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Okinawa

ARC Hdq 10 Army

11 May 1945

My darling -

Mail! - even if it's all old mail, it's very welcome - a mail ship must have come in or something. Your letters Mar 8-12 - 23 & 29 - all here - also package with rubber dollie & very welcome food - Also letters Father, Eleanor Hickey, Ed Kellie, Det. Lubricator, Geo. Dixon & note from Hygeia saying manuscript was returned to Aulwood Rd ages ago - Expect the old bat used my stuff in his newspaper column & let it go. Some task becoming a writer - ain't it? Hope there is some "new" mail soon - with report on your Dayton expedition.

This is the most peaceful time of day out here - from 6 P.M after "choir" to sundown - the Corsairs roar overhead - but this is a lull in activities (our ARC work - not the war) & it's sorta nice. My back aches from typing 20-page report today for the boss. Which he will edit the hell out of & I will have to do over - but that's what I'm here for - to get things as they want them.

Last 2 nights the Japs have kept us interested - 7 raids one night - 5 the next - spaced with time in between to get your shoes off & pile in - have given up undressing at night - too damn cold hunting clothes when you have to pile out on the damp & dewey ground. The colonel says I should get Purple Heart for my wounds. Said no thanks, although it was "due to enemy action". My face is still a mess - lovely scabs. In case you did not get my letter describing the incident, it was done in

foxhole diving via tent stakes & not serious! Badge of cowardice! -

The package came! And here that mail officer on ship led me to believe no pkgs! Six weeks travel time - not bad. We can't make the rubber dollie do tricks as I left the instructions in Oahu - but the boys say she feels real enuf. Speaking of real - 1st 3 ARC gals landed today!

They are here, but their hospital unit is not - something snafu again - as usual. The food will be most welcome. Can eat the ham on ration biscuits we get, which Dinah would love - they are so hard. You have not mentioned Dinah in months - how is she? Or has she disgraced herself with a passing stranger & brought home a batch of nondescripts? Come on, give - lets have the worst.

So you can sing - & I suspected it all along - as heaven knows I can't, & Barbie musta got it somewhere. Imagine my piano plunking days are about over, what with no practice in all this time. But how I love music - still do & always will.

Speaking of rejection slips, I get damn discouraged about becoming a writer until I read something like S. Maugham said -

"The chances of writing anything of permanent value before one is thirty are small. One wastes valuable themes trying to make a living. It is better to adopt any occupation which will give you a living & some experience, and write on the side."

I had forgotten he nearly starved, & his "Human Bondage" not published until he was 37 - then sales very poor at first.

Dayton Daily News offering \$5 Col. for news about Dayton lads! Starve on that alright!

Am anxious to get my reports cleaned up & out and around again. There are plenty things going on here to observe. Don't tell the children, but the only thing we are long on out here is chocolate. I eat several bars a day & we mix it in water with ice cream mix & drink it. Suppose you are still short. Have been dreaming, lately about what I would like to eat. But it's only a dream.

Can't understand why so few flowers here. Guess the natives had to devote all their space to growing a living - they cultivated way to the hilltops & terraced the fields to hold water & breed mosquitos. Incidentally, we have B-19 lightning

bugs - twin headlights & bright tail light - they are simply huge! Ann would love a bottle full - she could see to read.

Glad you got the card and x-army patch and ARC medallion. Darling - you can wear the medallions - but not on your collar, where you wouldn't want to anyway. It's the damndest thing to send stuff and not find out you got it - I may be proud of that patch some day.

Will not see Verne Miller - at least I doubt if that APO will come here - they have their hands full as you can tell from this letter.

For chow tonight we had corned beef (utility), potatoes (dehydrated), peas, bread, peanut butter and coffee. Food

O.K., but of course nothing fresh. Army language continues to fascinate me - particularly the term "G/I", which means, as you know, General Issue, - G/I is soldier- to drink G/I means a mix of grain alcohol and fruit juice. 'To 'have the G/Is' means to have diarrhea or dysentery. A "G/I can" is a huge galvanized garbage can used for washing dishes, boiling clothes, etc. "Strictly G/I" means, like a typical soldier.

Notice out from the Navy - what with women in the theater, we are not to relieve ourselves by the road - not to take wimmin in the rough bushes (Japs might get 'em), and otherwise protect American womanhood. Seems funny as our latrines consist of boxes set over slit trenches out in the sunshine & the native women are inclined to open their kimono and squirt anywhere - don't even bother to squat. The angle of trajectory and distance of throw is amazing!

The sun is dark - too dark in the tent, so will finish this outside - The boys are standing outside, chewing the fat. The fighters are going in to their bases in squadrons of nine and twelve - they are beautiful when they are ours.

By the way, the ARC man killed here was not killed here - somewhere else - we don't know where he was. Our crew is intact so far - Honolulu papers May 7 in tonight - "Germany quits" - we hear newsies in the States were getting \$1 copy for papers on V-E day.

Darling girl - your letters are so very sweet - and am so glad you like your job. If things were not going well with you, it would be hard to stay here. Rough enough as it is .

Getting too dark to write, but must tell you how much I love you.

Good morning darling - cool with brilliant sunshine. Had wonderful sleep broken only by small incident about 12:30 - one crossed our perimeter, & pau - almost spoiled my breakfast to look at him.

Must to work & get this in the mail - this is the 12th - one month today. Will be thinking of you tomorrow - Mother's day - and what a wonderful mother you are! Your own,

Henry

Love
Henry.

Hope you can read this - written on my knee & pretty bad!