



Area
Dec 15, 1943.

Dearest Darling,

I meant to write you from Texas, in fact I started a letter to you, but Tindell and I went out to get something to eat and wound up in a Nite Club and didn't get back until 4.30 a.m., and by that time I was in no condition to write a letter.

We are rounding the tip of Florida tonight, and it's certainly a beautiful evening. The weather is just like July and a large, bright, silvery moon is casting a wide path of shimmering light over a placid, sparkling sea. Its radiance is making the stars seem far away and pale in a cloudless blue sky. Far out on the horizon are puffs of white clouds ^{the} silver lined in the glow. The white, creamy wake streaming back from the bow is glittering with phosphorus, like fimbriations in white ermine streamers. What a night to love — you.

As I'm sitting here thinking of our troubles in coming to a happy medium I think this is a good time to explain something to you. I've never been able to talk to you before, mostly because I think, when I should speak, and speak when I should think. You can't understand why I want to live in the Country. It's not entirely selfish, even though that seems to be the conclusion you've drawn. Remember I spent my boyhood, or rather what I consider the better part

of it, then. The topic that comes to my mind and is synonymous with "country" is the fact that we have three boys. Apart from the health standpoint, which is no small matter in itself, as you'll admit, is the environment. I think that all evil starts in the city. I can't remember knowing or thinking of anything wrong until we moved into the city. Then again, I think so much of hunting and wildlife that I want my boys to know its joys too. I want you to know them. When I get out of this mess I'm in you're going to get a 20 gauge shot-gun and go hunting with me if I have to drag you by the hair. To know the thrill of rolling out in the wee morning hours, going out at daybreak when the air is chill and cold and bites through everything you may have on. To smell its' cleanliness and the pines and oaks and the wet dew on the grass. To hear a good hound give its' first yelp as it comes across a spot where a bunny has played the night before, and hear him working out the intricate puzzle, (sometimes it takes an hour or more) each yelp coming in shorter intervals, and then the joyous yelping-bay as he finally springs Mr Bunny from his hiding place or bed. The full resonant notes as the chase is on, so full of confidence and persistence. The puzzled yipping as some bunny pulls a fast one and he loses precious minutes unraveling the maze to shortly break into full cry again. To go out and stalk a ~~deer~~ deer, to watch it spring from behind a tree or a clump of brush and go running away with a grace that only a deer possesses. To see the little squirrels pop up the trunk of a tree and try to walk around it when you know that they'll pop the tree in between. To be standing in a rabbit-or deer run and watch a bird come so close it seems as if it shall light on your shoulder, and light on a bush nearby instead and look at

You with little curious eyes. To feel the cool wind and rain
 in your face and be able to enjoy them. All that Honey, and ~~so~~ so
 much more I want the musketeers to know. To see things grow
 out of the ground, to reach down and pick up a handful of earth and
 gaze at it curiously, wonder about its magic power. To know the
 value of horses and cows and if they like fishing to know that too. To
 grow big and strong as only the country can make anybody big and
 strong. Can you see what I see? I've tried to put it down here.
 I made my first pennies with a trap line. Sold the few furs I took
 to the Hill Co. Crawled into a hollow tree one time after a skunk.
 Boy! did I stink! Most of all I want you to be my pal and
 like the things I like, and I'll try to like the things you like. I'll
 never be religious, there are too many unanswered questions for me to
 swallow. To try it wouldn't give me religion. I would only be a
 first class hypocrite. I may be a sinner, but I live according to my
 own code. I don't think I'm mean to anybody. I don't want to be. I'm
 glad you have it, I want you to have it. It may be that which makes you
 as good and clean as you are. Sometimes I think you are too perfect for
 me, for I'm a bit on the pagan side. You are everything I could
 ask for, or ever hope to have. After all these years we are
 beginning to get a faint understanding of one another. You have to
 remember Honey, you married the most independent guy in the
 world, and I hope the musketeers are the same. That's what we're
 fighting for, I guess it's everywhere except in the Navy or I should
 say the service. The day that I have to follow anybody around like
 a puppy to improve my status in anything I hope I die, for
 I wouldn't ever be able to look myself in the face again. Try
 that sometime. I sent you a Christmas card from Houston. Let me
 know if the extra allotment has come through. It's been swell

of you not to mention being shot if you were. He's been trying to forget this Boy. Sent outfit in the Norfolk barracks. Don't be worried about me for I can take care of myself, after a fashion. He's been hollering long and loud for a transfer, but it has done little good. It's the same old story, I've learned my job so well they don't want to let me go, and I'm so independent I can't better myself. Perhaps the word is stubborn or something else. Maybe you have a word for it. In Houston, they didn't call us at the Hotel, we had left a call for 5:30 a.m., I didn't awaken until 7:30 a.m., liberty was over at 8:30 a.m. and we had thirty miles to go to get to the ship. We were 15 min. late, getting there at 8:45 a.m., so we ^{are} ~~were~~ restricted for two liberties or sit days when we get to Norfolk. That is the first time I've ever been late or had a restriction of any kind. It just goes to show you how any sailor's opinion is formed of this Porty-wait gang. A good record doesn't amount to a Tinker's dam. I'm going to take a nap now, as it is 22:30 and they'll call the watch at 23:20. Write some more before we get in.

Dec 16.

We have entered the Chesapeake Bay this a.m. and have been in a gale since yesterday. It's awful cold and the waves keep the decks continuously wash. There isn't anything ~~new~~ new to tell you, except not to expect me home for a few months. Love is

like gold in this outfit and they think if they give any away they might lose their right arms.

I've never seen such a nest of ass-lickers and louses ever gathered into any one group as they are here. So they call this the Navy. There are men here much older than I, and we have talked about it time and time again and come to the same conclusion, that there is no honor in serving in this branch. It is probably as Chief Young told me before he was transferred, not to judge the Navy by one ship. There could be a lot in that, but ~~the~~ ^{when} it seems that one is tied to that ship for the duration, what is one to do? Just make the best of it, one thing, nobody bothers me, they all understand that I'm going to run the shop as I see fit or they can have the rate with my blessing. Through that medium I've tried to effect a transfer, but it doesn't worry them, they haven't got that much intelligence. I feel sorry for these younger boys and the raw deals they get aboard here. They haven't any recourse, but I'll bet after the war the Navy's reputation won't be worth a plugged nickel, and that's putting a low value on it.

Took time out for show. It's snowing and the wind

is still in high gear. Here in the crews quarters its comfortable, but we were pretty cold ~~in~~ - watch this a.m.

I know I can depend on you to see that the kiddies have a nice christmas, if anything turns up ill let you know. Mommy, your old man is very much disillusioned. The only bright star on my horizon is you, and you are certainly my Venus. I'm ~~not~~ wasting my time here, I could have done a ~~much~~ more complete job on my shore in the war if I had stayed at the ship-yard. This is just a farce. I guess I've moaned to you enough, and I shouldn't, for I know you have your own problems and I should be there to help you with them. I'm very much of a fatalist, honey, and I'm just hanging around to see what fate has in store for me.

Have as nice a christmas as you can, and again, don't worry about me. Everything will turn out O.K. It won't be long now before we are together again. Let me know how the marshmellows are, for they and you are on my mind continually, though you probably doubt that. Well mommy, a Merry Christmas and all that.

Love
Parker.

Dec. 16, 1943

Dearest Darling,



True isn't an awful lot to talk about. In fact I don't know why I'm writing, except that I want to talk to you. Try and figure that all out.

You mentioned something about dreams in your letter. That I was pushing you away and hurting you. You need never worry about that again. I'll never hurt you, needlessly, again. You are everything that I want, and that takes in quite a lot of territory. Darling, I'm saving in terrible lot of love for you, and I hope you can handle it all. I'll probably get home again in the Spring.

You seem to think I want to start at the top in the paint business, it isn't that, it's the fact that anybody going into any business, must meet the competition or hang up. Efficiency is necessary to make a success of anything, and certain equipment is needed in any business to make it efficient. Also, a living standard must be maintained. The overhead is the same every month. We couldn't stop eating waiting for a business to grow

I received a letter from Stephanie in my mail, incidentally, I sent her a gross card from Texas, too. I'm getting tired of Texas. It's a swell place, but we are too far away from everything when we go there.

I should be ashore in Norfolk tonight, but I can't get off the ship. You don't know how glad I'll be when this is all over and I'm in Atlantic City again. I asked my sister if she could get me a cheap ukulele and one of those big Green Song Books I hear that cost \$1.00 one has a hundred pages or 100 songs with chords for a ukule. I must have something to occupy my mind or I'm going to wind up in the nut house. Checkers didn't for a long time, but I can beat everybody on the ship, so it has killed off competition.

Well Darling, This is all for this time. Tell those kids if they don't behave I'm going to give them a good whipping when I get home. Love and kisses to you Honey.

Parker.

Dec 31, 1943

Dearest Darlin;

Happy New Year! To-

monow we shall arrive in Norfolk, having just completed a trip to Aruba. The V Boats are active in the Caribbean again, though there is little danger for us as we are very well protected.

I'm looking forward to your letter tomorrow in Norfolk. I hope the tide-dies made the most of Christmas. I spent Christmas in Aruba. It was very warm. I took off my shirt and got a swell sunburn. We did have a White Christmas, or rather it should say a Christmas in whites, as we had to wear whites in Aruba. No wonder the Navy is the laughing stock of the Merchant Marine. I couldn't get ashore there as our section had the duty.

We have come back through an angry storm. The crew is pretty worn out. The wind blew fifty miles per hour, but the sky was as clear as a bell. One of our life rafts was washed loose.

and broken to shuffling wood. A 11" rope reel
on top of the forward pump room was broken loose. The
forecastle was unapproachable and a guard was posted
on the forward catwalk to keep anyone from going
up there. It has calmed quite a bit and will
probably be at the entrance of the Chesapeake this
P.M.

I haven't heard anything about my trans-
fers. Mr. [unclear] has put in for one also. I'm
just I don't think that anyone on the ship has
failed to ask for me. So you can see that it's
not my opinion alone. You are all so ready to
crucify me. Move down to all of you. I'll still
do what I please.

I wish there was some way of getting home
to see you. Liberty is very scarce on here. That
is the necessary 48 and 72 hour ones. It is
a virtual Prison ship. It's improving though,
from a hell ship to a Prison ship. The majority
would like to see Capt Hoff back again. He
made it tough but he certainly saw that all
were given all the liberty and leave that was possible.
You can tell my Mother that this Morte is
a good Methodist Hypocrite as ever walked
down astray me, and I think they all have

It
walked down there at one time or another.

Clive had a swell toothache for three days now, and nothing can be done about it until we get in. Did you wish that on me? The Doctor says there is an abscess at the root and I have to wait until I can get to the clinic at the N.O.B.

I have good reason to believe we are making a big jump this next time. So in case you don't hear from me you'll know I guessed right. Send all your letters air mail and I'll have a fifty fifty chance of getting them no matter where we go.

My sister said in her letter that you weren't feeling well. Is it anything besides the teeth that you told me about? I don't want you to be worrying about me. A bad Penny always turns up. Our convoys aren't losing any ships and this one was never made to be sunk by anything. It'll be going fifty years after she was over.

I was too full of button Rums to
send out my Christmas Cards properly.
It took me two hours or more to find
yours. That is the only one I sent. The
one to my sister I got from Tindell. He
bought too many and had a "sister" card
left over. So I used it up for him.

Well Darling, I'm not exactly in
the writing mood. I feel very quadsome, is
as you can't talk back it's not fair. one of
these days I'll surprise you by hopping in
when you least expect it.

So. Until then

Parker.