

81.

Bombay.

Darling,

I'm feeling particularly well-fed at the moment which means, too, that I'm feeling particularly lazy. A complication resultant on this condition will probably be a noticeable worsening of the quality of my writing as time goes by, but I guess by now you've gotten quite used to being a de-coder of my efforts. I'm going to be lazy in mind, too, sweetie, & only write about things you write about - in your 99, for instance. That came today & gave me quite a lot to think about, so it's not strictly true that in confining my penning to your topics I'm being mentally lazy - you've given me much to write about.

Being an important matter - at least, I think so - this question of my post-war jobs will be discussed forthwith, & what's more I'll do it here & now. I've had

a really good think about this matter,
baby, & I've come to at least one
definite decision - I intend to go back
to Contracts & not try for D.A.P. - here's
why. To get into D.A.P. means a
tussle with Establishments, for, as you
know, there are no Executive Grades
in that Dept., & I know that all
the higher clerical grades are jealously
guarded by the Rodford Clique - I
have every reason to believe that they
wouldn't welcome me. Further, altho'
I have had a technical training in

the Navy it is not the type of training
that would qualify me for any ^{technical} jobs in
D.A.P. ~~requiring such~~ qualifications.
I'm at my best in an office which
deals in work requiring a certain
amount of despatch in brain potential
- in a position which allows me to over-
ride convention & red-tape to the
advantage of the job - & with the
type of work ~~with~~ ^{to} which I can
apply any technical knowledge I've
acquired thus allowing me to ~~steal~~
keep tabs on an agreement involving

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experts, perhaps giving me the advantage over another less experienced clerk. All this I used to find in Com. 2 B & if I'd stayed on to see my cases worked out I should have been in the happy position of liking my job & being in line for promotion - also, by then, I should have made the proper contacts for the future development of L-Westaway.

Thus I want to go back to Com. 2, & I agree with you, darling, that Mr. Goad's Dept. isn't quite the thing I want - whereas Com 2 is Disposal sounds just the thing. I can start there where I left off - all I want is to get my feet under a table, the rest will be easy. Maybe later I'll look around, maybe towards Mr. Black, but first of all I want the Ministry to become Westaway-minded again - rather ~~as~~ ambitiously put, perhaps, but you know what I mean, eh pet?

So, my angel, I would be

very appreciative if you'd speak to Mr. Hall about me. You'll know what to ask him, of course, & how far to go, but I would suggest that you stress my Naval engine-room training & say that it will all help in a section dealing with engineering schemes. Tell him of my eagerness to get back to Car-2 & say, with tears in your eyes, that I'd be waited any where else. I'd wait anxiously for your reply, (I take it you don't think a letter is the proper thing at the present time). It wouldn't be a bad idea - but here I leave it entirely up to you - if you rang Black & passed on my kind regards - all part of my come-back. I know he'd be pleased, but it's a bit of a cheek to ask you to do it.

That's my future settled.

Is the iron one of those modern affairs with rheostats? If it isn't then as soon as they come on the market I'm going to buy you one of them - I like to see the red light - so pretty. I remember what a job we had to get anything out of the frying pan & the stove affair

is boom No. I. Anything connected with food is a boom - I speak with feeling. I do like to hear how our home is growing, sweet pie, in fact, after hearing how much you love me, that's Topic Grade A with me. By the way, what the hell's stippling? - if you hadn't mentioned it in connection with walls I'd have guessed it was a new word for boozing - especially if Cuffey's going to help you. As it is, I gather it's some kind of wall decorating but at the moment I look rather blank. Still, don't you get the idea your old man is a back-number in these matters - "stippling" had probably come in since the war - huh? By this time you will have phoned Mrs. Q. & discovered that the decorating is finished & that you can move in any old time. I do hope you can get some help from the gang because it's going to be hard work for a gal all on her own, & it ain't right. I'm sure Jim will help you. When you've got every

thing arranged, honey, I want you to send me a free-hand plan of the rooms & the layout, with sizes, etc. I'd like to have every detail in my mind as I picture our first real home lying back here in my crude camp bed with nothing to drink but brandy, & nothing to smoke but cigars.

Let me explain about the photos, ma pet. I haven't been able to get decent metal frames for your lot, & to keep them out would be courting disaster, for the rats would love 'em. I keep them in a cupboard which is frequently opened to give everybody a good view of the body. The old favourite is on the desk which is out of the picture. See - see - er!

Joany's doing well, eh? Glad to hear she's gotten started on her heart's desire - but it's going to be awkward with baby & housework, etc, surely? But perhaps she takes on the status of 'Madame' in the establishment & lets the girls do all the work - that's the idea?

I'm afraid I shan't be able =

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get any further than Bombay & district this trip. The only chance of getting away into another part of the country is by getting long leave. That's an expensive business, & further, its by no means certain that we'd be granted long leave in any case. And, then again, I'm not particularly interested in the rest of India - this part is bad enough. The whole country is seething with discontent & besides hating the British, the Indians cant understand why there should be any aftermath to a war! They want everybody in the world to rush to their assistance & give all, whilst they are adamant in their refusals to give a damn thing in return. With transport for the troops in such a state the Indian authorities agitated to some good purpose & got passage for 300 Indian students to England in a Troopship! To add insult to injury, before the ship sailed the students protested & ~~left~~ came

down the gangplank in a body, refusing to sail, because the ship's officers had asked them to carry out the same duties as the troops in clearing away their own mess! The Indian papers made a lot of copy in protesting ~~to~~ ^{against} talents, ("some of them holding a doctorate") ~~should~~ being asked to perform "menial tasks". I've met many a British matinee holding University Degrees & I'd like to hear what he thought about it. The simple people in India, being simple, are quite prepared to like anybody who will give them backsheesh, & they won't cause any trouble, or sting any mud, but the classes above the coolie are born trouble-makers - the big consolation is they will never cause wars because they haven't the guts to fight as individuals, nor the initiative to think & plan big. Try w² will to overcome what might be prejudice I do not like the Indians as a whole.

Those fit increments are very minor affairs, ain't they? Getting me nowhere fast. I shall have to try & do better than that when I get back -

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can't keep a yacht, two cars, a country
& a town house, & a wife on £500 a year.

As I said in 75, sweet, I don't think
I shall need any cash to be sent out
unless I see something very sooper-doooper.

Any news of the blitz-damage claim? It
has just struck me that regarding worries
like claims & flats & jobs for me after I
return, I'm a good kid sitting out
here letting you do all the graft.

I had a letter from Mike
today. He's really chocca on account
of they won't let him go on compulsion-
at grounds - Peggy's back is worrying
him. He writes very violently of the Navy!
He must be about 44 Group - if, as I
believe, his age is 25 - no, he's older than
that - say 28, which brings him down
to 41 Group - out in the latter half of
April. Apart from me, I know of no
~~other~~ man who would be so glad to be
demobbed as Mike.

For a lally man I seem to have

tumbled on more than somewhat. I've now come to the difficult part of the evening's writing - not mental difficulty but physical. At times, seated at the desk, it's a sheer impossibility to write for mosquitoes - they settle by the dozen on my hand as I write! The only solution is to get under the net, but I can't get into a comfortable writing position there.

I think I'd better declare my love whilst I'm able. This ending of letters with love & kisses isn't a set ritual, darling, & it isn't regarded by me as a 'must'. But when the time comes for me to sign off, my last thought is of a great tenderness of feeling for you. I say to myself, as I close, "here goes another letter to my lovely - hope she gets it - hope she's happy - hope she still loves me - hope she knows I still love her. And I think

Your everything to me.

R₂

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