

103.

Bombay

29.11.45.

• My Own

With the receipt of 124 & the Pamphlet your own is now up-to-date with news & views. Before I let myself go into the slap-dash journalism I usually use on all occasions when feeling slap-dash myself I'd better start formally with words as The Officer, (said he, taking off his hat & bowing slightly to the West).

Livotti, (I would have no idea what a load this is of my mind), it is perfectly obvious that I, an old man of 34 years, cannot enter for any of the open or limited exams - all age limits stop at 30. It's a pity in one way, because observations are made to the effect that none of these exams, in so far as they affect the returning Serviceman, are highly academic, ^{but} are cunningly contrived so that one's intelligence is gauged rather than one's knowledge of Theorem, etc. You know, of course, that as an intelligent man I rate high so that I'm perfectly certain I could have walked away with, say, the Executive Grades Exam - ah well, one must turn to 'Promotion, Prospects of' for solace or disillusionment. In the book the sheet & the pamphlet great stress is laid on two things - (a) reversion & (b) chances of higher promotion than the acting ranks already held

When one returns to the desk. (a) gives me much hope that in my case I shall at least retain my E.O. rank, whilst those on (b) seem to indicate a distinct possibility of having the opportunity of rising to even greater heights. Altogether I'm fairly optimistic. Thank you, my Angel, for your interposition on my behalf, & for your helpful remarks - I've got a clear picture of the situation now, & I'll take over from here. Nothing more can be done until I get back when plenty will be done.

Talk on getting back home makes you think, eh Precious? Want to know if there any news, eh Pretty? Well there ain't no news - not a smell of a buzz, - not a whisper. The place is like a morgue & if you say anything about 'calm before a storm' I'll smack y' little bottom for you - everybody says that until I could scream - Scream! & tell ya. All we want is one little snippet of information, one little ray of hope to lighten our abysmal darkness - cast into Stygian depths we know no love, no nothing - nobody wants us, nobody cares - nothing happens, nothing matters - life is one big negative. But through it all I laugh - ha, ha - & snap my fingers - snap, snap - & tho' I must be my destiny I fear no foe in thinking - What the hell am I talking about!!!? & this the calm, peaceful, rational, happy-go-lucky hero who stormed the Clavical Bastion to some

good effect, & who is, even now, looking ~~of~~ forward to a return from the war to take his place beside his ever-loving spouse? Inebriation is the fashionable thing - men bumble & stumble over pebbles as they dash from tree to tree ~~drunkenly~~ ^{crashing} their heads against each with impartial indifference.

Staid Petty Officers can be seen any hour of the night running down the road shouting "leave out!" They sit sipping rum thoughtfully on the verandahs of the bungalows, & when the mood takes them they quietly get down on their hands & knees & bite chunks out of the concrete. There's what you might call a strained atmosphere in the camp. Let's pass to something much more pleasant.

Silk stockings! lovely things! - make me feel all gooey when I see 'em artistically placed on a 'well turned' ankle & a nicely rounded calf & thighs of just the right size & shape - well I've seen 'em on you, haven't I? - 'course I'm not talking about other girls - where would I see silk stockings on any other girl's thighs? Now you've made me forget what else I was going to say about silk stockings - my goodness, I can't even mention legs without some people, (mentioning no names), going up in the air & accusing you of all sorts of things - definitely blush-making. What ~~was~~ was it I was going to say - let

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we recapture my thoughts. Oh yes, I know — she bought you 5 pairs of rayon stockings - 'Loutessa' brand - made in England - fully fashioned so she assured. Now don't I deserve a kiss for that - hm? - making all that ridiculous fuss over nothing, absolutely nothing at all - just you come & tell your little oozy woony that you're sorry then - come to papa - ~~mmmmmm~~!

Your girls ~~would~~ ^{would} have been quite justified in believing that Bombay flowed over with such things as silk stockings - I thought so until I tried to get some. I think she told you, until quite recently the only types available, (to my knowledge), were ^{English} utility & some odd brands that been to my eye weren't worth looking at - you certainly wouldn't have worn them. But - lately, what with the war over 'n all that, better quality stuff has been coming on the market & these stockings came to a little shop that we patronise, to be sold as "real silk". Of course they're not real silk & I don't really know whether they're good or not - they look good to me. The bloke had nearly sold out & so I couldn't get but two shades. They'll be sent off by ordinary D.F. parcel in a couple of days - the ~~parcel~~ parcel mail has speeded up these days & this'n should be home with me or maybe a little after.

What firm does this insurance agent represent? When we get settled I shall surely have

Start a few policies covering something or other - who ever heard of a modern young couple who weren't financially crippled by payments on insurance policies? - but I ain't gonna be ruined by any old company. This life insurance you're talking about it a 2^d a week affair isn't it? - no money coming to me through it I suppose? - I reckon not, else the old man wouldn't have passed it over - & I ~~do~~ wouldn't have blamed him. I'm not at all surprised he was an ex-mate. Just do the job for some of the usual types I've met. I don't like the sound of him, anyway - too cheeky - nope, I don't think we'll deal with him.

Go easy with the Gold braid, Honey. "Gold braid" in the Navy, is a term synonymous with all that is over-powering, tyrannical, flanneling & generally unpleasant. But I guess a little round the edges won't hurt. I had a letter from Dix today wherein he promised that Albert would rig up any fittings for you. That's good-on, because whilst I haven't the slightest doubt that you're are a mighty clever & handy little sweetheart, if you haven't had experience of knocking holes in walls, etc., ~~your~~ efforts might be disappointing to you. That ain't no crime, for Dix caused disastrous cavities in my early attempts at sawplugging & any bloke what says anybody can do it first time is talking out of his hat.

One small but drip-preventing point, Baby - can you get me a shaving mirror + find a place to fix it so that the light is on my face? I shall need one from the wood "go" when I get home, + I don't suppose you'd like the idea of me shaving in the bedroom, as it's unlikely that the bathroom's fixed up - just one of those little matters that help to make the wheels go round. I remember that the alcove or hall out of which ~~the~~ the doors of our rooms open ~~was~~ was curtained off in the old place - have we got enough stuff to do it now? I was thinking that ~~what~~ ~~was~~ dashing from room to room in various stages of undress will be a very public spectacle - I don't worry over much, + if you're not worried about what people might see, Baby, then I suppose it's not worth bothering about with materials so difficult to get. Another point that occurred to me - we need at least two sets of keys to front door + rooms, altho' that's a matter that may be left until I get back. You a good kid at telling you what to do out here, ain't I, Honey? And when one considers that you've probably already thought of these matters a hundred times before one begins to feel that it's about time one shut up.

I haven't concentrated an oversight in you these days, have I Sweet. What with describing + so forth I'de rather let myself go in other directions

but it's not right that you should be neglected so. But, again, Precious, you don't need to be assured how much I love you & think of you & miss you. You know, don't you dearest, that in my life you are No. 1 Priority, & everything I do is directly or indirectly connected with giving you all the joy & contentment within my power. There's only one reason I feel impatient at waiting in this camp for a draft - it's because I want to return to you. There's only one reason why I jabber & jaw about flats - it's because my first consideration is to make a home fit for the most wonderful of all wives. There's only one reason I tramp the hot & dusty Bombay streets - it's because my life is dedicated to bringing gifts from Heaven & Earth to my beloved who is deserved of the best I can muster. If you were not my woman - if we had not met - I should still be scoffing at words like love, peace of mind, contentment, spaciousness, & all those which describe the divine something that makes up the soul of the woman you adore. For I adore you, darling, & daily ~~pay~~ do homage to your loveliness & personality, those qualities which make you peerless. I don't exaggerate, Sweetheart; try & think of somebody in your esteem who dislikes you - nobody can dislike ^{you}, all love you, all see you very much as I do, except that they do not, my cannot, see that light in your eyes or that flame in your heart, & I am the only man who can say

She is mine

Be

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~~For the King's Service~~
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