

29

Borobay

Sunday 13/6/45.

Hallo Sweetheart,

To be quite truthful this afternoon I'm not in a proper mood to write to you - I feel so damned wet & sticky, + everything is such a proper muddle that the act of writing is a major operation, until we can get some organisation to bear on the problem of living comfortably in the monsoons. The rain came last night, about 9.30, + there's no doubt at all that all that water is going to cause a lot of trouble to us poor uninitiated - our friends may laugh + tell us that we've seen nothing yet, but I ~~say~~ say we've seen all we want to see + if it didn't rain for another year it would be O.K. by me.

All last evening there were threatening rumbles in the sky, + away to the West flashes indicated an approaching storm of some size. The wind gradually increased in force, bringing a little relief to a day of heat that left me gasping for air. But sitting in the cabin, reading, sewing + talking, we really didn't imagine that anything drastic was about to happen - we knew the rains were due any day, but in this climate it's difficult to imagine rain for any length of time, + we thought a pre-monsoon shower might come along + leave it at that. At 9.29 a gust of wind blew in the open windows bringing with it a hundred varieties of insects + a pile of dry earth together with half the cherry tree outside the cabin. It blew the sewing out of my hand, landed the

dirt in my lap + brought the mosquito net over my head. The insects settled on us all for the brief space needed to recover our breath, after which pandemonium reigned. At 9.30 the rain started, accompanied by a deafening clap of thunder + we leaped to action stations. I disentangled myself from the net, rushed to close the windows + doors, we all banged into each other in an attempt to hold all loose gear down til the wind could be shut-out, + among it all, the insects, now safe from the elements, went on their careful business of stinging. A happy peaceful company was changed in a minute to a yelling crowd of men upon whom had burst one of Nature's miracles - we all wanted to go outside + see the effects, + half of us stripped off + gloried + revelled in old water for the first time in months. Each stream of rain was like a water tap at full bore + the noise it made on the roof + on the foliage was deafening. Little fireflies were struggling to get to shelter, you could see hundreds of green lights go up + then down to the ground as the force of the water beat them down, + they lay on the earth with their tailpieces still flashing for all the world as tho' they were sending out an S.O.S. in Morse. Branches of trees broke off + the trees themselves looked unsafe as they bent + swayed. lightning lit up the scene at intervals of a few seconds + we had to come inside because the flakes were getting uncomfortably close. Inside the cabin we examined the roof anxiously for leaks, but the only one we found was in the outer room which is

only used occasionally - nevertheless it's going to be most inconvenient because we hoped to dry clothes in the. As a sad & sorry sight was the return of the Lade who'd gone ashore that afternoon. They come back from Bombay by lorry - open lorry - & they were caught half way. It's not their clothes they worry about - we're always soaking with sweat, anyway - but some had bought tea, etc, toys for kiddies & shoes - everything was ruined. You see, darling, after a month in this country in the dry season, we forget any precautions natural to an Englishman in his own country, & the thought of going ashore with the possibility of it raining sometime during the day doesn't occur to us - it just never rains - only it did last night & it'll continue to rain for the next 3 months! At the moment the rain has stopped but the wind is high & the clouds are very low so it won't be long before it starts again. See but you know how we set on, sweet, & how the average naval chappie overcomes adversity with his usual aplomb.

Well, considering I wasn't in the mood I haven't done so bad so far, have I baby? It all depends to whom I'm writing, I suppose. Now if I were writing to one of the family I should be sitting here mulling my pen & wondering what the hell to write about, but gee-oo..... I just write. It's not a question of being in love because I haven't written much on that subject herein, have I? - hope, it's just that I can think up something, enlarge on it a little, (alright, the word is "verbosity" - I know), & guarantee

I

myself that it'll be read the other end with the necessary view-point & intelligence. I couldn't write on & on about rain to other people - they'd be bored to tears - but I know you like to have me describe affairs like that so's you'd get an idea of how I'm living out here & be able to picture the scene. I try to make it as vivid & clear as is possible within the limited range of my vocabulary, (alike I am getting up to 6 letter words now), & if I get away from the point a little, as I do, or if I write a little too long-windedly I know you'll gloss over those faults & take the effort as being the best I can do. In other words, darling, I know you appreciate, in every sense of the word, a letter from me & that's why I'm able to scribble on page after page no matter how vague the subject. On the more intimate subject of us; I have a feeling, every time I write, that I'm stressing the obvious to say that we two are in love - I'm sure I am because whenever the family or friends write & mention you they always say how much we're missing me, etc. & it's fairly clear to them that we're a couple of truth does & it must be clear to everybody else. Still, it's nice to ramble on about love - as you discuss each aspect you find a new angle that hasn't struck you before & that needs to be examined to see if we've hit on anything new. You're right, angel, we needn't be complacent about our love, but we can be satisfied with it because we wouldn't find anything better & to be able to seal it with marriage is the most wonderful thing in the world.

"Whom God hath joined let no man put asunder" —
 I'd like to see any man, or woman, try. I have a
 "soft" heart but I should be the most terrible avenger
 living if any person dared to sow discord in the harmony
 of our union — sometimes, perhaps cynically, I think
 that our own persons ~~should~~ should not be considered
 when endeavouring to maintain that standard of
 love + companionship that is ours, but that we should
 be held as an example to other young married
 couples to show them what can be achieved by under-
 standing + a little give and take on both sides — given
 the basic quality of mutual attraction and/or love, of
 course. All that sounds awfully conceited, doesn't it
 sweetest, but what else can we say? "Our love
 is like that. We are as one. And we know that ~~time~~
 time will never change us. So, what else can we say."

I shouldn't really have said I wasn't in the
 mood for writing — what I should have said was I'm
 not in the condition for writing. ~~At~~ At the moment
 she slipped right off to a brief, very brief, pair of pants
 + got the sweat rolling off me. I have to rest my
 writing arm on a handkerchief else the bottom
 half of the page would be soaking wet. We keep
 large bottles of water, (boiled water, don't drink
 any out of the taps), or every hour or so we make
 ourselves a fruit drink to combat thirst, & also to
 make up for the water that's left our bodies. It's also
 very important to take a lot of salt because that
 goes out of the system with the sweat & if it's not

replaced you get cramp. I know now where all the roses
 have Juice went to - we've got it out here & whilst I
 think it's very necessary in this climate, when I get
 back to the U.K. I hope I never see another bottle -
 when you have to take it day after day, all day, it gets
 very monotonous. You may wonder at anyone complaining
 at having to drink stuff usually considered luscious but,
 as I've explained, it's a necessary drink but we have
 to pay for it, & it costs us about 25 a week - a very
 expensive medicine. We get some queer fauna about
 the area. The other night a bloke brought in a
 thing that looked like a visitor from another world.
 It looked like a flying beetle enlarged a hundred
 times - about 6 inches long, an inch wide with a
 wing span of about 5 inches - it was an insect &
 one of the thousand varieties that fly around at night.
 It had a sting in its tail an inch long - ugh!
 A centipede 8 inches long is quite a common sight
 running across the deck. Ants? . . . !!! They're
 everywhere, only they're about 10 times bigger than the
 English sort. I've seen bumble bees as big as a small
 bird & rats as big as a small dog. Lizards run
 all over the joint, only we don't kill them because they
 like small insects. We've got a little frog visitor to
 our cabin we call Freddy - he comes along regularly
 & he looks so pitiful we haven't the heart to throw
 him out. Wild dogs roar in packs around the camp
 & the din they set up at night is hideous. Sometimes
 the natives in their villages in the hills start up in
 opposition & the racket goes on all night - one night

7

When they'd quietened down a bit I stood at the back door of the cabin + howled right back at 'em - blow me if they didn't echo back + start all over again. I haven't done that since - I, but sleeping dogs, + villagers, lie.

I've just been down to the mess + had two suppers. You might think that a normal sort of feat, but I regard it as a sign that better times are coming for your working old man. Whilst the heat was turned on I hardly had the appetite for one supper, (altho' I might have managed two meals), but now the rains have cooled the air + me, down the old gluttony is returning - good-on, eh? I've stopped the rot at 13.4 11 lbs which is almost exactly 2 stone lighter than when I left England - my last weigh-in showed a gain of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb but since I'd just stuffed a bag of peanuts down me I regard that as of no significance. The weight has definitely come off the old spare time + the boys tell me I have now a figure whereas before I had an outline. I certainly feel lighter + perhaps it's a good thing the spare has rolled off, but, at the same time, I'm glad it's stopped because I was getting down to what I normally should weigh, + to get below 13.4. would have worried me.

That's all for tonight, ladies - we're all going down the road to the next camp to see a flick. The rig is oilskin + seaboots, + I think we'll be very warm.

Love - as if you didn't know -

Be.

Kent
England.

Welling

85 (A) Belle Grove Rd.

MORICE ~~W. P. H. H. H. H.~~

WELLING

99

Received
16.9.45