

#777--V-J Day... "Wednesday August 15, 1945...

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My Darlings:

My precious precious wife and little ones... Today is one of the great days in the history of the world, and we as a family, have many reasons to be thankful to the almighty. On this last day of the war, my thoughts automatically turn back to that first day, when we were awakened out of a peaceful sleep to learn that our island was under attack. We were a worried four as we stood on the front steps of our old Kawela house that Sunday morning, trying to admit that it ~~was~~^{wasn't} all true. How secretly proud I was when you all stood by me during those terrible days and months that followed, willing to accept the outcome, regardless. I believe that was our first real test as a unit, as a family, and we came through it with flying colors, in spite of the fact that war brushed at our very doorstep. Yes my darlings, I'm ~~a~~ very proud Husband and Father.

Two hundred and seventy seven days have passed, almost to the hour, since we said good by. That's a ~~long~~^{long} time loved ones, when you measure it in minutes and hours, a very long time. Your life was broken up, but you went back and established a new and better life, while a new member was added to our little family. I went forward on an invasion with the armed forces of our country. Each of us has done our job, and done it well, and you can well be proud of yourselves, and each other. The day I left you was without question the saddest day in my life, but like every other crisis in life, it had to be met and accepted. The deep hurt from that parting can not be cured by the ending of the war, or any other such event. Our eventual reunion is the only thing that will bring pure happiness back into my life. That will be the really big day in my life. That is the day we will be rewarded for

our patience and loyalty and love. That will be the real day of peace in our family.

It is three years, eight months and seven days since that fateful December 7th morning. A thousand years it seems, in lots of ways, yet only a moment in the pages of history. But from our own point of view, its been a life time. Today, at this moment, the realization must come over us that killing has stopped. Peace has come to a war weary world. Its almost impossible to believe, yet its what we have prayed for these ~~many~~ years. A chill went down my back this morning, when I saw our flag raised on the standard, and the bugler following it up with ~~his~~ stirring salute. I realized then how grateful we all should and must be to have such a heritage, America. We are a fine family in a great and wonderful country my loved ones, and we must never forget. "America the beautiful" and the "Star Spangled Banner" were played shortly after the peace announcement, and tears filled my eyes. I knew then what You and I and all the rest were fighting for.. For that flag, Old Glory, and those songs, and each other. I hate war, and even worse I hate this seperation from you, but I believe down deep in my heart I would do it all over again, for America, *and for you.*

Remember the many times we listened to that song, "When the Lights go on All Over the World"...we sat in our blacked out house and knew what that song meant to us. Tonite that song is a fact, all over the world, for all the people~~s~~, the ~~xxxxxxx~~ victors and the defeated..The lights go on, and there is peace.

Here on Tiny Iwo, over seven thousand miles from you, we heard the wonderful news at the same moment you did. But here it was Wednesday morning, nine o'clock, and you were all in bed no doubt, for it was ten o'clock Tuesday night, when you heard the news. But still, we heard it at the

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same moment. I was so stunned for a moment, I couldn't believe my ears. Right away I thought of you. I knew Nathy would be sound asleep, and that You Patty and You Butchie should be asleep, and Darling Louise, I knew you heard the announcement, and thought of me at the same moment, in the same way, as I did of you. We should all write down our impressions of this day, and file them away, and when Nathy gets to be a young lady, we'll read them to her, for I know she'll be interested. When the last world war ended, I was just a little older than you my Butchie. I remember well what I was doing, when I heard all the whistles sounding.. but I probably wasn't to sure what it was all about. At that time, it happened at eleven o'clock in the morning, and I was in my underground house over in a vacant lot on the other side of Pratts house. I ran home and found Mother in the Kitchen, and she explained to me that the war was over. Now I wish that some one had written down my thoughts and impressions..for I could have let you read ~~them~~ today. I want to tell you a little bit about Iwo on this great day..what has happened, what I was doing when the announcement came through, and how the men in general reacted. In the first place, in case its never occured to you, ~~Iwo~~ Iwo Jima is just a little different than any other major island we have captured in the Pacific, in this respect...We had no natives here. Until the day we landed her on Feb 19, 1945, no white man had ever set foot on this island. All the people here were Japs, and the civilian population was removed before we came. Thus when we landed, every person on here was an enemy. I only mention this because if we were like other islands, we would have natives to help us celebrate this day. And because of this lack, our celebration is like a party without any cake and ice cream.

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I say that the Natives would help us celebrate this day, not so much because they would be natives, but because they have women and children and customs that help keep the thoughts of home closer to the heart. But in our own way, we did celebrate.

I was on duty when the announcement came over the radio. Reception was very poor, since the program had been relayed from the states to be released on our station here, called "radio two". It wasn't until the announcement had been repeated several times that I was able to grasp the full text. For a moment I was speechless, and I didn't know what to do. There was one man in the office at the time, and I decided it would be rather silly to just start hollering, so I went to the phone and had Chief Childs paged over the loudspeaker system. Childs came on the double, I gave him the message, and in a moment he was on the air, telling all our men in camp about the great news. In the meantime, I had entered the important news of the victory in the Battalion log book, and had settled back in my chair to reflect on the full import of the occasion. Just before the announcement came on the air, I was listening to the Met. Opera program with one ear, and reading my ~~MC~~ lesson for next Sunday. I thought of these things, as I sat there, and then suddenly my thoughts welled up ~~and~~ and I was home with my dearest loved ones. I brushed aside my thoughts long enough to finish my lesson, but I'll have to admit I didn't get much out of it, for the reaction was beginning to set in. As I finished my lesson, and pushed aside my books, the office was filling with men from all the surrounding offices, all eager to hear the news directly, still not willing to take the news second hand. Every one had their Sunday smile on, and they were all a little shy as just what emotions they should show. Suddenly some one shook

hands, and we all joined in, every one ringing each others hands. In a few minutes the men started leaving singly and in pairs to return to their offices. They wanted to close shop and go back to their tents, but no announcement was forthcoming from the commander,.. As the day wore on, there was no noticeable difference in this wednesday than in any other we had spent on this island...Several times cars went by the office very fast, on the main island road that passes in front of our camp, and here and there I would hear a "mooray" and a "yippee"...but that was all.

At Lunch the mess hall was loud with buzzings from the men talking over the whole picture, ~~but~~ going home was the main topic of discussion. Patty and Butchie and Kathy, I don't think you know yet what that magic word HOME means to me, to men away from home, to fathers and brothers and sons and men that have been away from that wonderful place called Home for months and months and months. The mere mention of the word is like a drug. Slowly it creeps through your system, and your dammed up thoughts and dreams and hopes are all on the tip of your tongue...You want to yell them out to the world...but you halted at the point of speech, for you know its a matter of keeping such things inside, and accepting the realities of ^a day to day life. The effects of the drug never wear off though my loved ones, it just becomes a matter of fighting off the effects as best you can, but immunity never comes, no matter how hard you steel yourself against the truth.

All ~~work~~ was called off after lunch, and as the announcement said, "No work in the Pineapple fields", everyone was free to go back to his tent and do as he pleased. A few men had some whiskey, and they began to drink, and a few had beers, but the majority just sat around and talked, or wrote letters to their loved ones, as I'm doing. It was very warm this afternoon, almost unbearable in the tent, so I decided

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to take a shower and cool off. Another fellow, "Tex" we call him, was taking a shower also when I entered. He began to tell me about his home and the plans he was working on and would I come over and look at the new drawings when I had my cloths on. So cooled off, and in fresh clothes, I went over to Tex's tent and looked over his plans. He has five children, and he showed me the bedrooms for the boys, with the double bunks and the bathroom just for them, and he showed me his new master bedroom, ~~but~~ I went off in a cloud of my own as he talked on, thinking of our new home thats to come, not to far in the future. I thought of your room Patty that I want so delicate and feminie, and I thought of Kathys room, and Butchie, I thought of that special boys room that your going to have. I thought of the new bedroom for mom and I, and that new bed at least eight feet long and wide that mom and I are going to buy. I dug the swimming pool, and planted the shrubs and took a long walk with Mother in the hills that surround our house, and looked off in the distance at the beautiful sunset that threw long shadows across the American River canyon that stretched out below us. The day is almost over, just another day on the calendar, but a day with a big red mark around it in the history books. We know tonite that Peace is on Earth, and that we can rest easilly for you and for ourselves. I walked over and looked at my fox hole, and it was like greeting an old friend goodbye, for its never to be used again. It served well, in its time, and the stories it could tell of its occupants on those dark nights with Jap planes overhead would fill many a book. Funny isn't it, but yesterday our fox hole and gun were our best friends, and today they are as useless as dead weeds. But that is life I guess. I'm ready for bed now, and very sleepy too. My heart is tired from the

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miles it has traveled today, and my mind is weary from the dreams that still must be head back, but keep fighting for release. You see Patty and Butchie and Kathy and dearest Louise, the peace didn't release the pent up emotions that still remain dammed up...Only we as a family can solve that problem. I live for one day, our day, the day I can hold you all, and one at a time, in my arms, and cry forth my thanksgiving to that Guy upstairs that has been so kind to us these many months and years. And now I must say good night, and across the miles I feel your love protecting me and guiding ~~me back to you and~~ me. I am your darlings, very grateful. Keep safe, and pray for our early reunion.

All my love to my four,

Dad.