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Bombay
12.11.45.

Darling, This is Sunday evening & very warm for November. There's a quarter moon with a few clouds crossing it now & again, & there are a number of dogs howling their heads off. One or two lights show in the country-side, & the glare of fires rises here & there - one or two towns, one or two tribal settlements, a thousand different noises from the jungle & a million mosquitoes. Altogether they make up a typical Indian evening, & that's the background for tonight's effort.

I said I'd tell you the latest news about denuding, didn't I, & so I'll try to give you a balanced non-prejudiced report as it leaves me at present.

Actually there hasn't been a great change from a fortnight ago, & as great drafts have gone from here, neither have the group numbers advanced perceptibly enough for me to say that we are now up to X groups & all before have gone. But, happily, that does it mean that the situation hasn't improved as far as it affects me; certain moves ~~strong~~ strengthen my conviction, (& your said would seem Angel), that the end of the year will see me away. It's rather complicated to explain, but I'll do my best.

Firstly, the fact that we still have a 26 man & several 27, 28's up to 31 in the camp means that the authorities are deliberately holding back those men pending the readiness to completion of the closing

of this base & further, it means that they have grouped these men together ready for draft when they can be spaced - their contemporaries in barracks have either gone or are about to go. Thus we are all anxiously awaiting the news that this group of groups is due for draft & we now hear that a signal has been made to the effect that it must be in Braconya by the end of the month for draft. Getting rid of that lot will mean that I am in line for the next big draft.

Secondly, the closing of the base about the end of the month to the middle of Dec will release all of us, & we shall become 'cash hands' to be sent to Braconya for disposal. When that happens it is fairly evident that any group will be held back ^{from going elsewhere} pending draft ^{to U.K.}: it is also possible - in spite of what I have previously said - that the majority of us will be shipped back to the U.K. as being redundant.

Thus whether the base closes or not by the end of the year I have every chance in the world of getting away in Dec. Altho' no big moves have started yet, anything can, & probably will, happen ~~for~~ just like that, for we get not an hour's warning of a draft chit. Oh, I'm happy enough about the situation, sweet, & like you, I believe it won't

be long now - my only gripe is of this awful waiting period wherein a week seems an age.

Went to Juhu this afternoon as usual. The beach was crowded with what were obviously Service men & women. I was sorry to observe that a commission in the East had effected our girls somewhat in the wrong way - they no longer spread charm & femininity around, they burn themselves in the sun til they crackle, & then they cultivate the instincts of the Whistling Deviser, plus a streak of tiger, which fits them to become a positive menace around the place. These creatures openly, very openly, undress on the beach as coolly & nonchalantly as any native, but, at the natural approach of the male who had been led to believe by their manner that these Sirens might while away the afternoon in their company, they scream abuse at the poor lads ^{who} if they care any nearer, would be in great danger of being scratched or kicked to death. I don't exaggerate - the sun & the free & easy way of the East has turned them into Amazons & land help the boys back home - unless, of course, the 14 day transition from hot to cold takes away the Devil & just leaves the original article with a tan.

What with swimming, sun-bathing, dancing bears, performing snakes, tea & biscuits & snap hunting the afternoon from 2-5 just flies & is as

Good a way of passing the time as any I know. Incidentally, the hotel place we go to for tea, etc plays records all the time, & they played a record that you must get for my return - I think it's called "Drinking Run + Coca-Cola" & I'm certain it's sung by a girl trio probably the Andrews Sisters - have a try to get it will you please, darling? They play this all the time out here, in cinemas & in shops, & it'll be a link with the pleasurable times I've had in India.

I've enclosed the Driving license form herewith filled in as far as I can, & signed. I'd like you to complete it, Honey, & send it to de L.C.C. with my old license. Remarks regarding the blank spaces are as follows:-

4. You'll see that I've put in Blessington as the address. If when you send it, (note I want it to run from 1.12.45) Blessington is not functioning then fill in the rest of the No. 4 with E.E.'s address as that to which you want the license ~~to~~ sent.

5. I'm not certain whether my old license mentioned the Groups they talk about. Being an old-stager I'm entitled to drive anything. If you're uncertain just put "As per previous license" w something like that.

6.(1) is related to 5. The rest you can easily copy.

And that's about all. Don't forget the 5/- P.O.
I hope I can use the damned thing ~~the~~ when I get
back. Seems to me, when I read the car adverts, new
or second hand, that it'll be a couple of years before
we can think of buying our own car - Mrs. Furlong
will have to provide.

I should imagine you've gotten something
definitely done about No. 12 by now - eh, baby?
I haven't had your report about last Sunday's
trip to the flat + I'm really anxious to hear it.
It's going to be damned awkward pulling all the
gear out to lay the carpet - if it hasn't arrived by
now. How's about lino - can you get it, or is
it worth it? Depends, of course, on the condition
of the floorboards + what sort of a job staining will
do. I'm in favour of a parquet-design lino if
it can be obtained - inlaid stuff - if it's good
quality, it looks as effective as a real parquet
floor, but I suppose that's unobtainable. I
can't follow Mrs. C.'s argument that ~~because we~~
~~having a carpet~~ we pay installation charges,
but it's not worth arguing about. Would you
like me to bring home a lot of soap, Sweet? All
English brands are plentiful out here - soaps + powders -
+ if you think it'll still be short say the words
+ I'll find room for a load. I think I've

already told you of the soap parcel sent a week ago. I shall make up another food parcel tonight to send next week - I think that'll be the last one; after that I'll collect my stock for bringing home myself.

Your joke about the soldier & the knees was very funny, but don't you think the girl was a little hard. I think that soldier had every right to look at her knees if she was showing 'em. Take me, for instance - my eyes are a bit tired tonight, but you're not going to ~~say~~ retort "they shouldn't be, they've been resting on my legs for the past half hour" - are you honey? You understand just how this man feels, don't you, Pat. You know that in mundane surroundings your legs are like an oasis in a desert & hubby can rest in 'em any time he likes - ain't that so? Anyway, whether it's so or not, I have a little rest every 5 minutes, on an average, & I'm here to declare that not only is it nice work if you can get it, but that I've got it. I think I've said before that my love for you is worth the time of Bluebell & I think you've said what the hell does that mean! Well it's a bit too obtuse to explain, Sweetheart, but the general idea is

I love you.

Les

Received
21.10.45
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England.

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