

20 October 1944

Dear Mom:

We are now in the town of ----- moved in yesterday and everything round here looks as if a tornado has been through it and just like a movie scenario except this is for keeps and the movies never portray danger as we have it here. The Germans are now throwing in some heavy stuff and it scares the life out of you. It comes swishing through the air and then boom - some little house falls over.

I am staying in the second floor of a very charming apartment - the home of a doctor. Hardwood floor with fireplace and everything you want for comfort - it is really a grand place although the protection isn't very much. I am becoming very much the fatalist - if I get hit, I am going to get hit. The going has been very rugged and the casualties more than I want to think about. Mits Tsugawa was wounded - one of those million dollar kind - slight so please tell his mother not to worry at all. He will be alright and will have a nice rest to boot - saw Ben today. He came in tired wet, with that look all fighting men have when they come in from the front. He is ok - so tell his mother that I saw him today. I am getting to designate the time I see my friends last because one never knows from one moment to another. One of my very good friends - an officer you wouldn't know was speaking to me not an hour ago - and now I hear that he was killed. That is battle - and we get to look at things the same way - very pessimistic and looking for the worse every time. It's tough - so far I have been lucky - the road I travelled on four times was shelled as many times yesterday claiming many wounded but I just happened to be travelling at the right time.

We are being shelled constantly and when it gets too bad I duck with the family in their shelter which reminds me of the underground passage way in Les Misérables and I bring out the old uke and serenade the people - and then get together with them and sing opera bits - not that I am getting to be a master on the subject but know a little here and there. The Germans threw in some very bad one just now that scared the living daylights out of me -

O Lord - when will this horror end. Whenever I pass one of our men so still on the road with their body covered - I think of some family in the islands - think of the bright future the young lad might have had - all because a couple of madmen in the world wanted everything for themselves. A few more weeks of this and I shall go mad -

Sometimes when the going gets tough - I go out as a volunteer aid man to bring in the wounded - and then it is really rough with a capital R. Then I think of our boys out there taking everything the enemy can throw in and I find a comparative safe place - but our outfit has a reputation for having rugged chaplains. Chaplain Yamada is doing a grand job and so is Chaplain Yost.



21 October

Belgrade falls, Aachen is ours, the Phillipines invaded - all good news but the only news we care to hear about is when will this war be over? Had a terrible day today - going out in the battle field for the body of our boys. It really isn't my job as the orders from the War department reads that "Chaplains will not be available for GRO work" but since the officer in charge hasn't the guts to go out for them - and as I hate to think of boys with whom I worked with in clubs at home lying there even in death - I take it upon myself to go. Shells were landing on all sides of us but luckily not on us - we got four bodies out - one of them whom I knew quite well, in Aiea. As we were going out - there were many many German dead out there - turned white in this cold weather and just as we were passing one of them, the supposed dead Jerry moves an arm - it scared the life out of me. He was wounded - but since we had only two litters and had to make two trips for our dead - I wasn't going back and risk my neck for a wounded Jerry no siree - not your daddy. I high tailed it back - and am now exconced for the evening in my hangout - the home of the French Docteur. It is really bon - tres bon.

So I now cross off another day in my diary - another day in which I have gone through living in fear and in sorrow - sorrow to see the boys I had worked with in the army and before the army coming in wounded or killed. The Germans however are taking a bigger loss than we are - I talked with one of the wounded jerries - he was afraid of me at first but after I offered him a cigarette and asked about his home, he pulled out his wallet and showed me pictures of his home and his mother and father and sisters - and for the moment I got to forget the hate that comes over one when he sees his own boys killed and mained.

We are making advances right along - the outfit being the only one making such a steady advance smong the best of the outfits here and commended very, very highly by the general in charge.

By the way I hope Edna and her husband Minesokare makingroutt. alright.

My jeep developed some lunatic movements so I have sent it to be fixed and won't have it tomrrow so am not moving until tomorrow. Bad news will be trickling in from now on in at home I guess - but as the French say "C'est la Guerre". We have some comic scenes in villages where we come in - the FFI go out hunting for women who were too familiar with the heinies and then shave them bald headed. Seeing how the women prize their hair - one can understand why many of them faint. Its really not a right thing to do but the French has their method of punishment -

Take careof yourself - don't worry about daddy - he won't stretch his luck too much.

love

Dad