think you should know where I've ended up; how I ended up here is something you'll figure out from my next letters. But first, let me continue my story because as you know, I wasn't finished. After we arrived at 263 Prinsengracht, Miep quickly led us through the elongated hallway and up the wooden staircase to the next floor and into the annex. She shut the door behind us, leaving us alone. Margot had arrived much earlier on her bike and was waiting for us. Our living room and all the other rooms were so full of stuff that I can't find the words to describe it. All the cardboard boxes (that had been sent to the office in the last few months), were stacked on the floors and beds. The minute room was filled from floor to ceiling with linens. If we wanted to sleep in properly made beds that night, we had to get going and straighten up the untidiness. Mother and Margot were unable to move a muscle.

They lay down on their bare mattresses, fatigued, dejected and I don't know what else. But Father and I, the two cleaner-uppers in the family, started right away. All day long, we unpacked boxes, filled cupboards, hammered nails and straightened up the mess, until we fell drained into our clean beds at night. We hadn't eaten a hot meal all day, but we didn't care; Mother and Margot were too weary and keyed up to eat, and Father and I were too busy. Tuesday morning, we started where we left off the night before. Bep and Miep went grocery shopping with our ration coupons, Father worked on our blackout screens, we scrubbed the kitchen floor, and were once again busy from sunup to sundown. Until Wednesday, I didn't have a chance to think about the enormous change in my life. Then for the first time since our arrival in the Secret Annex, I found a moment to tell you all about it and to realise what had happened to me and what was yet to happen.

Yours, Anne