

Sunday April 1, 1945

Hello Darling:

"Happy Easter" darling. It's been a long time since we've seen Easter roll in together, and no doubt it will be a long time before we see it again, but I'll never lose hope because we know that Easter and all holidays will be that much nicer. I don't see how anything can be as wonderful as those days.

When they say that I'll appreciate home that much more, I sorta grin. I wish they could have seen us then. That expression, appreciate home, would disappear. I don't think that it was meant for me.

And so, to celebrate the happy event, they, my bosses, said that I would have to give the latrine a quick rub down. They said that it would never do to have the "Wabbit" see such a nasty, filthy hole. That's what they do to me on Easter!

I made a mountain out of it, honey. I was on latrine duty this morning and there was nothing to it. Started about eight and finished up at ten, just in time to make "Service" in the hatch. The Chaplin isn't Catholic, but that doesn't make any difference. Easter is Easter regardless of who says it, and regardless of who goes.

The Chaplin hoped that we could hit port or make some contact with chaplains of different faiths. He knew how a lot of us felt. As for me, well, he was okay. I didn't mind at all.

He was so good, this Chaplin, that one of the kids said he reformed. No smoking, no drinking (he can't get one here if he tried), no women (there ain't one within thousands of miles from here) and no swearing. He's even gone to ready the prayer book. Now, he wants me to listen and help while he recites.

We have a lot of religious material here. He's confiscated all of it. I'm really worried about him. Now he jumps

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all over the boys if they say a bad word.

But you should have heard him yesterday. What girls he goes out with! And what he says! And what he does!

You' get a band out of him. He reminds me of the present Mrs. Macko. You know – gab-gab? He's a round head, incidentally. If you thought Duane was bad, you should listen to this bird. How full of expression. He has a high voice and throws his hands about. He also says the girls love him. Well, he is fair looking, sports a mustache – thinning hair at twenty-three and he always has a grin.

H's like Romeo from Susquehanna. Mamie knows him. You should. There's no one like him.

But this kid is a peach, yellow and fuzzy. More laughs are derived from his antics. He has a good imitation of a baby. Nice baby! And he would talk in Slovak in a cooing, cuddling voice. Then he'd imitate the baby talking and sputter!

What people!

Then this magician I was telling you about. He's a ventriloquist too. He had a lot of tricks that he sold to Orson Wels. Abbott and Costello etc. He had quite a number of clippings about him and his work.

Now with a few characters like that, you certainly could build up a pretty good show around these guys.

Well, sweetheart. I don't know if it's okay to mention that we've hit port, but we have. This isn't the end of my trip. Just a delay.

Goodnight Jean. Thousands of kisses to you from the guy who loves you and awful lot.

Happy Easter to you, Mamie, Ann, all you folks and everybody.

Your sweetheart,

Leo

(2)

Monday, April 2, 1945

Dearest Jean:

I hope by this time you will have received some of my letters. It's rather difficult to get mail off at just a moments notice, since our stops have been pretty rare. This place is really the first stop, in about ten days, so you can see what our problem is. And that can't be helped. I'm only sorry that it takes so long.

As you probably have guessed, I happen to be the guest of Uncle Sam, and Uncle says, Aleutians aren't bad. He also said you'd be pleased to know that I'm here, and not somewhere else.

I don't know much about this part of the world, but I do know it's the most changeable place in the world. I believe it's the only place where you see rain, snow, sun, fog & mist, all at the same time. It's really remarkable. Today, are walked about in our shirt sleeves. Not bad! Another change, to just a little warmer, and you'll hear about me giving the old Pacific a trial run.

Just fooling, honey! They say we won't see many days where we will even think about a thing like that.

I haven't seen a tree in this whole chain. Those two dogs that came up

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with us sure are going to have a heck of a time. But then, there is my bed posts.

And sand. Yep! Got plenty of it out here. Not too much snow today. Snows like all get out – but melts quickly.

I think of you dig up some pictures of the place, you ought to get a better picture of the place, much better than I could ever describe.

By the way, -- I'm not at my regular outfit, or base yet. We're waiting for transportation. I'd like to get really set.

Some of these places are much better than those of the States. These huts are pretty nice – small and cozy. We still use oil burners. I guess they do throughout the chain.

Friendly place: A man's a man, regardless of color, race or creed.

In my barracks we have three colored boys. Right now, they're playing cards with some of the other boys.

Three more just came in! Quite a family!

Good kids.

And now honey, I'll give you a big kiss.

Holey Cow! Another colored boy just came in!

The kiss! Here's some more. I wish they'd stop gambling!

Good night darling. I love you, and miss you. Thousands more kisses to you from

Your (half to be) devoted  
husband

Leo.

Half to be? I want to be your devoted husband always. Just picturing the womanless (only) Island.

(2)

Tuesday April 3, 1945

Hello Darling:

I love you sweetheart. And I love you more and more – the more I think of it.

Tonight, a bunch of us old hens – one colored boy – a twice divorcee, only eighteen years old. A violent lover of the weaker sex. I refer to those three because they seem to be the men of the hour. The colored boy is divorced and has one youngster. The other boy is only eighteen years old, has credit for two divorces and three youngsters. Two by one, one by the other. The other is a chap from Pennsylvania. He's twenty-three years old – Slovak descent. Carries volumes of girls' pictures whom he claims, loves him. I saw the pictures and I counted thirty pictures of girls. Each one he knew intimately and has had ardent love affairs with all of them.

Men with pasts! I couldn't in no way keep up with them, even if I lied my head off. And I think I learned something. So, with these three astutes comparing experiences of their lives, career or tactics with women, the only thing I could do was withdraw, plan an attack, try to execute if and withdraw again to my corner. Short and snappy or as we are taught to do in certain problems, hit and run.

That's what I did.

Honey, I'm ashamed of myself. To think of all these experiences these boys had and the tender age of twenty, and me with ten or twelve years their senior, and all I can talk about is Sunday school classes.

But we had a pretty good time and a lot of laughs.

Another chap, something like me, claims that he had a girl once. He walked her home from  
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school one day.

But there are many of us who painted their lives in picturesque prose and respectable comfort. Mine was sort of a blissful background. When I met you, when I first knew you, I found myself something I always wanted. Prior to that, life was a drab existence full of wild excitement.

And now that I've swaggered into marriage, I find that I'm virtually the happiest guy in the world.

Just think honey, the censor has to read slush like that.

Personally, I don't care, but I sure wish he'd take my word that I won't give away a secret. IT's hard to say exactly what I feel with prying faces about. In ordinary times, Post would say that it isn't exacting to the proponents of etiquette. Even though they don't snoop. I still don't like it.

That's what I'm doing, bitching!

I'm sorry sweetheart. I know what should and what shouldn't be. They're right. They must be!  
But they don't touch your mail, so you can make up for what I've missed – as if you don't  
I'm sure grateful to you for being as you are.

Goodnight for now, Jean. Sweet and pleasant dreams to you – my orchid girl!

Thousands of kisses to you from,

Your husband

Leo

Hello Mamie (that's my mother censor).

(2)

Monday April 9, 1945

Dearest Sweetheart,

That radio I mentioned in one of my letters was just a gag. Nothing to it, so don't fret your pretty head about it. I'm only sorry you went to so much trouble finding out about it.

That address of Oliver's is an en route A.P.O. He will probably send another one soon. I Haven't the slightest idea where he will be sent, but where ever it is, I'm sure he'll be okay. That long stretch in the hospital saw to that. He will be alright. You might tell Lena that.

I did see the picture, "Song to Remember." Saw it in Frisco a few months ago. Very good too. It sorta reminded me of you. Instead of the violin, they used the piano. That was the producer's fault. It should have been the violin – but then that would have been an entirely different picture.

And "Keys of Kingdom." Didn't see that. I understand that it was a fine picture.

Out here, they have some excellent movies, but I'm afraid I won't be able to get to see any of them this week. I'll be working at that time. You see, we work for a certain length of time at one particular post, the same hours. I don't know much else about the setup, but I do hope they change once in a while.

By the way, Honey! Is Lesko still in New Mexico. Haven't heard from him in a long time.

Is Steve Sadowitz here on rotation? What I mean is, will he stay in the States now. Or does he have to report back to his old outfit.

Hojcik should be coming back to the States soon. He's been in Latin America quite a while now. Don't tell Mamie that. She's liable to worry about it. But after they've been overseas

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for a while, they're subject to rotation. That isn't true in all cases though. I hope for Marie's sake that he will be home soon.

Mamie dolled up too. Good! She's getting younger and younger every day. Glamour girl! Do you suppose she'd consent to posing in a bathing suit for me?

I've got your pictures in front of me now. I guess that made me think of "Pin Up." Of course, you know that there is only one "Pin Up" for me. On the back of the picture it says, "Can I be your Pin Up Girl!"

You always were. There will never be anything else between us. Of course, I might look at a seal now and then. There ain't any women about that I know of. Come to think about it. They do have female nurses. Haven't seen any yet. Probably never will. Who cares as long as you're here with me.

This kid White will have trouble. He's the one with the two divorces to his credit. He's a women's man. I'm afraid he'll have to forget women for a while.

By the way honey, I'm gonna send this letter free. The Lt. tells us that there wouldn't be much difference in time and that sometimes it's best to send it this way – judging the weather conditions. Keep track of this letter and let me know how long it takes from the date that's on the letter. Usually it takes a day to get out of here. And even that depends on weather conditions.

And now, sweetheart, Goodnight! Thousands of kisses to you from the guy who loves you.

My best to Mamie and Ann and everyone.

Your husband and sweetheart

Leo

Have you heard from Leon?

(2)



Thursday April 12, 1945

Dearest Jean.

I love you, dear! That's to start the day off right. That's my first general action each morning. TO love and be loved, is my motto.

And so as usual, I slept shamefully late this morning. My watch twitched to twelve-thirty. All I could say was – I love you dear! Oh well! Holy Cripes! I jumped out of bed, quickly dressed and hurried. I had to go – that's why I hurried. I stepped out the door and held my face. A strong gush of wind and rain up and smacked me in the face.

At that time, one of the boys who had just come from the orderly room told me the suffocating news of the President's death.

"Yeh?" That's all I said in response to it. It sorta floored me. I couldn't believe it. So, I went about my business, and when I came back to the hut, I told the boys what I had heard. I snapped on the radio – and sure enough they were broadcasting the sequences of the President's death. About that time the whole hut was up.

I looked at my watch. It was twelve-forty-five. "Chow!" I said. I know I said it softly.

I walked out the door, down around the lake and to the rear door of the mess hall. I opened the door slowly. I wasn't sure if I could go in that way. I poked my head through that door and looed around. Nobody said anything so I walked in. It was just like walking into a funeral home. All conversations were carried on in muffled tones. That, also surprised me. Usually, there is enough noise in the mess hall to drown out a B-twenty-nine.

Most of the boys were already seated and eating. I picked up a tray, cup and silverware and proceeded to fill my platter with dainty fare. They usually leave the food right on the stove to keep it warm.

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I walked to a table and sat down. As I walked, I caught fragments of their conversation. IT was the President that they were talking about.

All this time the radio in the mess is turned on. A couple boys were bent over the counter listening to it. A couple other boys stood in the doorway and some gathered in the kitchen. Some just sat and pecked at the food before them.

I then started to eat. I was as bad as the rest. I too fumbled with my dinner. I ate what I could, got up, cleaned up my tray and pushed my way through a couple boys, and back to the hut I went.

I sat down on my bunk. I felt tired and lifeless. I tried to write. I gave that up. I tried to read. The war news had no effect on me, so I laid down and listened to the radio. At this particular time bereavement messages were coming in from all parts of the world.

The boys had finished chow and were filing in one by one. And again, the President was the main topic of conversation. That, and the radio neglected to give me any rest. All I could do was stare and listen.

Truthfully honey, I felt bad. I felt as though I knew him better than most people. He wasn't what you might call, "just President," he was more like a father with a great big bunch of kids.

Maybe I imagine a lot. I guess I am a dreamer. Yep, that's it!

I dream of important things. You, for instance! You're in all my dreams –in all my love and in all my heart. No matter where I am, you're always the one beautiful thing on my mind.

I love you a lot, honey!

Sweet dreams and thousands of kisses to you.

Give my best to Mamie and Ann and everyone.

Your affectionate husband

Leo

You might save a little data for me on the President's death, etc. Headlines for instance.

(2)

Friday April 13, 1945

Hello Darling:

Did you all get over Roosevelt's death? I suppose some of my Republican friends are glowing hysterically. Not mentioning any one in particular, but just how are they taking it.

And how are you honey! You never say too much about yourself. I mean, truthfully! How are you. I suppose you lead a quiet, bovine life. Nothing about to stir your medicinal virtues? One thing I can be thankful for is, too much wild life doesn't agree with you. Or do you disagree with me. I just wondered.

Remember me telling you about the thousand and one dogs out here. We seem to have a lot of trouble with them. A bunch of softies, that's what they are. Last night, one of the dogs in my hut boldly ventured outdoors. One of the boys let him out because he whined and scratched at the door. Two minutes later, after his kind friend nestled comfortably in bed, some more whining and scratching at the door. The same pooch wanted to get back in. No one moved. To hell with him. Let him stay outdoors.

Then he started to bark and scratch. You know what kind of a racket that makes in the middle of the night.

And we still wouldn't get up to let him in. I drew deeper into the blankets – drew the comforter over my head and held my hands over my ears. I was getting impatient and emotional. I tossed from one side of the bunk to the other. I could still hear him.

Then it stopped. I was relieved for a moment. Then I heard it. The loud clump of running paw steps over the roof. My eyes followed the sound automatically.

Then it stopped again for a minute. I knew he reached the other side of the hut and no doubt, he found his way to the ground.

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I had a stinken idea what his plans were. Only a second had elapsed, but it seemed like forever. Then it came. He hit the door with a terrific whack. Everyone jumped. It was like a rifle report in a small chamber.

What they say. What they Said!

Well anyhow, we still wouldn't get up. You just don't feel like getting up. You're so warm and comfortable, but – that ---!

Before you could realize what happened, one of the boys up, slid on the oiled floor, banged up against the stove and swore. Yea, he did swear. I heard him.

I never did know what pedigree that pup was, but I sure know now. I can't tell you what he said, but its sure covered volumes. Some words I never heard before, and no one would tell me.

Following that episode of magnificent presence of manner, I sought out an antidote for mental excitement. A good strong drink might have done it, but the good Bible etc., etc. tells me we haven't the presence of mind to cope with spirits, liquid, spirits no matter what color.

And so, as a final resort, I navigated with anxious care through channels most familiar and most precious to me. The channel straight to your heart.

When I got to bed, you're probably just getting up. There is about six hours difference in time. That probably accounts for all the wonderful dreams I've had. I hope they continue forever!

And so now sweetheart I better sign off.

I'll love you always, no matter where!

Thousands of kisses to the sweetest girl I know.

Say, - hello to Mamie and Ann and the rest.

Your husband,

Leo

(2)

Sunday April 15, 1945

My Sweetheart:

If by chance this conflict in Europe should be over one day soon, and if by chance screaming headlines of "Wars End" should cover that front page, that would be an eventful day, would it not? It would. And I would like to know exactly what kind of a day it would be back home. Of course, letters from you would detail your immediate reaction, but the people are a whole. I can't depend too much on the "Sun" up here. In fact, I haven't seen a home town paper since I left the States. That isn't important. What you can do, is save this one particular paper with the headlines glaring boldly in huge type. I would like to see it, and keep it. Will you keep it for me?

I'm sort of expecting an end soon. I'm not sure I know just how long. Some say a month at the most, some say a little longer. Some don't say. I'm not saying, but I'm hoping it will be real soon. To get one off our chest will warrant great revelation. Then the other ----! Let's finish on first.

It's hard to imagine such as yours truly can ever hope to win the war from this angle. I think the battle lies within ourselves. It's a battle of want, and something to do. In spite of everything, it will near be as bad as those early days. Today, we have good substantial living quarters – such as they are, and they are, nevertheless, adequate protection. We have good solid bunks, minus a spring to tow, and we have plenty to keep us warm. Blankets, oil which is darn good, clothing, and a first Sgt. to keep us warm, or burned up if you prefer.

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Some boys seem to resent the first Sgt. Don't they always. To me, our first Sgt. is somewhat singular looking gentleman, not too tall for his face and, and very long as to his mouth. He has large, bulging eyes, which he usually kept close (so they tell me). Someone remarked that he resembled a frog because he had a curious frog like trick of flattening his eyelids – as if in the act of swallowing something. I don't know. Who ever heard of a frog growling and barking.

I know I shouldn't talk like this honey. I'm just inventing moods of stroke and dash. The reason I mentioned first Sgt. is because he's the most popular guy in the outfit. Everyone either likes him or dislikes him. As for myself, I like him, it that's possible. I don't know him well enough to pass judgment. He's the guy that takes a good deal of trouble. He's a shock absorber, working two ways. The officers want to take a rap at someone, the first Sgt. intercedes. When a private wants something, the first Sgt. is the middle guy. He's sort of a referee. The waves batter him on either side.

And besides, look how lonely he is.

There I go! I'm sorry honey. No offense.

It's just that there is nothing a guy can write about. He tells his wife he loves her. And he does. He tells her she's beautiful and warm, and she is. In fact, she's everything a guy ever wanted and more.

So, you see how it is! Gee, I love you honey, and awful lot. I always will, but in the meantime, lots of good fortune to you! Thousands of hugs and kisses from the guy way out here!

Your husband,

Leo

(2)

Monday April 16, 1945

Dearest Jean:

Today, I encountered a new experience. And maybe you'll never believe it. I didn't either when I first heard about it. And it's kinda nasty!

All about our area we have small latrines, most being the two-seater type you'd find out in the country. Every week or so, they have to be cleaned out. Today, happened to be one of those days and no being on duty, I was selected along with two others to massage these relief headquarters.

It wasn't as bad as one would suppose in as much large cans do all the collecting and all we do is empty the stuff.

Gruesome, huh!

It's all dumped into huge vats. Oil is applied and a match is applied to the oil. The result is a huge fire.

It doesn't take long to put the operation into effect, and less time to carry it out.

As a result, it's clean and sanitary!

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And surprisingly, we have volunteers for the job.

Out here we have to get rid of refuse and junk the best way possible. Burning is the solution and possibly the only one.

Duties out here are light anyway, so one doesn't mind doing things, just to keep busy.

Guard duties are varied. I guess they cover fixed post and roving patrols with jeeps. Then occasionally, some other guard detail develops. That job goes to anyone who does not happen to be on duty.

Tonight, a job popped up and I won the detail through a lottery, instigated by our esteemed first Sgt.

It is necessary or else they wouldn't need guard and besides, I'm glad to do something.

But now, with lots of love for you and thousands upon thousands kisses to you, I am as always,

Your affectionate Husband

Leo

P.S. Just received a letter.

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Tuesday April 17, 1945

Dearest Jean:

If there are cards to be had, Leo will get them somehow. And it's nice to know that you liked them, but in no way should you give me credit for good "taste" in my selection. It's just that the guys who write those lines are people of versatile gift. All we do is read them and pick out the one that comes nearer to the truth, and one that bears more sentiment. That is the kind I look for.

But in no way do they express what I actually feel. My thoughts are deeper than mere words.

I'm sorry I'm so stupid here, but what is "sachet soap." The only soap I'm familiar with, is honest to goodness yellow G.I. soap. The kind you scrub walls with – the kind we use with a stiff brush to clean our feet. Is there another kind?

Al Lesko up for induction again! He is never making it. The Army doesn't want healthy young men, they'd prefer my type. Nope! I betcha he won't get in.

Jean, don't you fret your pretty head about my health. I assure you that I'm as snug as a bug. I've got good living quarters, good clothing and equipment, and food, - the

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best yet. Where else can you get steaks two and three times a week – and all you want. Every day we get two or three vegetables. Asparagus! Sliced in butter. Peas, corn, beans, etc. Everything. I mean it honey! Very good. The coffee is damn good. Milk, ice cream, cake, pies, chocolate syrup. Fruit of all kinds. They keep this stuff on the counters. Help yourself. Take what you want. Right now, I've got grapefruit, oranges and apples in my locker.

Last night I had a steak sandwich. There was Spam and hamburgers too. And coffee and milk, fruit, cereal or what have you. I've seen some cheese sandwiches that would make your mouth water. The boys just up, took their bread and put cheese between the two slices, heat it some more until the cheese oozes over the sides of the bread. Doesn't that make your mouth water?

One kid uses [*unintelligible*] packages of cereal before he goes to bed.

Then there is cake or pie to be had.

Honey, what could be sweeter, outside of my deep devotion and love for you.

I wish I could tell you where I am, but I can't. There is nothing in the books that says you can't guess. You might try guessing. You might hit it right. There ain't too many important places out here. That booklet I sent may offer you a clue.

But for now, honey, keep trying. I love you very much, Jean. Thousands of kisses to you from,

Your husband



Friday April 20, 1945

Dearest Jean:

Received the Anniversary card today. Very pretty, honey! I knew what it was before I opened it, sort of expected it. IT's one of those days a guy always remembers – a beautiful remembrance. Thanks sweetheart!

So, Mamie's cat had pups. I can just picture Mamie talking to the cat just like she would one of the family – you know, motherly advice and all that. But the cat did it anyway. After all that talking to.

Let me know if you hear from George Oliver. I owe so many letters. If I ever get enough time, I'll write some of them. I thought I'd have plenty of time to write when I got here, but lately, I've been tied up with guard, sleeping and eating. I'm glad it is that way. Time passes much quicker.

And speaking of time, no doubt you heard about mustering out service men after the fall of Germany. Well, we received a formal statement on that questions. For me it doesn't look so hot. Age and parental dependents do not count. So that puts me behind the eight ball. The biggest item to be considered is overseas duty and men with children – their own. There of course, time in the service. And now that they've settled that for us, I won't expect too much. I'm sure you'll be wise not to let anyone tell you anything different. So, honey, don't be disappointed. I think it will be gradual mustering out and not one of those quick ends meaning

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the last war. I'm afraid this one will last a long time and before it ends, quite a few of us old timers will be out, and others will take our place. I'm almost sure it will last that long.

Sweetheart, have you decided what you're going to do this summer? I think Canada would be an ideal spot for you to relax and get away from things. Why don't you think about it? The family will no doubt get to the lake again this year. Please think about it. I think you need the rest very much. I'll even let you take your violin with you. In case you do decide to go there let me know before hand so I can send my mail c/o General Delivery. It's a long way away, to think about this summer, but I know you like to plan. It's just an idea.

I'm glad you had a pleasant birthday, sweetheart. I can imagine Mamie and Ann serenading "Happy Birthday" to you. Mamie with her high voice and Ann with her low, quivering voice. Exciting, I'd say. It's nice of you to praise my gift. I'd feel hurt if you didn't. Just fooling, honey! Don't forget that extra bus tonight. I'll be expecting it.

Everyone was nice to you this year. They never acted that way before you came into my life. Wat a person you must be. It truly pleases me.

"What is thy power, oh fair one!"

As if I didn't know. Not only do I think the world of you, but my family and friends are trying to outdo me. Trying to make me look like a piker.

I am jealous.

Well, darling, the time has come when all children must say, goodnight, angel! Take care of Jean for me.

Thousands of kisses and loads to love from –

Your husband

Leo

(2)

April 21, 1945

Dearest Sweetheart

I hope this letter reaches you okay. I won't feel comfortable until it does.

I happened to meet a sailor on board one of the ships. He said he would mail this letter for me when he hit the States.

This letter isn't that important, but I can tell you where I am and I thought you would like to know.

It's an island in the Aleutian Chain called Amchitka. There isn't much to the place, but it is quite large and spread out. And believe me dear, it's good and safe. You can find out more about this place from the World Atlas. It's a big red book we have.

Your letters aren't censored. You can write what you will.

This is the only M.P. Co. on the island. Our duties are light. We have jeep patrols and guard gangplanks and guard piers. At these piers we have a small hut such as had at Douglas. We usually park in there all the time. This gangplank guard is on a duty when there is a ship in port which is nearly all the time. Sometimes we work at theaters, U.S.O. shows, etc. Otherwise the job is very simple.

Island is flat, with slight rising mounds.

The letter all about the radio was coded. You didn't catch it. I was trying to tell you about where I was. Just remember when you see my name written on the envelope in this manner, P.F.C. Leo A. Skorko, you know that "A" means the code is present.

1<sup>st</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> two words of the first sentence mean up and down on the map.

2<sup>nd</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> two words of the second sentence means oceans on the map.

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Now to find out exactly what spot I'm at.

In the are I have given you by code, list all the towns or Islands on a paper for your own use. Each day, when you write a letter to me, just mention one of those places. Ex., "Is it Amchitka?" That's all you have to write. Each day write a different name.

Now, if you hit on the right one, I'll answer "Just received a letter dated April 20."

You know that you wrote "Amchitka" on a letter dated April 20.

Now you know where I am.

Keep the list	Amchitka	April 20, 1945
	Adak	April 19, 1945
	Attu	April 21, 1945

Kiska

April 18, 1945

If that confuses you, you might forget it.

You might have known where I was before or had an idea.

But remember, honey. Write those codes down so you won't forget them. Get into the habit for looking for the letter "A." There won't be very many letters like that because I expect to be here some 18 months and longer. But just in case. I'll probably be able to tell you beforehand that I'm moving.

What do you think of the idea.

As we go along, we will be able to devise more plans. It will be interesting to figure out this stuff.

And now sweetheart, I guess that's all.

I love you sweetheart, so much that it hurts. I think and worry about you. Are you happy. Are you safe. Do you love me as I love you?

You're the most wonderful person in the world. I keep looking at your picture all the time. That's all I have now.

Don't misunderstand me honey! This is a swell place. Everything is swell – but I miss you!

Goodnight dear.

Your sweetheart forever

Leo

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(2)

April 21, 194

Dearest Jean

Here's a few pictures – one of the boys consented to take with him. He's a good egg.

I will be simpler to get them all off at the sometime.

Love

Leo

(1)

Saturday April 21, 1945

Dearest Jean:

The weather is fine. Just a cool, mellow day with a full, grey sky. Every once in a while, the sun pops out, and then it's really nice.

I don't know if this is information, but we have colored boys, who comprise the labor gang for the area. Quite a few of them are familiar with Binghamton, and live in the New York area. One boy in particular mentions the "Green Postures" in Elmira. He worked there as an entertainer, a singer I believe. His name happens to be Jim Berry. Not that it makes any difference, but it just goes to show you how far and how close people are.

But back in the States, there are very few people who know where Binghamton is.

I'll have to jump on Frank Feek when I get back home. When you see him, ask him what he and his gang are doing besides figuring out ways to pinch people's money.

Received your letters almost daily now. Sometimes air transport becomes difficult and they get held up. As a rule, it takes about 4 days to get here. That's damn good time.

I hope Mamie had a nice trip. IT's nice to know that she gets out once in a while. Does her good.

Birthdays are nice, ain't they? I can just picture you giving off a shy grin

(1)

especially when the boys kissed you. And those gifts. If you feel like I do, you'd want a birthday every day.

And speaking of birthdays honey. Please don't send me anything but a card. That's all I want – just a card. Thing's get lost during transportation and sometimes it takes too long. A kid in the hut just received his Xmas package. It was mailed a couple months before Xmas. And besides honey, I don't want to have a lot of extra stuff. I promise if I ever want anything, I'll ask but, in the meantime, please let me be boss just once.

I know you all want to do things for me and I appreciate it. Thanks sweetheart.

I happened to see "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" in Ord, California. That was a couple months ago. Very good picture.

Being lazy is common place with most people. But being beautiful, such as you are, is circumstance. People like you ain't discovered every day. By virtue of happenstance, people can only be what they are at heart.

That puts you right out on top.

Well darling, I better quit for now.

Give my best to Mamie. Tell Ann that I appreciate her help.

Goodnight angel. I love you!!

Thousands of kisses to the sweetest girl of all the girls I know.

Your husband and sweetheart

Leo

(2)

Sunday April 22, 1945

Dearest Jean

Dogs! Dogs! Thousands of them. Where do these little wild creatures come from? Judging from the amount, you'd think they've been here for centuries. No doubt some of the boys brought some up from the States to be used as pets. And pets they were until they started families. As a result, nearly everyone has a dog. And the boys really become fond of them, sometimes causing heated arguments. One day last week, a bunch of the boys got together. The dogs tail along, -- well, just to tail along, I guess. Then the boys start teasing the dogs. Dogs are like kids sometimes. When kids know someone will go all out, in playing with them, they become excited and unruly. The dogs are the same way. They're even jealous of each other. They'll sulk and growl and even start little fights.

So, all in all there is a hell of a commotion for a while. They dogs growl and snap and shake each other. Then the boys begin to argue and snap at each other. "Get your dog to hell out of here!" And maybe he'll kick at a dog and try to pull his pet away. His pet is a stinker. He always wants a fight. I guess his master does too, where is darling is

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concerned. Then someone gets a bright idea. He throws a stick in the pond. You heard about the cold waters up here. Believe it or not, it's colder.

In goes a dog. Up into the air goes his master. Little Junior might catch cold.

The other dogs follow suit. In they go. In the center a fight starts. They all want the stick. On the bank their masters plead in vain -- but to no avail.

More sticks go in!

About this time, we (of the human race) are splitting our sides out. We roll and weave, clap our hands, [*unintelligible*] our trunks, our eyes glare in anxious frenzy. We of the human race, anxious to see blood!

The masters know it's useless. He looks about at the hysterical crowd.

"Common, Pooch!" and then laugh half-heartedly.

Somehow, he feels as though he should laugh, but he does. And a half-hearted laugh is the silliest thing I've ever seen in these woods. His eyes follow his dogs, every movement. Some other dogs jumps his dog. He yells frantically, kick and howls. His dog is clear of danger, but he's got some other pooch by the neck and is shaking the hell out of him.

Naturally, the owner beams from stem to stem!

What a life! Exciting! Some fun!



Well, sweetheart, all that prattle and nothing said.

I will say something now of great importance to me. I think your wonderful honey and I love you a great deal. Thousands of kisses to you.

Your husband

Leo

(2)

April 22, 1945

Dearest Wife:

This Navy boy also consented to mail these few pictures. They are not much, but I thought you might like them. I can send only a couple at a time up here, and I suppose that would have been okay.

There were taken April 20 here at Amchitka.

If there is anything you would like to ask me in a letter, you can devise a little scheme where by I can answer you.

But if this letter gets through, I might be able to get more through later. That's one advantage an M.P. has sometimes. Meeting sailors and such.

I hope you're not angry with me for doing this.

Your affectionate Husband

Leo

I love you sweet

(1)

Monday April 23, 1945

Dearest Sweetheart:

Fog and mist are not uncommon up here. It's either in the air, or it's in your head. Most of the time it's in your head. That's why we wear hats, to keep the fog in.

But, it's a fair day. It's still lukewarm, and those dull skies still prevail. "Quote." It's like any March day in the States. "Unquote."

And regardless of weather conditions, we still have a job to do – such as it is.

This morning the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. calls up my hut and informs me that it's time to get dressed and get on the job. That was real early this morning – about 0950. I was to report at 1000 fully (he particularly) stressed "fully," that included arms and my M.P. band, dressed in the orderly room.

I ups and dresses as fast as any slow poke could, rant out the door with my shirt half buttoned, jacket in my arms and pistol belt slung over my shoulder, and shoes fastened at the top. As usual, I'm the last one for any formation. I'm slightly ashamed of myself.

Into the truck, which is a small vehicle with a canvass over the top, and the backs open to throw or allow dust and mud to kick you in the face. Bars hang from the truck rafters to enable the occupants to hold onto something

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whenever the going gets rougher.

But, we're all happy. Take that anyway you like. An adjective in front of that would no doubt, be the correct word to use.

So, we finally arrive at our destination, the theater, where an orientation film is to be shown.

Our job at this time is to regulate traffic and keep order to a certain degree. When that is done, and everyone is inside, we take off our hats and seat ourselves among the common folk. We've got to see the picture too. In fact, everyone on the post has to, so during a period of time, the Army has several showings at different hours to enable those who are on duty to get a chance to see it. A few today, a few the next, etc.

Now, everyone likes these films. They're long and interesting and cover a good deal of "Why we fight!" Someday you civilians might get a chance to see some of them, and I'd advise everyone to see them. They come in several parts and last perhaps an hour.

After the movie lets out, we stick out our M.P. bands and direct traffic again. The area cleared, we take off. All through.

See! That's one of our jobs. Sometimes dull. Sometimes interesting. Never the less, it's a job.

I still want to get home, but I'll never forget this job.

And so sweetheart, this winds up another letter.

My deepest love to you, darling from the guy who thinks you're swell, and loves you a lot.

Your husband

Leo

Thousands of kisses to you.

(2)

Tuesday April 24, 1945

Dearest Jean:

Quite a change in weather today. A strong wind kicks up, lashing and tearing at your clothes. To the boys, it's just an average day. To me, well I don't know. Haven't decided what to make of it. In time, I'll get used to it. And in spite of my warm blood, I'm glad that I came up here instead of those Pacific Islands, where a guy can't possibly get comfortable.

But I do hope the Army gets a notion to get rid of some of the dogs. I have referenced to one dog in particular. He happens to be a pet. Me thinks they forgot a letter, and should have added the "S" between the "e" and "t." This little jerk happens to live in our hut. At times, he's taken the notion that the floor is too uncomfortable. The bunks are more promising. He hasn't bothered me yet, but many nights I came in and found him laying in someone else's bunk. He knows he's wrong because he jumps off when he hears someone coming. He's quiet then.

Some nights, he gets a notion to be vicious. About 1230 midnight, when I come off duty and I'm quietly prodding my way through the door of my hut, flashlight in my hand, trying to make as little noise as possible, he starts a barking spree.

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I'm trying to quell his disturbed mind, by softly explaining that I live here. In reality I feel like braining him with a two by four. Please! Keep quiet! Is he concerned? Not by a long shot. Does he listen or pay any attention to my feeble apologies? I'm sorry I woke him up. I'm sorry, damn it! Shut up!

Everyone is awake now. I tiptoe to my bunk, snap on the light over my bunk, and prepare to turn in. That's what I did tonight, when the door quietly opened. One of the other boys no doubt. No one else wanders around at night especially at 12:30 in the morning. I looked over. It was one of the boys who had the corner bunk.

As soon as that door opened, our little four-legged friend starts up another rumpus. This time he lets out one yelp. That's as far as he goes. He was stopped short by a curt, sharp, "Quiet!" And a bawling out was in order. He got it, and how. He whined and whimpered and drew back to this corner, a licked and hurt dog.

Now it's quiet. Thank goodness! Now I can get some sleep.

And sleep is what I like to do. Sleep and dream. Always my thoughts carry me thousands of miles away – to you, to the girl I love – to the sweetest girl I know, to the one I want to be with always. I say, goodnight darling! I love you, an awful lot. Here's a bunch of kisses from --

Your husband

Wednesday April 25, 1945

Dearest Sweetheart:

Had a home run today. Four letters, one of which took four days, the others six and seven. That's pretty good time. Sometimes it's hard to get or send out mail because of flying conditions. Fog and low ceiling. I'll try a few more "free" letters just to see what time is involved. I might not make a great deal of difference.

Just for the heck of it, find out if the Binghamton has an Air Mail service. Is the mail flown directly to Binghamton, or is it dropped off at Syracuse from there, by rail? Bob might be able to enlighten you on that score.

Thanks, honey, for taking care of the "Sun" for me. I'm sure everything will be straightened out now. I'll wait a week or so, and if I don't hear from the "Sun," I'll drop them a line. I think Callahan will get in touch with the office, so I won't have to worry about that.

Time doesn't mean a thing in the Army. Some of the boys have been here for thirty months and more and still, there is no sign of going back to the States. Look at Pete Hodanik. He was one of the first to hit foreign soil, and he's still overseas. I hope he gets a break, and gets home for good. He deserves it.

Say! Ann has reformed! I can't picture her being comfortable with out a drink in her hands – and a book – and the radio.

(1)

I can't imagine what's happened to my family. Have they no pride? Dear! Dear!

I understand Mamie is quite the cutup. What does that boyfriend of hers look like. I hope he isn't without reference. Hate to see the family getting involved with just anything. You know how it is. Some stuff!!

By the way Jean, I wonder if you would do me a small favor. I've got my heat set on a dictionary, a small pocket size. Do you suppose there are any to be had? If you do happen to find one, will you send it. It's hard for me to spell words such as dog and cat. I did have the small story book size in mind.

You might check on Leo Curry in the telephone directory.

Billie tells me that you're quite the girl anymore. I mean curves and stuff, all in the right places and evenly distributed. She wants to know what your secret is. Surely, I can't be responsible, I tell her. And besides, how would I know. Maybe it's the punch or root beer or something.

Now you know I haven't been talking through my hat all these years. "Am I the picker," I say to myself. And I answer, "I sure am!"

And then I say to myself, I love Jean, more than anything. And I will love her as long as I breathe, as long as my pulse beats, and forever more – eternity!

So, sweet lady, goodnight – pleasant dreams and lots of love and kisses from –

Your husband

Leo

P.S. Say hello to Mamie and Ann

(2)

Thursday April 26, 1945

Dearest Jean:

That bit of information concerning Leo Cury was exact and just what I wanted. You must have gone to a great deal of trouble checking here and there. I knew you wouldn't rest until you did, and knowing that, I was sorry that I did, but those thoughts came to me later, after I had already mailed the letter. Then I couldn't do anything about it.

So now it becomes a means of conversation, so you see, I'm pleased and I believe you are too, to know that your efforts have not been in vain.

And for that, dear lady, I'm very grateful and for your inconveniences, I'm extremely penitent.

Somehow or other during the course of a letter, I always manage to manage a paragraph, that of which, is devoted to Mail Service. Its concern is of such very little importance, that to even mention it becomes a [unintelligible] thought. And it all leads to one thing – time. And likewise, time out here is of very little importance. We all just live for the day – when! So, when I say your regular mail and Air mail get here about the same time, when actually one should come sooner than the other, I mean three cents does the same trick as six cents.

Let's talk about my life for a change

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such as it is.

This morning I overslept. The top bunk forgot to wake me up. He did call up but he didn't ask for me, and if he doesn't ask for me, I don't answer. So, I took a short nap – about two hours. At that time, he calls up again. I answer. He wants someone else in the hut, but when he hears my pleasant voice, he wants me too. So much so that he tells me that someone wants me at the rec. building. Well, ain't that nice. If I remembered correctly, the place was full of games and books, etc.

Swell! I'd like that! So out I go into the awful fresh air, full of hop. Did I want to play or did I want to look at books. Books are dull without pictures so I decided to play.

So, around the lake and over the hills I trickle. I feel happy and full of pep even if I do stumble on the board walks. Now I can see the rec. hall. I can tell it by the barber pole which hangs majestically on one corner of the building.

"Greetings," says the Sgt. I heard that somewhere before. So sorry we had to bother you! Here! We as very rough about it. He hands me a pick and shovel!

So, I dig a ditch – a big long ditch. And one day this week, I'll probably have to cover it.

So that covers everything to date – ever my hands and back.



But now, loads of love to you sweetheart. I do love you, honey. And for that, here are thousands of kisses to the sweetest girl I know from

Your husband

Leo

(2)

Friday, April 27, 1945

Hello Darling:

How are you sweetheart? That is that old man of yours again. Even if you disagree with me on that "old man" business, I nevertheless feel aged and decrepit. That little job of pick and shovel turned me into a pretzel with extra curves and knots. And what do you know, I wish I had more of it, more of that rugged outdoor work. I'm sorry to say those details are few. Maybe with the warm weather pending, there may be more of it.

And seriously, I feel excellent. I try not to eat too much, but I can't help myself. The chows are swell. Had steak for three days now. Gets tiresome you know. An example of food we get, as of tonight – steak, good French fries, three warm vegetables, 2 cold vegetables (beets and apples cut up with something and creamed), cake with chocolate syrup and a box of apples. Now what do you think? Every day it's the same. Every day I feel an extra roll on my somewhat huge frame. It's not a pleasant thought, eating and getting fat, and becoming lazy. I wish I were more active – I wish I had more time to be active. Get out and exercise of my own free will.

But my time is pretty well taken up. When I'm working regardless of hours

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and time of day, I still need some rest and sleep. That takes up pretty much of a guy's time. You might get up shortly before chow. After chow, you know that you've got to get ready for guard. So, you figure on that, get your stuff ready and wait. Usually I don't just wait. Sometimes letters have to be written. They take up a good deal of my time. What to write! Not much, so I ponder over that for some time. I may tear up a page or two before I get started. I finally finish. I shave and wash up.

Time is short now so you wait for chow again, and from there out, you got to work.

I worked last night, so I slept all day. It sounds like a senseless life a useless one. But it is often said that someone has to do it.

We do have fun too. Lots of it. The boys, our mutts who get the same as we do, and our lonely cat and I mean lonely.

Somewhere or other we have fences on this island. I haven't seen them yet.

And so, for now dear sweetheart, goodnight, good love, and all my love to you for always and always.

Give my best to Mamie and Ann and everyone.

Thousands of kisses to you. I love you!

Your sweetheart and husband

Saturday April 28, 1945

Dearest Sweetheart:

Wars end in Europe appears to be the main topic of conversation these days. It is the truth when I say, serious, nervous frustration prevails. Spirit is lacking, both in the mind and that stuff in bottles, and it's something I know, but can't put my finger on it – either the bottle or my mind.

I might say that the boys are worried about being civilians. That's something hard for some people to understand, but I can say that such a feeling is quite frequent in the G.I.'s mind. To be a civilian is one of their most desired hope and yet it becomes their most feared. Last night I talked to a chap in our company, who had a flourishing business. He told me, without shame or fear, that he actually was "afraid." He stressed "afraid" several times. As I listened to him relate his story, I could sense a tone of truth in his voice. He's the kind of guy that would strike you as a man of the world, a guy who could take most anything.

And then I wondered about yours truly. I tried to pick out a reason why I should be afraid of civilian life. I couldn't think of any. I have everything to gain as a civilian. Family, work and a quiet life and comfort. That,

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doesn't scare me. That's exactly what I want. Let's hope it's soon.

And now the mail news. It's great mail every day. Lots' of love every day. Thanks to our flying crew. I guess I'm happiest when my mail comes in.

The boys say the first Sargent is that way. When he doesn't hear from his wife, he's grouchy all day and then some. When he hears from his wife, everybody is happy. Even his dog. Sometimes it gets to a point, where by the boys threaten to write the Sgt. a letter – just to keep him comfortable and livable. I know it's mean to talk about him like that. I don't mean it myself it's just what I hear. And it always makes good talk. A first Sargent wouldn't be top kick if he couldn't take it. He'd have to, or else or else he wouldn't have to.

We could talk about someone else but that wouldn't be fun – it would be hell, so we steer clear of hell.

To change the subject, how's the car behaving – and the gas. I take it you get plenty of gas to carry you through.

Well sweetheart, it's time to say goodnight for now. Loads of love to you and pleasant dreams. Thousands of kisses to you from –

Your husband and sweetheart

Leo

P.S. Give my best to Mamie and Ann and everyone

(2)

Monday April 30, 1945

Hello Darling:

My, has time flies! Here it is, the last day in April, exactly fifty-one days since left the States, and twenty-three days since I've been here in the Islands. Sometimes, it feels like forever and again, it seems like only yesterday. It never feels like last week. It's either awfully long or awfully short. No in between. And so today, the weather being favorable and all, it seems exceptionally long. I'm working the docks this week. It's a tiresome job just hanging around watching the time drag by. It gets tiresome just watching the waves roll in and yet I watch them for hours. It sorta reminds me of an old battle scene I've seen somewhere. The enemy, a thousand strong marching in formation as rugged, as straight and without fear. That's screwy! They must have been scared! But in the movie, they didn't show fear – so the big waves coming into shore. When they are fired upon – they drop, naturally! They're dead. And so, the waves get smaller and smaller until the last one is killed. Then another formation takes shape and the same outcome takes place. So, I've been watching this battle take place for yours. Somehow or another, they just can't land – just can't establish a beach head.

Then there is another dull item of interest. Trucks! All kinds, all sizes and all shapes and those little things they call Jeeps. I don't know what they remind me of, but I sure get as much a bang out of these as the driver gets a bang out of banging them. It's

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just one continual show.

And the birds. Not many of them, but they all seem to congregate in my doorway. The next time I'll know better! I won't drop crumbs in the doorway.

Yes, it's tiresome. But it's cozy too. On the desk and up against the wall, I place your pictures, one by one, carefully placing them in order. They're such nice pictures. In every one, you smiled. You always did that even when you were feeling down and out. It was natural with you. And like a dope, my mouth open, my glasses dirty. (I cleaned them.) I would sit and stare, recalling every minor incident that took place when they were taken. On the back of one picture you wrote, "Can I be your pin-up girl?" That picture gets me. I start to flush and get warm. No wonder! The door is shut. I'd better open it a mite. Excuse me! Here, that's better.

You know honey, I write the darndest things. Where do I get all that stuff from? They don't sound like letters, they don't sound like anything! Just a bunch of words. First, it's waves, then trucks and birds.

I do want to write things of interest, but I'll be damned if there is anything interesting around here. I hope you don't mind the senseless things I write about.

Some guy is pulling some big logs across the dock with a big tractor. If he does that many more times, I'll find myself at the beach!

He's gone now. Which reminds me I'd better get going. I'm expecting my relief any moment now.

So, good night, dear! Loads of love from –

Your husband and sweetheart

Leo

Millions of kisses to you for every star in your golden hair.

(2)