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Sunday
September 10, 1944

Dear Sweetheart;

I am here in Camp Beale. It's a very desolate place out in the middle of nowhere and although at it's nearest approaches to town it is five miles from Marysville, it is a twenty mile trip from where my barracks is to the center of town. That's one heck of a way.

I met Bob Kennedy right off the bat. He got here last Wednesday and this Wednesday he leaves for a staging area and overseas. That's really fast work. I'll probably be here longer though. Bob says that they really are very nice here. There's no revile or retreat. At 6:30 they put the lights on in the barracks and if you want to eat they have breakfast at 7:00 a.m. During the day, he says that they are left alone unless there is something they really have to do. They give other physical exams and give us all new clothing also. Tomorrow we will probably all be interviewed and will have the opportunity of having all our personal affairs put in order. The spec numbers which we received at Camp Grant will remain with me. I still don't know what mine is but I hope it's something good.

God but it's hot here. We have mountains on three sides of us and on the fourth side is desert. The mountains cut off all cool

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Breezes from the ocean very efficiently. There isn't a tree or shrub for miles around and lawns are unheard of. All there is is sand and stones. The food here is quite nice, we have nice barracks – on the interior that is, the outside is olive drab. There are many P.X.s and there's also a Service Club – a very luxurious place. The movie-theater is a block away and the bus stop four blocks away where I can get busses for Marysville. We may go into Marysville today to see what it's like. I slept all nite [sic] without blankets and felt very comfortable, it doesn't cool off very much at nite. [sic] All I felt like doing after I got in here was drink. Last nite [sic] I drank a beer, 2 Pepsi Colas, and a quart of milk in quick succession, washed it all down with about a quart of water, went to bed and slept like a baby. I should lose a lot of weight here if I do any exercising at all. They give three day passes to some of the men to help with the peach harvest and they also let men off to help fight some of the forest fires around here. I'm going to try to get in on that fruit picking detail if I can. The pay is either 75¢ or 85¢ an hour for this work. That would be a swell deal. Things like that never happen to me though.

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Everyone is speaking about going out to get something to drink and it's barely 9:00 in the morning. It's quite warm already tho [sic] and I am starting to perspire. One of the sergeants who was overseas all through the Orient and South Pacific and he said that if we could stand this we could stand any tropics. I do have the damndest thirst tho. [sic]

Gosh, this is the farthest I've been away from you since I've known you Sweetheart and I don't like it at all. It's altogether too far from you for my liking. I love you and want to be with you all the time so this separation is not at all welcome. I realize more every day just how very very much I love you and always shall. I love you.

Bob said that last Thursday the temperature was over 115°. I touched some metal on one of the cans in the train and just about burned my hand badly. It was molten hot. That's the way everything is around here.

The A.S.F.P.R.D. stands for Army Service Forces Personnel Replacement Depot which is what this place is. From here we go to a staging area and from there to a Port of Embarkation. I am going to remain in the medics so you can keep an eye peeled for any fellow wearing a red

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cross on his arm in the newsreel and if you find me inside it you can show Vera.

I'll get some air mail stamps tomorrow and send my letters air mail from here so you'll be sure of getting it as fast as possible. I spent one free mail yesterday because I wanted to get it in the mail fast. Let me know when you get it. This may get to you before that one does. I'll try to send a telegram today to let you know what my address is so I'll be able to get letters soon. Those pants your mother washed were pressed very nicely in my duffle bag. I just folded them nicely and put them in, then when I took them out again there was a beautiful crease in them. Almost as good as I could've done with a flatiron. It was really amazing. I'm glad they have laundry service here. That'll save me much work. Tree's hardly anyone here now so they should get it back fast.

One of the P.S.s here sells beer in growlers – if you don't know what that is your father probably would remember. They have large number ten cans and sell these filled with beer. It seems funny to see fellows off in a corner somewhere drinking out of one of these huge cans. Quite colorful, like an old time saloon.

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Since I started this letter the whole day has passed. Bob, gold and I went swimming this morning. There's a swimming hole here in the post, which is limited to servicemen, a bus picks us up at regular intervals, takes us out there and then comes back regularly to take anyone wanting to go back. Since the place is reserved for servicemen there is no need for bathing suits so we swam in the raw. It's the first time I've swam outdoors in the raw in years. It was fun. There were a lot of rafts there and we had fun fooling around on these. When we got back to the barracks we dressed and went to Marysville. It isn't a big place but is fairly nice. We had a couple of beers then found a place to eat where we had a wonderful steak dinner. We walked about a mile out and a mile back to where we ate but it was well worth it.

As I said, the town is quite nice. The architecture is what you'd expect of California with Spanish architecture quite prevalent and date palms before quite a few houses. The business section is quite small and quite inadequate to take care of all these soldiers as far as I can see. Most of the fellows here are transient though and aren't here more

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than a couple of weeks. I forgot to send you a telegram though Sweet and when I did remember it was a back in camp and the camp telegraph office was closed. I'll see what I can do tomorrow. I wish I'd thought of it in Marysville though, but I guess that was the spell of seeing everything there was to see was too much and I just didn't remember.

I wish I were leaving with Bob because now that I know I'm out here and can't see you any more I'd just as soon go overseas as fast as possible and cut out this waiting. It would be nice to leave with him but there's no chance of that, he's practically on the boat. I guess I'll spend most of my time from now until I leave here in the Service Club. They have quite a nice Service Club with a wonderful library where I'll be able to spend much of my time.

Before I go to bed tonite [sic] I'm going to shave and shower. It has cooled off quite a bit tonite [sic] and I should sleep quite well. I hope that the spell of terrific hi's is over because I sure as heck don't care for it at all. It makes me too thirsty and the warm water we have to drink doesn't help.

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Bob Kennedy got himself a pipe to smoke in case he ever ran up against a Tobacco shortage anywhere and he tried to talk me into getting one. I think I'll wait a while though. Maybe I'll get one after my next pay. Who knows? What do you think of the idea. Then you could take Vera to see the newsreel of me standing on the beach at Manila smoking my pipe quite placidly. Wouldn't that be sweet? Especially with my hair cut off and a beautiful beard growing [image] just like that. It'll be a very cute little beard though you can depend on that.

I think I'm going to have an argument with Touma, Thomas, and Ludwig before long. They don't like gold very well and don't think I should chum around with he and Bob Kennedy. If one of them

mentions it to me he's going to be told off because I deserve the privilege of selecting my own friends without anyone's aid and want to let them know so. Anyone who tries to tell me what to do in this respect really burns me up.

Guess I'll have to leave you for tonight, Sweetheart. I send you all my love and as you lie there sleeping I give you a great big kiss and whisper in your ear

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that you are the person I do, and shall always, love more than anyone or anything else and reminding you that every mile that were apart merely makes me realize more than ever my love for you and just how very much you mean to me.

All my love and kisses and a great big Hug
Freddie