

45.

Received
26.7.45

Bombay.
19.7.45.

My own sweet Angel,

The postman has been a bit kinder to me for the last two days & she has had three from you - all intensely complimentary & calculated to put me in the sweetest of moods. One little request, my pet - as the mail is so awfully erratic, & I'm never sure whether any are missing, (if we're certain a letter is adrift, the postman makes enquiry at the Fleet Mail Office & sometimes the missing mail is found), would you be a darling & keep me remembering your mail? I suspect you forget what might seem to be an unimportant little act, but, as you see, it might make all the difference between a letter turning up tomorrow or next week. Like you, sweet, for me the arrival of letters from my beloved is an Event, one that keeps my blood racing & it's a very hard thing to do to keep it in my pocket, unopened, whilst I'm having my dinner or tea, & wait until I get up to the cabin. I prance in, flop on the bed, lie back, & frantically tear open the envelope, (they're always in an

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offered awful state by the time my panic hands
have done their worst), & then I'm very, very
quiet for a half hour - it doesn't take all
that time to read 'em, but I like to think
over it, & remember back & work out what
I'm going to say in reply - & then I read
it all over again. . . Half hour, did I say? -
well at dinner time that's all the spare time
I have after eating, but at teatime I'm
finished for the day, & maybe my mail
review will lengthen into an hour - I love
it.

Another pile of papers came with ~~this~~
your letter today - the other loads had a pile
too. When they're all opened the beds, chairs,
desk & c. will be covered. We sell 'em to
the dhobie now - he'll give Rs for a big
pile, but it's got to be big. We're just
getting pre-election campaign news now, &
I'm reading all about it - my goodness, how
they do go on! I suppose they can't conduct
a campaign without slinging a little muck
but I think they overdo it. Still I'm
glad to read that free speech is still in
vogue - wouldn't do to have hypocritical
nealy-mouths making speeches - let's have
vigorous oration by all means - only,

instead of throwing out hearty challenges they prefer to take up the dirty post - we've all earned in the past, no point in dragging it up, we all want to do better in the future, "Onward" as it were. I dunno, but in spite of what the critics say, I think the post-war mess is straightening out in a straightforward manner. I don't think the Administration on the Continent are doing a ~~bad~~ ^{bad} job of work. As I read it, the gradual transference of industry to peace goods is proceeding in as orderly & efficient a fashion as possible (they've started importing Austin cars into India already). Demobbing has actually started & I have hopes of speeding up in the future - is it the King going to include this subject in his speech on the opening of the new Parliament? Oh, I don't think things are going to take so long to settle down - you've observed, baby, that people at home are already beginning to forget, & in spite of the needs of the Jap war, it's better that they should begin to forget - forget the horrors, anyway, but remember the lesson.

The end of your last letter made me
sigh, dearest. I suppose I come into personal
contact with many people during the day,
but, like you, I still feel lonely - funny,
isn't it? - but is it so funny? It's one of
the penalties of being so near & dear to each
other that no one else can be any sort of a
substitute for each other even for a companion,
& I guess you & I will have to be "brave
little soldiers" until this parting is over. The
minutes fly by, sweet, & whilst we two are busy
telling one another how much we love each
other, & planning for the future, time marches
on - before you know, the day will come
when you'll get a letter from me yelling
in large type that I'm Coming Home!!!
& you'll say "my my" - eh? - & you'll think
that it won't so bad after all, & look at
the carpets we've got. From then on
you'll have me on your back, darling,
always around you, always loving you,
ever faithful - no more partings, no more
loneliness.

The matter with me Cathy is, I haven't
been ashore long enough & on Saturday I'm
going to do something about it. Geo. & I are
going to Bombay to see "Bring on the Girls"

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(my taste is unerring, isn't it, pet?), & besides that we - at least, I - are going to do a lot of shopping for to make up our latest bundles for Britain. We also need to re-stock ourselves in the cabin - cigars are short, we need more clothes' pegs, sealing wax - we use about a stick on each parcel - writing paper & envelopes, & several little oddments - it'll be a crowded day & we'll enjoy ourselves. I'd write you all about it, of course, on Sunday. Considering the sameness of all my journeys to town I shall begin to believe that I'm boring you with constant repetitions of stories of shop to shop to cinema to camp meandering, but maybe you like to hear anyway, eh? - would better say yes!

This week I've been very busy. The President is away sick & I've taken over, & it seems I've taken over just at the time when affairs need attention - just one of those weeks. Everyday I've had to go to the Jimmy about something & he's beginning to get a bit fed up with the approach of me. Just now we've got a plague of flies & they love to congregate on our plates of meat & bowls of sugar. Of course with the ever-present threat of dysentery that's a bad thing & today I've rushed everybody off their feet

getting wire + muslin covers made. The beavers in
 the mess have started their periodical slack
 period, + when 60-70 blobs have to be fed
 in about 15-20 mins - at breakfast (they
 always roll in at the last moment) + dinner - it
 needs all of my patience + forbearance to
 keep them moving. They get paid Rft a week
 by the contractors - full food + board free - +
 they also get a tip of Rs a month from the
 mess - that's the only hold I have over 'em, + to
 hear me threaten in pidgin Urdu is, to the
 casual listener, very funny. True to their
 own habits + upbringing they cannot understand
 our insistence on extreme cleanliness, + I
 have to point out every spot + source of dirt
 before they'll do any clearing. Their astonish-
 ment when a plate of food is returned because
 of a mere dead centipede is most expressive -
 these damned finicky Englishmen! A new
 mess-hall is now going up near to the old one
 + it'll be a larger affair altogether - watching
 the Indians build it I am reminded of
 pictures of the ancient Egyptians building
 the Pyramids - our scene is just as crowded
 with 'slaves', + just as deficient of any
 sign of modern building apparatus. There
 are as many women working on the site
 as men, + I don't wonder why, because, from

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One observation I can say that a woman does twice as much work as a man. These women bring their children along + its the first time Ive been in a Naval Base where the road is lined with begging kids - "Bachkeerh Sahib" !!! They start at 8 in the morning + finish at 7 each night, seven days a week - not bad for R1 a day?!!! They're also building a "Large & sumptuous Amenities Hall" + I am promised recreation beyond the dream of any mateloc, with a lawn in front in all. Of all this materialism I shant want to leave the place - or will I.

Health? One again, except, I present for your approval, a clean bill of health. Noe troubles at all. Weights remain steady at 140. No bother with eyes, (by the way, sugar, I havent received the specs yet), + teeth in good shape. I have put down to play water polo but I dont believe we have enough enthusiasts here to make up a team.

And here I leave you, sweetheart, 'til Sunday - only in the matter of mail, honey, for in spirit I never leave you.

I love you,
for