

Monday. 12 February 1945

Hq 14<sup>th</sup> AA Command

APO #322, S. Francisco

[60]

Good Evening Darling;

I'm very lonesome here in New Guinea. I think that what I need is some of your charming company.

Tuesday Morning

Good Morning Darling;

I'm still very lonesome here in New Guinea. I think that what I need is very much of your charming company. A lifetime of it preferably.

The first part of the letter was short wasn't it? Kowalchuk and I got into a heated discussion on politics and before we realized how late it was, the lights were doused and we had to go to bed. A deplorable state of affairs isn't it Honey? I'm sorry and will surely try to do better from now on.

Yesterday I transacted a little business. I sold the remainder of my case of beer-20 bottles- for 3 ½ pounds or \$11.30. A very neat profit. If I can augment my monthly wages with this much of the wages of sin I'll be doing well. I'd rather collect that much money any day than drink that warm beer. The price they paid is about 55¢ a bottle for very poor beer. That's more than I'd pay unless I was dying of thirst.

Tuesday Afternoon

Well, Sweetheart, just have courage and I'll finish this letter yet. This is my afternoon off, as they told me after letting me work for ¾ of an hour. I came down here to the Red Cross and did a little sketching. One was a very quick sketch of one of the Red Cross girls sketching a fellow, surrounded by a group of g.i.s. The other was a sketch of one of the fellows writing a letter. It came out quite well and was a good likeness of him. Sometimes I'll get a likeness right off the bat and other times I just can't do it to save

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my life. I'm still quite anxiously awaiting assignment to that new job at headquarters, the job as an artist that the Colonel was telling me he was going to put me in. We've still got some straightening out to do on the files before I transfer though.

I was moved out of my tent into one of the large circus tents this morning. They tore down my old tent and I am now in with Hop and all those boys. There should be a vacancy in Kowalchuk's tent soon and I'm going to move into that. It's a nice screened in model with a floor made of wood. Very ultra. It will be much better than the circus tent.

At work this morning the sergeant major nailed me for the job of mopping up the office tonight. This is a job not at all to my liking. It shouldn't take long and won't be hard work, it's just that I don't like

work. After that I was put to work burning some papers which had to be destroyed. In the process of doing this I succeeded in singeing the hair off my right forearm - che puzza – or as the English put it- what a stench.

Last night I went to work and boiled all my clothes. It was quite a job filling the barrel and keeping the clothes stirred up so the [crossed out word] dirt would be worked out of them. I did quite a good job don't you think? This suit of sun tans I have on is one of the items I washed. Don't say it doesn't look as if it had been washed by a professional. I don't intend for you to get any ideas about putting me to work washing clothes when I get back though. The day I step out in civilian clothes marks the finest day of a

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new regime- no more washing of clothes. In fact I still think it would be a good idea to send the clothes to the laundry instead of your trying to wash them yourself. I want you to save yourself for me. I do not want you to be tired out every night, or even any night for that matter. You have a grave responsibility-keeping me happy, something which is easily accomplished by your mere presence.

The job of mopping the floor has been finished, and terribly hot work it was too. There were supposed to be four of us but only two of us showed up at the appointed time. We swept out the whole place and mopped one section then we just left the rest of the mopping to the others, who finally came straggling in, probably expecting to find the whole place cleaned up. I wrote a letter to Mom and Dad when I had finished. I have been ignoring them of late.

They're playing the song "The Surrey With the Fringe On the Top." It reminds me that we never did see the show, "Oklahoma." I sort of wish we had because I think it must have been quite good. At least I like the music from it. All the songs were very good. At least I like the music from it. All the songs were very good. We should have made a date to meet in Chicago and made a week end of it. Something else we'll have to make up for. Now they're playing "Oh What A Beautiful Morning," my favorite of all the songs in the show. A week end together in Chicago would indeed have been wonderful, and I'm quite sure that fate would not have appeared in the nick of time as it did very nastily that once. You and your fate. Just let it appear during our vacation, that's all I say. If it does, you can rest assured that I shall not run in second place this time.

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Some natives are building a new building which I suspect will prove to be a chapel. It's interesting to watch them work. They set up the whole framework of the thing fastening it all together with bark strips. The floor is made up of boards and is the only part on which nails are used. While the majority of the natives are working on the framework others are busy making thatching of kunai grass. They use the main stem of a palm frond as the base for each piece of thatching and fasten grass on that in this manner [illustration] the completed job looks like a large shingle [illustration of shingle]. All of them are then laid on just like shingles, overlapping one another, to form a very watertight roof for the building. Something else all these natives seem to carry is a bag made of woven grass. It's about the same size and shape as the large women's hand bags which are being sold in the states [drawing of a hand bag]. They have a whole through both sides through which they thrust their arm [crossed out word] so that they are wearing the bag on their upper arm: [drawing of woman holding bag]. It looks

quite queer to see them all carrying these. I imagine though that, should some New York designer hear of the idea, the American women would be buying them to wear. It would look no worse than a lot of things I've seen.

Hoppy has been made manager of the baseball team here and he is making quite a few enemies. It seems that the way the team was set up it was dominated by a certain group of players who had to play regardless of whether they could play or not. Hoppy just changed that all around and put in the men he thought should play in the place they should play. The beefing has been quite loud from a few of the boys but they'll have a better team. One that will cooperate. I get

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a boot out of Hop whenever it comes to baseball. He is very impersonal and it wouldn't make any difference to him if a fellow was his best friend or not if he couldn't play he'd still warm the bench. A lot of these fellows don't feel that he is showing them the proper reverence.

I discovered that the Special Services tent has a lending library with a few books in it. The assortment of books available is not very great but it is good. There are no books of the kind you usually find in a g.i. library, the book that laid around the attic for years and finally was given to the "boys in the service." Practically all their books are quite modern or the best of the classics. I got a book titled "The Arabs," a short history of the Mohammedan peoples. It should be fairly interesting and informative. From a quick perusal of it I'd say that it is written quite briefly but with the pertinent facts all included. It will seem good to read something different from Pocket Book thrillers for a change. Don't mistake me though, the thrillers still have a very warm spot in my heart. A steady diet of them is rather monotonous, however.

Doughnuts were served here tonight. I had about a half dozen of them washed down with two cups of cold drink. These evening snacks I have at the Red Cross really hit the spot. They manage to have something good every night. Well Sweetheart, comes the time in every letter when it must be brought to a close even as this one must. God but I'll be so glad when I don't have to send you my good night wishes by mail but can deliver them in person

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by just folding you in my arms and feeling the nice sweet warm softness of your lips against mine as your head lies on my shoulder. When that day comes, I will consider V day as having arrived. That will [crossed out word] be my private V Day. So good night Darling, remember- V Day, and remember also and always that

I love you, and always shall, with all my heart.

Freddie