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Bombay.
12.8.45.

Dearest One, I'm happy to report that your ever-loving hubby is now more or less normal, altho' at meal times I still look at the food(?) placed before me with prejudiced eyes & eat warily & sparingly. The doc. saw me on Sat. & said that this Dia - whats-its-name out here, once you get it, recurs at odd intervals for no good reason at all & goes away again - nice country, ain't it?!! I still do all right now & that's the main thing.

Well what's about this surrender business, then? Whadya know? I think I was a bit previous on Friday night in writing that it was all over but I wasn't so very far out was I? My goodness darling, I get 'chokey feelings round the throat when I hear things like that - & ain't I just hoppin' mad at missing all those lovely celebrat-ions in London! If the war is definitely over - quite officially finished this week-

then I can start looking forward to a
very early demob. BUT, honey-child, let
me warn you that it won't be next
month, & the month after. I think
I shall have to wait 3 or 4 months
to get out because I can't believe
that they will flood the labour market
so quickly. In any case there's a lot
of clearing up to be done, even here.
However, even if it's 4 months, what a
different picture to the one that we had
when I first came out. Then we imag-
ined that there was a possibility of
2-3 years - now we can tear that picture
into a thousand pieces & paint the new
one of "Jack's back" with Xmas 1945
still in the calendar. I'd better not
ramble on in this vein for long for
there still maybe a snag somewhere -
it all sounds so easy, doesn't it? -
but in any case it just can't last
~~longer~~ for much longer & we've every
justification for jollification.

Certain little problems arise
out of this earlier demobbing prospect.
IF the Jap war is over at any time
after writing this letter, & you haven't

up to that time sent the camera, I
 reckon it would be unwise to do
 anything further about it, baby,
 owing to the length of time it takes
 for any sort of a parcel to reach me
 (I haven't yet got the specs!). If you've
 bought it, or have a beauty in mind,
 then just hang on it to present to your
 love-starved husband as a coming-
 home gift. I don't know to date
 whether the carpets have reached you
 (mail has slackened off again), so I'm
 not sure of condition, tax-to-be-paid, etc.
 But I do feel that I should snap
 up at least one large carpet
 before I leave & I'd like that for \$210
 sent otherwise use carport. Of course
 there's no panic of about this deal -
 it could probably wait another month
 & then again you've probably already
 sent it anyway so that it isn't really
 a problem after all. But I wondered if you
 agree with me that we need to buy
 another large carpet. I expect you'll
 be telling me your ideas on the matter
 in one of the letters now on their way
 to me - I mentioned it in 48 - so
 I'll wait.

There are ~~several~~ several little matters that have loomed larger in our minds consequent on the prospect of getting home earlier & some of the lads are saying quite frankly that they're not prepared to go home quite so soon - you can count me out of that bunch. We were all following a well-planned system of parcels & saving money & leaving certain 'items' til the last moment, to buy just before we sailed. Well, if our ticket came up in the next two months we'd be left up a tree for cash & those souvenirs would have to be left behind. In my case, I don't think that my release will be so early as all that, but if it did come out of the blue the fact that I've been leaving souvenirs behind wouldn't bitter the sweet for me, altho' as I say, you'd be surprised at the number of blokes who want to stay here just that little longer in order to get the extra money & goods. The man in the cabin, (again, not me) has expressed his view quite seriously, that it's annoying having to go back in the winter, & he'd sooner wait for the Spring!

All this is highly optimistic talk, sweetheart, → don't let it get your pulses racing too fast - altho I bet, like me, you're hoping like mad with fingers crossed. But won't it be wonderful - huh?

After many days of enquiries & general miserring I have managed to get the powers to own to a supply of forms regarding housing - I wrote about them in 51. As yet I've only done a specimen but I expect to get a copy of my own to fill in shortly. Before I do this I would like from you, honey, (a) your final opinion about Lewisham as the best council & any alternative suggestions, (b) address of Blessington - (c) time ~~had~~ ~~in~~ Blessington was rented - the last two are needed in the form. I've been reading in the Kentish of pre-fab going up permanently - 6 rooms too. I suppose they're only prototypes & later models will be along later - much later.

It is no use, I must come back to
this lovely topic of demobbing. They
tell me that parts of dis-embarkation
in England are scenes of the utmost
chaos when demob-troops pull in &
I'm wondering if the ~~the~~ quayside is the
best place to meet. It'll be a time
of panic over luggage, (as aforesaid
we can't anticipate taking back
half Bombay & as it is, I can't
see myself with less than 3 large
suitcases, steaming bag, kit bag &
hammock) of confused shouting of
orders, of much delay through Customs
& various checkings. The serious

question comes to my mind - shall I
let my beautiful in for a dirty job of
waiting like that? I know dockside
& if you're anywhere near whilst a cargo
is unloading & the ship's refuelling
then you get awful dirty & if it's wet
even the muck underfoot is glutinous
-> there's no place to sit in comfort
- all in all, very uncomfortable. But
I dunno, it would be nice to see you
there, baby, as we come alongside.
Of course, I don't know yet if they

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tell us where we shall land. I've got an idea they keep it a secret because of the wife problem - the port would be inundated. Or maybe they tell us, but, craftily, give us no chance to send a cable. Maybe it'll be at the station after all, sweetly, but it'll be all the more dramatic. To be in England or not to be with you just doesn't make sense, - the sooner the natural order of things comes about the better.

We've got a magician coming to the camp tonight for our entertainment - an Indian bloke. Pretty amazing, these chaps. I've seen 'em in the open street do tricks that leave you open-mouthed with wonder - the cleverness lies in such tricks being done with the help only of a rag or two, & a bit of a basket, whereas a London magician would need a full stage with effects. I shall squelch down to the cinema a little bit later on.

This feeling of exhilaration is getting to the dangerous stage - I'm sure the reaction will be terrific. But I'm

damned if I can see the snags. 'Too good to be true' - that's about the sentiment of all in this camp, but when the C.O. goes by in his car we yell at him to remember to treat us as civilians tomorrow. On reading foreign reports in the Indian papers I get the idea that the whole world is convinced of final victory & is celebrating accordingly - the way I look at it a few hundred million people can't be wrong & if it's good enough for them it's good enough for me. G.H. then - it's over. The effect on we two, sweetheart, has yet to be reckoned - at the moment I still feel like I've had a bang on the head - I'm eager to hear you on the subject, darling.

Night, angel. I hope the mail-plane flies tomorrow & brings news from you, telling me you love me.

I love you
L.S.

The Active Service

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