

May 16, 1944  
Tuesday Nite

Dear Dot;

Lots of changes around here. Junior caught a boat out of here. Our camp is a very unhealthy place. Too close to the water for little Louies not to play ball with the boss. Went over his head once too often. He wrote his own ticket but got worse than he deserved I think and I know I shouldn't. Only once in while I forget that I'm in the Army.

We have a civilian in the office now or did I tell you? Anyway I'm now full time darkroom man. That's what it says here. It also says that a darkroom is a room that is dark and you must remember to:

1. Turn off the lights.
2. Keep them off.
3. Make no mistakes - see what you are doing.

Are they kidding? I'm having a little trouble but everything will be allright once I get my Seeing Eye Dog. What a pain in the ---. You would be surprised how many hours I spend crawling around on my hands and knees looking for things that slip out of my hands. And you have to be so careful of that developer. Everything depends on the developer and many a girl has been known to over-develop in a darkroom. WOO, WOO!!

It's interesting work tho, Dot, and someday, if you would really care to learn I might be able to teach you how to behave in a darkroom. You don't want to know how to behave? OK - It was just a thought.

Something happened the other night and I thought, "Oh, brother just wait until I tell Dot about this." Here's the story. We had to all gather in the dayroom to see a movie. One of those sex things that you usually sleep thru. Only for some reason noone seemed to care to go to sleep. Our CO walked in after about 500 ft of film. She had the usual sweet sickening smile on her puss and suddenly she turned white and screamed, "shut off that movie!!!" And somebody said, "Oh, yea who says so?" "I'm Lt. Madden and turn off that picture. I'm sorry girls they seemed to have given us the wrong film tonight. You are dismissed." We were just about to learn how G.I. Joe should wash himself in the shower. Too bad she didn't come in sooner. She would have seen him taking his physical. This / Army gets better every day.

Thanks for Frank's letter, Dot. It was enjoyed thru four sittings. As usual, all I can say is GOSH!! He's wonderful or do you know? Have you heard from Ed? I hope you remember me to him once in a while. I always remember you to Deck and I've sold him on the Shields. He said that you sound like a family out of the New Yorker called the O'Hara's. I'm sorry I never heard about them befor. The New Yorker is a little too high brow for me.

Maybe you would like to know what I received for Mother's Day. And then maybe you can tell me why on Mother's Day.



## II

Of course I have been trying to help him with all his little problems. You know those nasty little things that always happen on wash day. Not that Deck isn't making his usual round to the laundry each week but he takes more pains that ordinary men in keeping trim and neat and the laundry isn't giving such good service. Thus on Monday night he has to wash out a few of his own dainties and there he is in the laundry room with his bar of lux, the two of them always together not knowing what is happening to them. So I have been trying to help. I've written him books on little wash day hints but, hell, he doesn't have to look to me like he would a mother. Oh, you're right Dot, what a struggle.

Anyway what I got was a 6 x 8 colored portrait of his beautiful mug. What a picture!!!! It's just like putting candy under the nose of a baby and making them just sit and look at it. Gad, it's beautiful. What a hunk of manhood!!! And it's spring up here in New England and it makes you feel so happy and I read his letters until I know them by heart and he says I fit just right in <sup>his</sup> good right arm and I'm not going to have any arm left just writing and writing and it's hell but it's wonderful too.

I received a letter from my Dad today and he said that Harry flew home for one night and then they all went to the Air Port the next day and saw him off again. Dad said it was the biggest thrill he has ever had in his life. The Capt. in charge of the crew told my dad that Harry was the most thorough guy with a plane that he's ever seen. Harry is the instrument man. Now I'm bragging, Dot, but he's always been just a little squirt and it doesn't seem possible that he is doing such a big and important job. My sister Dorothy and her husband bought a new home. Bar in the basement and built in bath tub and shower. It must be something but anyway it made my sister so happy that she isn't fighting with Frank any more and she lets him change his socks twice a week now.

We have been burning the midnight oil up here. Our last big push will <sup>be</sup> underway befor long. After that they will have just about everything we have got. We'll only be getting Casuals befor long. It's been wicked and sister, we have been working and I ain't kidding.

I received some pictures from your mother that were taken in Patchogue, and you have a set, you pig, so I don't have to tell you how wonderful they are. Dot, you knew Joe was going to have to rest for a while. I wish you would stop worrying. He has too strong a mind not to get a grip on his nerves again. I feel certain that he's going to be allright. Hell, can you imagine what you and I would be like if we went thru just half of what he did. It's going to take a little time for him to get adjusted again and it's only right that you should understand that. He wouldn't want you to feel down because of him and especially if he knew that he was going to be OK and I'm sure that is how he feels.

I've got to scram now, Dot, I'm hungry and I'll break your neck if you write to me on that stationery again. Soads of love  
Billie