Dolores Sweetheart;

I have been here, and lived through, one week in New Guinea. It wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be although I do find that I miss you even more than I thought I would Darling. It’s quite impossible to tell you just how much but believe me when I say that you are more dearly loved than anyone ever was or will be. I can’t wait to get back so we can start in on our exciting adventure of life together as man and wife. If only my duffle bag had been a little longer so I could have crammed you into it. It would be swell to have you here. That’s putting it extremely mildly. I want you with me so badly that it really does hurt just to think of it Honey.

All morning long I worked quite hard cleaning up the table I put my stuff on. I had to brush it off, scrape off the wax, wash it down, and then put out all my stuff. One of the fellows in the tent left today so I have more room. That’s what started me on my cleaning spree. This afternoon I have to rinse out some clothes I have had soaking and then take a shower. Since this is Sunday we have a day off so I’m really going to take it off and don’t intend to do anything in the way of exerting myself after I rinse off the clothes.

Last night I listened to a hillbilly concert at the Red Cross Building. Three Texas boys participated in it; one with a guitar, the second with a violin, and the last with a mandolin. They were quite corny but also quite amusing. One of the fellows gave out with a monologue which he called the Talking Blues. It was quite funny. There was also the usual cold drink.

This climate really makes anyone lazy. I never want to move just to lie here and relax. Redmon is now sleeping in the tent with a nice cool breeze rumpling his hair. He had started to comb his hair and just dropped off to sleep. That’s the way this heat hits you. It’s really terrific. I’m lying on my back as I write this so please excuse the writing if it suddenly trails off into a senseless scrawl. You’ll know that Morpheus has just encircled me in her all encompassing and soothing arms.

Jack Viren told me a story which, with the censors kind indulgence I will pass on to you. It seems that in Jack’s neighborhood there was a butcher with a sense of humor (This is true by the way.) One day this butcher went to the slaughter house and they had a newly killed cow in there. The cow had rather long teats on her udder so our friend the butcher decided he’d have some fun. He cut off part of the udder with one teat

attached and took it back to the butcher shop. Then he saw his wife coming toward his shop he hastily thrust the udder inside the front of his trousers and let the teat hang out the fly. When his wife came in he greeted her and looking downward at his trousers exclaimed “Oh, Hell! Is that damned thing hanging out again,” and walked over to a chopping block, laid the teat on the block and chopped it off with a meat cleaver. His wife fainted. I hope your mother won’t mind my telling you this of course because you’re still quite a little girl – hmmm! Quite a little girl indeed. It did strike me as being quite funny though and Jack swears it is true.
What kind of suit was it that you bought Darling? I know it was brown tweed but I want to know what it looks like. A photograph of you in it would be swell. In fact any new photograph of you would be wonderful. I can’t get too many of them.

I will have to make a few shelves from a box so I can put my drawing supplies in it. I’m afraid that if I leave them out some of my neighbors will be borrowing them permanently. That would never do because that stuff is impossible to get over here.

At the PX today they had a copy of Eugene O’Neill’s plays which I bought. It’s the small edition containing “The Emperor Jones”, “Anna Christee”, and the hairy ape. I like his plays very much. They are among the very few plays I enjoy reading.

A little later –

I had a very pleasant afternoon here. I read two of O’Neill’s plays laid on my cot dreaming of us and the future – as profitable a way of whiling away an afternoon as I know of -, rinsed out my clothes and hung them out to dry, showered and put on some nice new clothes – the new sun tan suit I put on fits much better than the one I wore to your house the last time. Remember that one? All in all, I consider the afternoon well spent.

Some natives came around and I managed to get a few pen and ink sketches on the fly. They do quite a bit of moving around and it’s tough to sketch them. They were selling grass skirts and sucked coconuts, the grass shirts sold for a pound apiece (3.20) and the coconuts for a florin (32) or a package of cigarettes [sic]. The fellows just spoil everything for themselves by paying these prices. The Australians are much smarter in their treatment of the natives and keep the price scales down but our G.Is with a pocketful of money will pay anything for anything. As I told you, I sold one of my pictures for a pound. One of the fellows heard that and thought that I was being very unfair for charging so much. This get my goat because a finished sketch like that takes about three hours to do. The same fellows who complain about my charging that much will turn around and pay two pound for a coin which has been filed smooth and hashed an initial scratched on it and a hole punched in it to make it a locket. If they want the pictures they can pay my price and if they don’t want them I do for my scrapbook. It’s irrelevant to me whether they buy them or not.

A lot of the boys go to a place a little way from here to dive for sea shells. They get some very nice shells of all shapes and sizes. Some are beautifully colored. A couple of the boys were given some bits of opal by one of the Australian soldiers they met. The pieces weren’t very big but large enough to set in a ring when cut and polished. Jack Viren is going to have a ring made for his prospective offspring and have his stone put in it.

There are a lot of butterflies around here. Some of them have a tremendous wingspread, as much as six inches that I’ve seen, and are beautifully colored. There are also some very large bats. I’ve only seen one
of those and he flew over last night. I guess he had a wingspread of about two feet. Much larger than our little bats. The ones out here eat fruit and are quite harmless. There are all sorts of snakes so I am told. So far I’ve seen as many of them as I have mosquitos which is none.

Well Sweetheart, I will leave you again very wistfully wishing that I could be with you as I was just a short while ago. Now it seems ages ago and yet I can recall every minute of the time I have spent with you from the first time I saw you in the bowling alley to the last time I said goodbye to you as I ran to catch that bus. That was the hardest goodbye I ever said Sweetheart and I was as strongly tempted to go AWOL permanently at that moment as I ever could be. I just love you too much to be separated from you this way. And although I am separated from you I’m with you in my thoughts

Forever

Freddie