



UNITED STATES ARMY

use V-mail or
air mail - am
cabling, but it
is slow, I hear

On a South Pacific Isle
22 March 1944

My Darling,

I'm awfully tired (Phew! this typewriter is good!) tonight. Maybe this typewriter is tired, too—it's about as travel-worn as I, I suppose. We've been here long enough that I can write some of my impressions of the island—Now, you will just have to wait awhile before learning just what island it is. Soon, Thear, I can name the place. After coming ashore and finding our camp, about the first thing we did was eat—it was hot (and still is—, like up in the attic in August) and the boys and I squatted down in the shade of a scrubby tree to open up our rations. I ate some cheese and "dog biscuits" and made some "concentrated lemonade, and sat on my pack, eating with my foot on a Jap helmet which has four bullet holes in it. You can imagine what might have happened to the monkey who was in that helmet. When I finished eating I found I had sat right in a bed of ants so I imagine I jumped considerably more than that Japanzy did when his helmet got perforated. My first sergeant (He's a 300-pounder from Samson, you know) looked around at the strange countryside and said, "Captain, I'm shore goin have a lot to tell my boy one of these days!" About that time a bushy-haired native came strolling by with a stick through his nose and a long spear over his shoulder. You can imagine how we gaped. He was the first of the "boys" we saw and I assure you he looked fierce. But, he just stopped and stuck out his hand and said, "cigarette?" So he wasn't really so fierce, I suppose. He grinned like an alligator and flat-footed off down the road. I should say "street" perhaps—for it is amazing how they have carved a really liveable camp out of this jungle. You remember how Nancy (or I) used to pinch out of the edge of a fruit cake? That's how this camp is pinched out of the jungle. A hundred yards behind my tent the jungle is positively impenetrable. Last night as I lay down on my cot to sleep—the major went across the road to the movies, no less, but I was so tired I could only go to bed on my little cot.—what I started to say was that, as the rain poured off the tent eaves the awfulest racket started up in the jungles. Parrots, or cockatoos, or some kind of screaming idiot-birds set up a hubbub which was almost deafening. It sounded like all the ghosts of all the japs killed on this island were having camp meeting in my backyard. About that same time, I suppose, you—Gene, Carol, Nan and Sue—were just about getting ready to go to school this morning—except that this morning there was yesterday morning ~~here~~ according to our calendar but of course it was really last night here—or night before last there—or something. It's quite confusing, I'm sure.

I received six letters from you yesterday, a couple from Mamma and one from Royce. I appreciated Sue's Valentine and thanks for the booklet. Your last letter was dated the 15th of Feb and Mom's and R's V-mail notes were dated the 4th and 5th. Today I didn't get any mail—only a few did. Now you can write as often as you feel like it—and please do, even if you don't receive my mail for long periods—I'll write as much as possible—hope you got all my ship letters—but sometimes no doubt the mail will be slow leaving. I miss you all so very much. Your picture is on the balsa-pole shelf above my cot—looks just like life. I'm going to read your letters again tonight and go to bed now—thinking of you.

Loads of love, 