

28 September

Dear Ones,

We played bridge last night and we are trying to line up a game for tonight; I really am glad that we play for it is my only release. It is no exaggeration^{to say} that from the moment I get up (before 7, in order to get the Ammo details out on time) until I leave here in the afternoon I have so much that I should do that I actually can do very little. Right now Thorpe is up explaining to the Colonel why it is impossible for us to inventory and check our vast shipments that were just cancelled and have the job done and tabulated in 5 days. It will be a sad day if we are ordered to go ahead - everything else will have to stop while we throw ourselves into the quagmire. A complicating factor is the situation of the enlisted men. We have two men sick, two more scheduled to leave, ^{and} two who are completely hostile to Thorpe and who are so disgruntled that they are valueless for any major project; on top of that Sprague got a letter telling him that his fiancée was married and is pregnant!! Fine. So life goes on in the Ordnance - I dread each morning when these days start. Uncle Louis writes that the Army stateside is on a 40 hour week - that may be true every place else in the world, but not on Santo. For the person who has no immediate prospect of returning home, this island offers no escape, no relief, no saving features..... I have a funny feeling that this will be the predominant tone of my letters for some time to come. If I could only see beyond Santo!

We saw "Robin Hood" last night - it is still better than 9/10s of the movies being made now. This noon I wrote to Juj and to Louis Epstein - I sent Louis my 1950 story as part of my campaign to get him to write at greater length, to impress him with the importance of developing his self expression on paper. I see from Uncle Lou's note about his picture and the canned goods that the old techniques still come in handy! good for him. I did enjoy his report on the family around NYC and on his impressions of the girl whose introduction you apparently arranged. I will say from his criticism that he wants everything in the girl of his choice... I take it that you meant Atterbury when you said Reynolds as his place of separation, Mother; of course I have been stationed at them both - I think Reynolds is closed now. I envy his being 30 miles from Indianapolis if nothing else. Atterbury is the place where Uncle Lou will be discharged if all goes well and where I left for overseas duty. I say one thing: if I could work any way of getting out of the Army (above board, of course) I would not hesitate to use it. I did receive the letter written from Boston and including the dollar which the Thurman grandparents sent. Even taking her letters at half-value, there can be no doubt but that Aunt Ida is overjoyed with Son's marriage and what it will mean for him; it undoubtedly helped ease one of the big trouble spots in their minds. I am going to have to sit down and write to Lou one of these days.

I enjoyed the Herald's rather cautious article on the decision finding Strange Fruit too salacious for the Massachusetts reading public. I still feel that the book was ordinary in style, content, and even the problem it took up and its treatment of it - as usual Boston did more for the book than the book could have done itself. I am glad that you had a pleasant stay in Boston, Mother; just the idea of going to a show, riding on a train - the little things - have a terrific appeal for me right now. The idea of a long, relaxing train ride sounds like the cat's pajamas to me. I don't know what to think of the reception you got at Radcliffe. (Thorpe just came back @ the Colonel is perturbed but recognizes that there is nothing we can do about it... hmm, what next?) Perhaps Mrs Elliot is acting a regular role and there may be a channel through which she can be reached. The next time I write to Mike and Renee Freedman I will ask Renee if she has an advice as to angles to use. I am sure that the Alice Gilbert contact and things like that will help.

The news of the award of the Silver Antelope is wonderful, Daddy; it is a recognition which you have earned. You have certainly done a swell job in your scouting. I'll be thinking of you especially tomorrow night. That about does things for tonight - I have some ten envelopes just loaded with clippings and I will start to go through them and try to write one or two longer letters over the weekend -

Regards to Doris.

All my love,

Sumner