



Feb 17, 1944
Norfolk, Va.

My Sweet Beautiful Darling,

I have all your letters lined up here before me. The earliest is postmarked Dec 26 and the latest Feb. 14, 1944. This letter shall probably come in installments as this paper I bought on the ship is so thick that its difficult to get more than two or three sheets into an envelope.

I'm happy that the kiddies had such a nice Christmas. I'm afraid I was very lax in my Christmas duties. You can't imagine how useless everything seems here. When its all over it will seem like a bad dream. I bet you have a great time with those two and the boxing gloves. I'm going to try to make up a lot of things to you and the kiddies when I get home. I don't feel as if I've been a very good father or husband. There are a few things on your side that have to be worked out, but I know how good God was to me when he gave me you for a wife and a mother of my children.

It was nice to hear you had such a swell time New Years. (No sarcasm intended.) You were very modest about the "new face" business. Darling you are one

of the most beautiful creatures that ever graced this earth.
That, along with that demure personality of yours, could cause
countless murders. I'm so very proud of you, and I have
always been. I'll tell you a wee secret. You can remem-
ber very well when I bought the Packard. It wasn't that I
wanted the Packard so much, but I had a feeling the first
time I saw you that you belonged in that kind of a car
with furs and all the necessary accessories. You spoiled
that foolish dream for me by being so dissatisfied with
the purchase. I guess I've bungled the description, but some-
times it's hard to tell a feeling. I had thought of it so often
that it had grown to be a mania. After those terrible
winters in P.ville. I wanted to do something to make us
forget them. I went about it the wrong way I know,
but patience isn't my fortitude, when I want something,
I want it, then and there. I'm learning patience in
the Navy, but not without a terrific battle with myself
and every officer on the ship.

I'm afraid I've always had a persecution
complex. I never realized it until I read it in your letter
just now. My Dad seemed to know about it. One time
when we were locking horns I remember him saying
that "I always thought someone was trying to do something to me".
My feelings are very easily hurt. Little inconsequential things

hurt me deeply. a word, a glance or an expression. I must try to overcome that. I've never realized how vast it is until now.

Your Valentine was ~~clear~~ so very appropriate. You are the Rose in my heart. Pierced through it like the Rose through the heart in the Valentine.

I'm now on your third letter. Tonight is a night of nights. I've never been able to write you like this before. Think well, if you answers my Darling. Your gripe is over by now. My semi-annual colds have stopped me this year. Either the one in Bainbridge was so severe it made me immune or the injections we get aboard ship are responsible, most likely the latter.

Johnny couldn't have seen our ship when he came in as we sailed for Casablanca on Jan. 4. This letter is postmarked Jan 11. On second thought he could have at that, taking time off for his getting there etc.

Don't worry about the lawn or anything else, I'm pleased that you have no fire to worry about. No gas and electric bills to meet every month, and the many conveniences that Place offers.

Your attention to Camille's eyes is another

heart warming subject. Its only my stubbornness about his age that I didn't press you on that, and didn't want you to go ahead with it as you so wanted. Dr McVey told me that nothing definite could be ascertained until he had reached at least five years old.

This sailor would love to paint the room for you, although it shall probably need it to extreme by the time he manages another leave. Cliff is a good hand with a brush, though he doesn't know the proper consistency for the Paint. It should be thin enough so when it runs from the brush it makes a small disappearing pimple in the Pot.

I certainly would have liked to have been there to meet this Hilda. Somehow, I can't reconcile Johnny with a girl named Hilda. That Swedish name brings to my mind a blonde, broad faced and beamed person with big feet and not overly bright. Ye Gods! you had never better tell John of that description. Tomorrow we are going into the docks to load supplies preparatory to another trip. I'll look and see if the Hopping is in. While I'm thinking of it. If John ever changes ship be sure to let me know, also, as soon as Guy is placed let me know his whereabouts.

I hope by the time this volume reaches you, your

teeth have ceased to be an annoyance. Mine were
 Passed as OK. at the N.O.B. I'm going back again before
 we leave here, as its more indulgent than anything else.
 The pain comes and goes. The cold dampness seems to bring
 it on, while clear warm weather chases it away. I think
 the best thing you can use for healing gums is a tepid
 solution of salt water.

So our Mary is a full fledged teacher. How are
 her nerves? This about the last person I could even believe
 would make a success at teaching.

Both Mike and I were surprised at the news of Mr.
 Tallner. He always seemed so healthy and robust, although I
 haven't seen him for sometime.

I'm not surprised about Ellet Tomlin, though I
 do feel sorry for Walt. He was a pretty square guy. You know
 Ray Moore was her boy friend a long, long time ago. That
 is where she lost her virginity. Incidentally, it happened
 in sea lake. I never liked that in Ray. His ethics on
 the female were practically nil.

The musketers are all boys Darling. You can't blame
 them for liking the snow. I wish I had been there to
 play in it with them. I haven't seen any snow this
 year. It has its good points, though.

To be sure I would like to hear you talk minus those teeth. I would like to hear you talk minus anything, Honey. Why don't you try vitamin pills to increase your resistance?

It saddens me to hear of Father Blake. If anyone deserves a place in Heaven, it's he. Of all the people I've met in life he is by far the finest. No tribute is rich enough to do him honor. He stood for everything that is good and fine in a human. He didn't belong to this world.

I'll bet Mom is tickled to have Guy back. It must be quite an ordeal for you to see Johnny and Guy and I'm still unable to get there. It should have its nice side, too. It's been so long since I've seen Guy that I don't if I should know him. Is he still the same old Guy?

Mike and I had quite a laugh about the Girl in Italy. Send it to Uncle Dewey. Incidentally, it pleases me very much to have you on such friendly terms with them. I hope it shall remain that way. Mike is one of the most liked fellows on the ship. Everyone speaks highly of him, and for my part I think he's tops. We are going to do a lot of hunting together when this is over.

You can't realize how much I want to be with you. You are certainly going to get a lot of loving when I

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do get there. Do you think you can take it? I think we are departing for Texas shortly and after that another trip across. Then, maybe they'll be so kind to grant some leave. Capt. Hoff would never had let us go this long without getting home. There have never been any 48 or 72 hour liberties since Capt. Marts has taken over. He must be a very strong pillar in his church for he is an IA hypocrite. I can see Capt Hoff yet, sticking his nose in everything. Rattling the whole Engine Room force out of bed at 2 a.m., including the chiefs, and chasing them down to the Engine room in their underwear, to stop the steam pipes from banging so he could sleep. Cussing a blue streak and waving his arms at some Arab on the docks because he wouldn't tie a line and the Arab couldn't understand a word he said. Getting thrown out of a barroom in Texas, getting up and hollering for his hat and saying the "God damn Texans didn't know how to drink". Coming out on the Bridge and yelling at a Lieut. "Give those men their cards, they rate liberty, get a move on you", because he thought they weren't being passed out fast enough. Saying to some P.O. that had committed some ~~misdemeanor~~ misdemeanor, "What was your rate? your Seaman 1st d now?" "The uniform of the day after 1600 is whites, why are you wearing churques? Five days in the brig". Dynamic was the word that best describes his temperament.

Well Darling, I haven't said all I want to say, but I've lost that certain chain of thought. I want you to know that to me you are everything, good, sweet, beautiful. I love you so much Darling. You are so swell. I don't think I can put the love I have for you into words. They seem so insufficient. To know that I have someone like you to come home to has made this sordid existence bearable. Whatever possessed me to get into such a mess and leave you all alone is more than I can determine. I'm going to try to make it all up to you. You can't realize how satisfied it makes me feel to know that musketiers have such a wonderful mother. Perhaps this sojourn in Navy has done for me what you wanted it to. It was always there, Honey. I just didn't realize that it should be expressed. Nothing shall ever take me away again. Your letters were more than welcome. Keep writing often as it breaches a void that shouldn't be.

The place I was going to have you send the V.I.C. is undergoing repairs so that's out for now. I'll have to look up another. Until I write again
your
Parker.

Feb 20, 1944

Dearest Darlin,

Well, just got back to the ship from calling you. There isn't much to say. I wanted to hear your voice so badly and want to see you much more so.

I don't think it will be much longer now until we get some leave. Our long trips are over and after a few small ones will go into the yard for the conversion.

It's been so long since I've seen any of you. It will be quite a reunion. I can't imagine how little Johnny looks, for he certainly must have grown since I saw him last.

Mrs. Walsh probably thought I was a nuisance, calling there so often, but she is certainly nice about it.

I guess I shouldn't have called again, especially early on a Sunday morning like that, but I felt that our previous conversation had been so short, and I did want to talk to you. Well, 'mornny, til then more to write.

Parker.

Feb. 21, 1944.

Dearest Darling,

My sweet, lovable, beautiful Darling.

How much I love you! Your goodness and faithfulness to me! If I ever get home again I'm going to spend my time loving you. Crawl into your arms and hide my head and shut out the world.

I can't find words to tell you the depth of my love for you, Darling. The pinnacle, or pedestal that is high enough to place you upon. Everything that I want ~~is~~ have dreamed of is there in you. What a fool I was not to realize it before. It was always there. I just let my stubborn high-headedness blind me to it.

Buy all the dresses and doo-dos you want Darling. From here out I'm going to see that you get more money than heretofore. Sure, I've been spending too much, when it should have gone home, but the Norfolk barrooms have received my last donation.
yours
Parker.

Feb. 23, 1944.

Darling Sweetheart,

It won't be long now before the old ship
shoves off on what is to be her last cruise. The sooner
the better. When we return from this we are to go
into the yards where she is going to be made into a
crane ship. What that will mean to us, nobody knows.
We are all hoping for transfers. If the ship is decom-
missioned to undergo the change, Will all get them. Otherwise
it's hard to tell.

Isn't it wonderful, after all our years of
wedded bliss your husband can still thrill to the
sound of your voice, how you look, and all those small intimate
memories. I don't think it'll be so long before we are to-
gether once again, even though it be only a few days.

The crew was given an interview by a group
that came aboard the other day. My inquirer told me I
should have come in first class, and asked why I hadn't
made an effort to get another rating. I told him that as
far as I was concerned this ship could go to hell, that the only
thing I was interested in was getting off it, and if this was
the Navy it was a sad day when I enlisted. He made a
recommendation to the Bureau that my rate be raised. By the time
they act upon it the war will be over and I'll be long out of the

navy.

This is going to be a very short trip, unless we go to another place after reaching our destination. I always did want to see Wally.

I suppose by this time Guy is well on his way to his next station. I'm sorry I haven't had a chance to see him. Johnny must be on a trip also, I haven't seen his ship around.

Say hello to the missus and tell them to behave or else! I'm looking forward to the day when I can be with all of you again. Especially that so charming, loveable woman that is my wife.

your
Parker.