

Monday 30 July 1945

[80]

Hq 14th AA Command

APO 75, Frisco

Good Morning My Beautiful Darling;

It is now my turn to sing the old lament, "I'm sorry Darling but I didn't write yesterday." I went into town to see Paul Katona. While I was whiling away the hours waiting till Paul returned, he went to Coregidor instead of having to work as I previously told you, I took a trip through the Walled City. It was really a mass of ruins. I went into the oldest church in the Philippines, St. Augustin, which was started in 1599. It is the scene of the signing of peace in the Spanish American War. The church was one of the least damaged buildings in all of Intramuros. It did suffer some damage and looks as though it was probably looted but on the while it is quite intact. Services are held there. It was a very interesting walk. There were a lot of Filipino girls in their hanging around the colored troops there. I guess the colored boys have access to a lot of food and supplies so they are kings of the downtown section of Manila. Quite a few of them are a little too overbearing. I believe in treating them just as I would a white fellow but a lot of these fellows go out of their way to try to be nasty. There was a fine example of this last night when I was thumbing. A group of about five of them came along and deliberately stood right ahead of me and started thumbing, a couple of them glanced over at me with very smirking expressions as if they wanted to know what I was going to do about it. I was not so foolhardy as to try to do anything about it but it ranked to think that they would do that. There are some white fellows who will do the same thing but they are not encountered with the regularity that these colored boys are. The colored boys seem to delight in the idea that they can push a white fellow around. It's the old story of persecuted people persecuting others if they have the opportunity. I'm getting I can't muster up a lot of sympathy for anyone who is persecuted because I know that in the Great Majority of cases, as in European countries now, the persecuted becomes the the [sic] persecuted always seem to become persecution with monotonous regularity. I just want everyone to let me alone and I'll do likewise for them.

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There wasn't an awful lot to do last night. Paul and I stopped in somewhere and had some papaya. It is very good and tasted somewhat like Canteloupe. [sic] It is shaped like a very large and rough cucumber, about the size of a very small watermelon. It is quite sweet and very good. Then we tried to find a show to go to – in vain. We did a little walking, stopped in and had a hamburger and then I came back to camp.

I priced some of the cut work you asked about. All prices are very high. There was a very nice tablecloth made of white linen, it was large sized, and this cost 105 pesos or \$52.50. There were some very small ones for \$17.50 "Special price for you, Joe, if you not tell no one. Only 30 pesos." Even at \$15.00 those small ones were no bargain. I saw some very beautiful luncheon sets consisting of a runner, six doilies, and six napkins. There are Filipino handiwork but again they were too high. The one I liked cost \$30.00. If I had something to barter with I could probably make a trade. That would be the only way to get anything here because money is so valueless. Maybe prices will go down but, at the present time, prospects of this are very slim.

On the way into town Neumann, Zeizer and I went through Chinatown. There seems to be an odor peculiar to Chinatowns everywhere and this place is no exception. It is the kind of place I would rather not walk through at night. I passed several places with fellows outside trying to lure me and other GIs "upstairs Joe, pretty girls here." I managed to tear myself away without finding out whether the girls were pretty. I wonder if they were.

Later in the day –

A very amusing guard mount was just stood by yours truly – yes, I'm on guard again. Out O.D. (Officer of the Day to Laymen) was a very Chickenshit individual who took his responsibilities very seriously. He inspected each rifle and man very carefully and at the third man he took the rifle apart and then – and then – and then he couldn't put it together again. He sweated over it for at least five

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minutes before he got it reassembled. This did not faze him at all because he went right on with his close inspection. It took about 25 minutes for him to finish his inspection, a job which usually takes five minutes. At the end of this farce he gave us a lecture on general orders and told us that he wanted us to study them while waiting for our relief to come up. Ah me. I'll have to sleep in the guard tent tonight. I think I'll go to bed about 9:00 o'clock and then I'll have five hours sleep before I go on and will be able to get a couple more in the morning after I come off guard. It won't be too bad.

This evening's mail brought three more letters from you, the last one from the cottage. I'm glad that you got there all right and that you are enjoying yourself. I wish I were there with you on one of the sand dunes. By the way, Beautiful, how about a little more detail concerning your friends on the sand dune. You didn't give any details just generalizations I can't say that the possibilities to be gathered from what you saw are all that you say. Explain specifically just what it was that you saw. I'm sure it will be a very worthwhile experiment though. I'll be so damned glad to be back with you my Darling, I miss you more than you can ever know and I'm anxious for the opportunity of trying to show you how much. I am sure that I can make you every bit as happy as I know you will make me. If so, we shall be the two happiest people. This stupid war just had to end soon so I can get back home. I'm very optimistic about the chance of the war ending in the near future. It seems that, in the face of our over whelming strength the Japanese must surrender unless they are the very most stupid of humans. I think they are smarter than we give them credit for being.

I'll let you know as soon as I receive the roll of film you sent. Harry took a couple of pictures of me Sunday but I'm afraid they won't come out because Harry found a leak in the bellows of his camera. I know that one of the pictures won't come out because we double exposed the film. The other may come out because the leak isn't bad. We're going to fix the camera with some colored scotch tape which should exclude the light. Then we'll be able to take some good photos. It is a good camera. I'll also have a portrait taken and maybe a sketch made. The sketches cost 6 pesos.

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Paul Katona told me that I had put on quite a bit of weight but that I looked much better this way. He thought that I had looked skinny at Oro Bay – I weighed a mere 170 pounds there, more than I ever weighed while I was in Lansing. I feel quite spry though and think that I can carry this much weight

quite safely and won't get too outsized. Of course it may be a slight hardship on you if I put on more weight, you don't think you'll mind the extra burden do you Darling?

A couple of amusing incidents lightened my journey into town yesterday. The first was a little scene along the way. There was a very ramshackle nipa hut beside the road and large sign on the front of it proclaimed it to be the Home of the Juminex Bros. Architects Extraordinary. Just as the truck neared the center of town we passed a small riot which was being broken up by the MPs. One of the fellows was reminded of a big riot he had seen in town – the Americans were fighting the MPs. He was dead serious too.

It is very considerate of whoever cancels the envelopes I sent to be so careful about not touching the drawing at all. He must hand cancel them all because, if they were machine cancelled, they couldn't very well avoid cancelling the tree tops. As long as the censors stamp is on it, it is all right though. Who is your military informant anyway? Civilians back home seem to know more about the war than we do over here. I can't understand it.

Do you mean to say that the Subros are not parents. That seems impossible because the last time I saw her, a year ago, she looked as if she was about seven months along. It must merely be a case of avoirdupois gone to the front but I could have sworn she was expectant. I though she told the Ellises that she was. If she is pregnant the poor child will emerge half grown. It would be quite rough on her.

You needn't fear that I am straying onto the primrose path. I have very carefully avoided it and am quite proud of the fact in view of all the pitfalls which are to be found around here. You needn't worry about my becoming

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enamored of any of these women because I have too much to look forward to back home to get involved over here. You don't really think that anyone else could displace you in my affections do you? It flatters my ego to think that you are jealous though. You just be sure that you steer clear of these returning veterans and wait for your own to return. I'll be very well able to handle any of your desires I assure you.

It would be very nice if Pauline did decide to spend some time in Lansing. She would have a very nice time I am sure. I'll write her a letter advising her to avail Hersey of your invitation. She could see the campus there and see if she thought she'd care to go to school there. I'm glad that you two get along so well. You'd get along with anyone though Honey. I know you get along famously with me. It's fun to think of all the fun we had together and to think of the wonderful times we had together. Our furlough to Lynn when we had so much fun, your trip to Rockford. Those last few weeks ends that I spent with you were the very most wonderful of any we have spent together. I'll remember them until I am able to get home to you again. Those last week ends have remained with me just as vividly as they were then I was with you. I can remember just how you looked and the enjoyable time we had. I was happier then than I have or had ever been. That was only a slight prelude of what the future will be.

Harry and Bob just came back from their softball game against the officers. The officers had quite a build up because they won their game yesterday by a score of 7 to 0. They suffered a setback at the hands of the enlisted men though. The final score was 6 to 1. I think I'll spare Major Capron, the

officer who is censoring this letter, the pain of reading a resume of the game – he was on the officers' team. I guess the enlisted men were pretty rough on them though.

I've been considering what you told me about your "sand dune friends." If the situation was what I have gathered it to be from your brief description, I would say that it would have to be a reciprocal affair or it would be very unfair. Was Neva with you at the time? I don't

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imagine she would have approved. Knowing what she thinks of me, I don't think she would even approve of our conduct during those last week ends with you. What do you think? I'm very glad that your thinking is not confined within such narrow borders, but then one of the reasons why I love you so much is because your thinking processes are not patterned after hers. You are you and that is the best reason I can think of for loving you.

I'll have to leave now so I can get to bed. Goodnight Honey, I wish you were with me but since you aren't, I'll send you all my love and kisses and remind you that you are foremost in my thoughts

Always,

Freddie