

Nov. 21, 1944

Oahu, T. H.

Dearest Barbara:

This is to let you know that I appreciated your letter so much... and that I have not forgotten about you.. particularly while I am on this beautiful island, where the poinsetta bushes grow like spirea in Michigan... And many other exotic flowers... I will never know their names... when we first got off the boat we were brought to our hotel in an army truck, and when I piled out I saw Hawaiian gals making leis under a parasol... and remarked, "those can't be real flowers." They make leis of carnations... string hundreds of them on a wreath and sell the whole works for 50¢..... also make leis of orchids... you should see them.

We are quartered at one of the most beautiful hotels in the world... for the moment.. so we might as well enjoy it while we may.. as I know it won't last long.... Have been to Honolulu shopping... bought a bright red bathing suit... or trunks... all covered with Hawaiian names and scenes... the city is so full of sailors, soldiers, and machines that it is much worse than Dayton... they say its much worse when the fleet's in.... have been swimming at Wakiki Beach, and it's just lovely, but you have to watch every step as the coral rock is very sharp and will cut your feet like a razor.

The temperature is very moderate all the time.. it rains every day... but the sun does not stop shining.. so they call the rain "liquid sunshine"... and it drys up almost as fast as it hits your clothes, so there is little need for a raincoat.

You will remember Jean Lennox, who visited in Dayton.... on Sunday she came down to the hotel and picked me up... went out to dinner, and after dinner I played her piano while Duncan and Dianah sang songs... they love to sing. Visited with her husband much of the evening while Jean and her Auntie went to see Maurice Evans in Hamlet. They have a perfectly lovely home... Not large, but very very beautiful. Duncan has a little house of his own out in back... mebbe someday we can make our garage into the "guest house" for Henry Kaye...with built in bunks.. like the Navy. We had a lovely dinner.. I taught Duncan and Dianah how to stand on their head... and returned to the hotel early.

You would be astounded at the hours observed here. In the first place, curfew is at 10 P.M. every night and everyone has to be where they are planning to spend the night at that time... so you stay where you are at night, or wind up in jail. All buses and taxis quit running at 9:30 P.M. ... so that is that. All the bars close at 6:00 P.M. and many of them are only open from 12.00 to 3:00 Mon. to Fri. inclusive.

We had a grand trip on the boat... you would have loved "Rags".. the ship's dog.... he walked down a slanting deck like an old sailor. Everybody loved him... and he loved everybody. The trip was very fast... and the food just grand... hope you can come out here someday and on the same ship.. or a similar one.

The first night we were here some unidentified planes came over... and all hell broke loose... all at once. Big guns going off all over the island... and it felt like some of them were right under our bed... the whole building shook.

This was not half as bad, however, as one night at sea, when our big ship stopped dead in the water... all lights out, and the engines stopped... they cut off the electricity to assure a very complete blackout... and there we sat... like a sitting duck.. for about half an hour... I really lived a long time in a hurry.

Food prices here are very high... like all other prices... food has to be imported from the mainland... and the crowded conditions keeps the prices up... \$2.50 for a poor dinner. 85¢ to ride three blocks in a taxi.. 50¢ for haircut... and so on.

I wanted to buy some shirts but found they were \$4.75 for very inferior garment.. and I paid \$2 for a good one in Washington... glad I have some shoes... as they are equally high. In a way... rationing is a blessing for you... as it keeps prices down some.

Sunday Stew Lennox drove us out to Pali.. the most beautiful place on this island... You stand at the top of the cliff where King Kamehamehamea threw his enemies over into the Pacific... you can see some tiny islands off shore, and the beach and low lands are beautiful. We live in the shadow of beautiful mountains, and everything is green here.. the grass and flowers grow and grow and grow.

We (newcomers) are called Kalejahinis when you want service in a hurry you say "wicki wicki"... means quick quick... unless the waiter is Chinese.. then you say "chop chop": means the same thing...

Today I had lunch with some of the men from American Factors... they formerly handled Airtemp, and are friends of Blackie.. one of the men took me to the Commercial Club, which is the highest building in town... all of 6 stories... lovely place... Last evening I sat on the beach in front of the Outrigger Canoe Club and listened to an excellent orchestra.... we have a fine Officer's Club near where we are living... but it closes at 6 P. M.

Received my first letter today from the Mainland... from Auntie Jo Stephens... it was mailed Nov. 9th.. airmail... wonder what has become of the rest of my mail. So far only have one letter from mother... they must be piled up somewhere.

The war is very very far from here... and yet so close. I am to be assigned tomorrow to a station.. somewhere on these islands for a few weeks or even a few months.. can't tell. My big boss here is Arthur B. Mayer... chairman of Paramount Pictures, and formerly of MGM... he called me in today and said "take any assignment they give you for the moment... but we have you earmarked for something else later on. Hope he means it.(censored) was here until a few weeks ago... just shipped out.... be sure and write lots of letters... as I sure can use them. Tell Henry K. and Ann to write too.

Am going to send a wire to Grandma Knowlton tomorrow, as next day is her birthday... if I can do it. We are about 6 hours ahead of you here... when it is 1 P.M here you are just sitting down to dinner... what a difference.

Tell mother that I love her very very much and will write to all of you again as soon as I get an assignment.

Your own,
Daddy. *Daddy*