

Mon. Aug. 2, 1943, 9.30 a.m.

In North Africa.

Dearest Dorothy.

I got two letters to answer or should I say four? I got 3 V. mails numbered 1.2.3. from June 17th and a letter from July 9th. excellent mail service dont you think? I also had a V. letter from Auntie and one from Ane and Dick, they all came in yesterday. I dont know why you havent heard from me Honey, I've been answering every letter right away and I write some in between besides. ~~xxx~~ So; you could picture my doings in Columbia, could you? Well its not too much different here Dot. Not as many G.I's of course and we can't run to town for a beer ~~fx~~ or a meal, and the heat is a lot worse. But all in

all I can honestly say I dont feel as though I were 3 or 4 thousand miles away. About the only big difference is in our flying is that we play for keeps instead of for fun. The place itself is nothing to rave about, we are down in a little valley. On one side is mountains and the other is a huge grape and olive orchard. At either end we have huge wheat fields. You know when the heat starts to shimmer out across the valley floor it looks like water and with the mountains in ~~xxxxxxx~~ the background its almost like looking out across the Hudson to the

Palisades. There is no G.W. or River in the distance but a little imagination often brings back fond memories. We live in tents Dot, six men to a tent and we have made life quite homey. We have grass rugs on the floor that we bought in the local Arab market and we have a desk that I made. It comes in handy for card playing, dice, shaving or letter writing. We have a big earthen jar set in the ground and that keeps our drinking water fairly cool. At first there were no showers and we used to take what is known (to the army) as a "Whores" bath. We washed or bathed out of our helmets and we were never quite clean, but after putting on a lot of sweet smelling powder and after-shave lotion one could live with us in not too much discomfort. But they have a few showers here now so we manage to keep fairly clean.

We are seven hours difference in time Dot so as I write this you are peacefully sleeping away at 3 a.m. it hardly seems possible does it?

You mention your visit to Frank and reminis your visit to me. You aren't fooling when you say we were afraid we wouldn't be able to entertain you sufficiently. I dont know how it was at Spartansburg, but you must admit that Panama City was one rough hole, but we did have a good time didnt we? It hardly seems possible that all that took place nearly a year ago? As we go from day to day time seems to drag, but when we look back every thing has gone by in a flash. Here today and across the huge world tomorrow. But I enjoyed every last minute of it. I have your picture here in front of me Dot, the one we took out in back of the Cove Hotel and beside it I have the picture Mom sent me for Easter. Have you seen it? Its really beautiful, Mom seems a slight bit heavier but I never saw her looking so well before. You know when a guy stops and thinks he starts to realize now what a ~~xxxx~~ wonderful family he has. I realize now what a fool I've been for the assine things I've done and my moods and tempers that have so often brought grief to Mom Dad and you. I think maybe Ive gotten over them a little, but I wish I could be rid of that mean trait in me, I try hard but every now and then it pops up and there I am, an outcast. That, I'm afraid is a cross I'll have to carry all through life I dont ~~xxxx~~ have the willpower to overcome it.

Dot please dont send any more baseball scores, not until Bklyn is out in front again. I dont know whats wrong with them but I'll stick by them to the end come what may. But your right about the Ski reports Honey, once they start coming out I want you to start sending them to me. I wrote and asked Mom for a subscription to Life and the Daily News but she hasnt mentioned it in any of her letters, would you remind

her for me. Yes I guess your right, Frank and I would have a lot to argue about over Air Force vs. Infantry, but take my word for it we arent over here to play games. When its all over I think Air power will deserve most of the credit. No Dot I didn't make my Easter Duty, ~~xxx~~ but I have gone to Mass and Communion since I got here. Flying interferences quite a bit, but I go as often as possible. That covers your June 17th letter, now lets ~~xx~~ see what you have to say in our other one.

As I opened your letter Dot I could see youd taken them pictures. Boy they were tops. You dont know what pictures mean to us over here. WE cant get enough of them. You look or am I mistaken, a little fatter. But thats probably due to the good chow, ahem! The picture of Frank is verry good, he looks so much taller. I'm glad he decided to go to school instead of staying with his outfit. Of course I can see his point in wanting to stay with them, but as you say he has a chance to finish his education and when he's finished he'll be much more valuable to the army than he is at the present.

Yes Dot I will be 24 soon wont I and as you look back over the years its nice to remember even for myself all the little mischievous things Ive done. I always thought that growing up and becoming a man would be a big event in my life, but for some reason I'm disappointed. It wasn't or isn't anything like I'd thought it would be. I feel today the same as I did when I followed the mud gutter band and climbed the bill boards. I think the only time I felt grown up was the day I walked up 87th St with my little brown bag. I was lonesome and I never felt so alone in all my life, but I was out on my own then and too late to turn back. I'm glad I didnt. I've traveled a long way since then and I've learned a lot. No matter where you go people are people, they are all the same and we have to put up with their whims and fancies. They have lived that way a long time and you cant change them over nite. This is I suppose an answer to my disappointment in life. I'll go on living the way Ive always lives, still full of mischief and wrong doings, but happy at any extent.

You assumed right Dot I am part of that bunch, but that will have to be a closed book till after its all over. Yes I remember out little chat in the Cove Hotel but I'm afraid it will be a long time before I can use that mark, maybe never. They just wont tangle with us Dot, call it fear or surprise but they stay clear at any rate. Well Honey I've used a lot of ink and a lot of paper and have'nt said much worth while, but its the best I can do. Keep up your excellent letters Dot and send more pictures. Oh, yes one more thing that Arlene West looks I could swear very familiar, have her write me will you I'd like to get to know her. I'm still chasing Fel but its wise to be ~~xxxx~~ prepared on another front just in case. So do me that favor and have her write me.

Well Shorty I'll say bye for a while, be good, keep happy and stay sober.

All my love always,

Joe

P.S. What is that insignia on your shoulder Dot, I don't recognize it. You look swell in that uniform Dot I wish I could see you in person.

It would like a copy

Joe

P.S. What is that insignia on your shoulder Dot, I don't recognize it
You look swell in that uniform Dot I wish I could see you in person.

Sam Dot sent this home - I thought you'd like a copy
as to the latest - Army life sure seems to have set Joe to
analyzing himself - Knowing Joe it doesn't seem possible
that he could write letters like these. I received a letter
one dated Aug 9 - in which he apologized for not writing
saying he had moved again. He's up on the
Coast now and can go balling on the Mediterranean
and

is nearer June's now, expects to go over to visit pretty soon - Can go to Cape Bone but as there's nothing there they don't go - That gives you a pretty fair idea of just where he is now.

Did I forwarded you a letter today from Dot she must have forgotten your address.

No special news here - Saw a Walkoff today - Army hasn't gotten there yet, Cliffer still in Sperry - and we're still waiting to hear from Jimmy.

Love from Mother -
P.S. Samuel Heale on - Don't you hope better surmises

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