

Ottumwa, Ia.  
Feb. 2-43

My Dear Baby:-

Here I come again. Your dear letter was waiting for me this evening when I got home. Was I ever glad to get it, I waded into the mud to the box way up on my shoes. I would wade mud over my head to get your letter dearest angel. You didn't say how your eye was but I presume it is coming along all right or you would tell your Mother wouldn't you? I have been praying God to heal it and then to plead the blood to cover not only your precious eyes but your entire body and keep you well and safe.

I note what you said about the inquiring officer and I have called Mr. Woodman. He said he would get the personel department to write it if possible that it would be more effective in that manner but he said if they didn't do it that he would do it himself. He said he had heard from you but the fellows said that you had moved before he got to answer so he hadn't written you. I tried to get Miss Weirsmith but she is out for an hour or so, so I will call her again pretty soon.

This evening I got in just before dark, I left the store about six and got home about 6:30. I am not so nervous and tired as I was Saturday because I got my cash and all taken care of without the boss lady being there today while I was doing it and everything came out O.K. I think she likes me, at least I am hoping so. It is a lonely life when no one cares or takes an interest in me. Today was lesson day and Mrs. Stoltz always inspires me when I go there and she encourages me too. She thought it was marvelous the way I was bravely facing the issue and doing all I could to try to make something of my voice. I don't get to practice all week because the room would have to be heated and it would take so long of an evening and then by the time I get the fire fixed and things taken care of I am plenty tired. I walked over to her house and back from the store and it makes me a tired working girl by evening. I am not well and everyone who has talked with me at the store says that I have the symptoms of anemia. Well it may be because I haven't eaten a half dozen cooked meals since you have been gone. I just don't have time at home and I can't afford it up town, they are so high priced everyplace for nothing when you get done. So outside of coffee that is all that I cook and eat heated. I should eat fresh fruits and vegetables but I just can't sit down here at home and eat, alone. To cook for one makes a lot of work and then after the meal it is left in the refrigerator to dry up or something.

At nights when I get in bed I start sweating and am just dripping wet when morning comes and then to get out in a cool room keeps my cold going constantly. I know a lot is nerves but that is not do to conditions but is due to my physical change, you know what I mean, just now. I could take shots every month for that but I am afraid of shots for that is the way that the bacteria was carried into Ernest Thomas' little girl that killed her with that blood descease. I will just bear with my nerves as long as I can without any doctors aid and I know the good Lord will carry me thro if I will just ask him for strength. I am getting so weak and my head sort of whirls and I don't see as I should. I can't focus my sight and I get so overbalanced at times. I have to watch my step or folks will think I am stewed. I know I will be better when I can get into the out of doors more as I felt so much better today with the walking and breathing the fresh air. Today was like an early day in Spring and the snow and ice was running in little rivers all over the streets and sidewalks. I hope how soon it goes.

I should go over to Mother Harry's this evening but I just won't have the time as it is now eight and after. She is not ill but her son who stays with her, Frank, you know, well he dropped dead yesterday at home there with her. Now isn't that something. All these years that Nell has been so poorly and has come so near dying many times and she has outlived him. I feel so sorry for Mrs. Harry I just don't know what to say or do. He meant so much to her in a financial way too. Poor old soul. If you get a chance to drop her a line of condolence do it, she will appreciate hearing from you now more than at any other time., her and Vesta.

Well I must say that I am so happy and to quote the natural, proud, that the officer found out about your standing at Greensburg. God bless those people there and praise to his wonderful Love and sweet name. You make me so happy anyway but this makes me happier too, yet I envy those who can be in contact with you every day while I have to be deprived of your sweet self. I am so lonely anyway. This morning when I got up and found myself alone again I could have just crawled off and died someplace like a wounded animal and not cared at all. But I stood myself up in the corner and I started preaching to myself and told me to count my blessings and praise the Lord with them instead of feeling sorry for myself. It don't hurt me any more than it does you to be separated from each other. I hope you get the furlough before you enter school, that is if you make the grade and to be sent out of the U.S. will just kill me but who am I to be considered.? Just Mother who doesn't rate with the government any more than \$15.00 lousy dollars a month and I haven't even got that yet and a wife rates \$50.00 With a dear son like you to love and know that I can depend on him coming to me when the time comes for your release and knowing that as the years turn my hair whiter and my face more wrinkled and my shoulders more bent, that you will not let your mother go begging. I would want to die right now if I thought that you would find other interests to fill your life like Albert did and cause my heart to break as poor old Mother's did over him. She never said anything to the world and tried to console her own poor heart with the fact that he was busy with wife and family and work, but Oh how much it would have meant to her if he had shared a little time with her.

Well no one but he himself knows now the pain that it is bringing to him and he is truly sorrowing within his heart as he has to live with himself every day under that terrible burden of remorse and regret. I never will forget what Mrs. Cresswell once said to the Sunday school class, "I have taught my children that remorse and regret are the two worse things to live under in all their whole life and so live that you will not have to do so". I am so happy that I stayed with Mother and Dad until their last fleeting breath was gone for now I have no regrets to haunt me. I wish I could have done more in a financial way and all that but I did not go away from then and find another one to come into my life and separate me for their love and care. I thank my heavenly Father so much for the privilege of being with them until they had passes on to their heavenly reward. Until God had them safe in his love and protection the Heavenly Home and they were not left to battle the old world and its burdens alone in the home. Yes I have been given more blessings than I deserve and to make it a crowning glory to have the kind of a Son that I have. The only thing that hurts me is that we must be separated. It nearly drives me mad when I think of it. But I am praying God constantly that we will be reunited again before too many years have passed to spend many more happy years together. Mrs. Stoltz wanted to know all about you and I told her about fixing the home and she thought it was grand that I kept up the spirit for myself and you too. She said how happy and proud of me that you would be when you came home on your furlough and then when you came home to stay. She thinks that we are the ideal Mother and Son. and the folks at the church all think so too. Isn't that wonderful to have folks feel that way about us?

Bobby was whining from lonesomness just now and I had to take him and love him and talk to him a while, he gets those spells since you are gone so I have to make a big fuss over him and then he feels better. The driver at the store brought a pup in today that was suffering from hunger and cold and put him in the basement of the store by the furnace and fed him and this evening he was barking around and showing signs of feeling better. I am anxious to know how he he is the morning. Poor little fellow. The driver thought he was dead when he picked him up by the side of the store and he came in lugging him under his arm all wet and cold. The driver is just recovering from an accident in a semi trailer where the other fellow with him was killed and the driver has a silver pin in his leg and is somewhat crippled up. He is a stranger in town and the employment agency sent him up to the store when they called for a driver.

Now my darling, about this school. Pray that God will have his way and lead you to some place to carry on your work when you have finished it that will keep you in the states for the duration. The boys in the C.G. will have to eat and have someone to cook for them here as well as out of the States. But don't stick your neck into some work that the women can do and take it away from you because maybe that is just what the officer suggested it to you for. You see they cannot do the work that you are doing now and so it may be better for you to tolerate the boys and their goings on than to get into a woman's job where they will oust you when they get more Spars trained and put you out on the water or into a forgein country. Think this over carefully and prayerfully both. Not that I don't want you to advance, Oh, no heaven forbid that I lay a straw in your path but I don't want you to go out of the States if it is at all possible to remain in them and by his will you will remain in them. I think that God has answered Sister Noland's prayer and kept Estell here in the States, and it is my most sincere prayer that he will do so with you. I can stand a lot if you remain in the U.S. but to go out of it, will mean something terrible for me. I doubt if I could live thro it. You don't know what you mean to me and that I am only drawing my breath ~~for~~ for you and you alone. Without you I don't want to live, I wouldn't even try to. That my sound foolish to you my dear, but every ~~worded~~ word of it is true.

Well Ralph Dial was called in as an aviation cadet and has left. Alta took him to Des Moines Sunday and thought that the train would come thro Ottumwa for some reason and when they drove on down to Ottumwa sure enough they went to the depot and the train came in there about midnight and she had another visit of 45 minutes with Ralph before it left here. Wasn't that wonderful? Raymond passed and he is leaving the 19th of Feb. She said it was mighty hard loosing both of them at once but she would rather they would go than to have them drop dead in front of her like Frank Harry did his mother. Folks all see things different I suppose, but either way is no picnic.

I hope that we have another nice clear day tomorrow like it was today and as mild but the wind is in the east tonight and I think it means a spell of weather again. Sunday afternoon it blew and snowed like another blizzard was coming and I was just sick about it, but it didn't. It let up in the evening. The train wheels are screeching tonight like they do in the early spring. The house was warm tonight when I got here so it wasn't so bad as coming into a cold dark house. I'll tell you my darling that that just kills me. I don't know why but it is a horror to me as it was to dear old Mother.

Well the store may close for a week while the rationing system goes on and they make ready for it and yet she may keep open for sale of other things yet everything nearly in the store will go on the point system and when it is established it will mean more and more work for all of us and more headaches.

I wouldn't really care because I could use a week to work around the home and do a lot with the time. Of course I would miss the money but then I would have a week to pull myself together. You see nothing can be sold during that time which is to be rationed and of course that is meat, butter, canned milk, canned fruits and vegetables and dried fruits and I think the shipped in fresh fruits and I know it will go on the frozen meats, fish and fruits and vegetables for Carl has been buying and buying all that he can and is using the ice cream freezer to store fish in and the surplus that the regular frozen foods refrigerator will not hold.

My sailor laddie didn't come to the store tonight, I geuss he had enough left over from Sunday to do for today. I expect that he will be in tomorrow with his cheery little smile and Hello and Goodnight. Oh how I wish it was my little Laddie's smile and Hello. Dear God how I am praying that I can see you soon. I will be looking now for my new clothes next week and the rugs about next week or so and then I will be getting your lovely blue hobnail plates before so awfully long. I must call him or drop in and see if they have come yet. The jeweler went to Chicago to order new stock for the store and spöke for them for me. Wasn't that kind of him to do it? He don't know how happy it will make you to see that lovely walnut table set with your sparkling blue glassware on a lovely cloth and then we will have Brother and Sister Welshons and little Jerry over and some others that you will want to have come in and also have the nice new rugs instead of the old threadbare ones that now cover our floors. Oh how I thank God and praise him. It is all supplied thro his wonderful grace and love. I would not do it for myself alone but because we can enter tain God in spirit and his Son and his dear people in a house that I would not be ashamed to ask Jesus to come into if he were to knock at my door in person. Even tho he comes into the most humble home without seeing ~~over~~ poverty and want yet I love to make it beautiful for his name's sake and it will be kept pure and clean for his spirit to abide in it with us. Even our little dog which is the symbol of the dog who licked Lazurass sores in the Bible time, so our little dog will be. I want him to be a pure clean little dog too.

He holds his little head for his benediction each night before we turn out the light and when I leave of a morning I lay my hand on his little head and ask God to keep him well and safe for Boy and then kiss him good by. He is one of God's creations and if we use him as such God will bless him and care for him too and protect him. I have come to love him so much and his little company when I come home means more than the world will ever know. He is only a little dog but he has his place and I thank God for having him here with me. Mrs. Peck gets on the bus with her bull dog every morning and he has been wearing his blanket these cold mornings. His name is Cappy. Well the clock is striking nine now so I must try to get Miss Weirsmith again as she may be home now. Well I just got thro talking with Mis Weirsmith and she said she would do that very thing and mail it to me. She said for you to keep up your faith in God and stay with him and she is proud of you and said I had a right to be pröud too, but I told her while it might be pride in the natural but just the same I was mighty happy about it all, that I had such a wonderful boy and she said to keep up my lessons and my spirits for a happier day would be coming for both of us. You know her. Bless her dear old heart. Even tho she has never sung lullabies to her own baby or cared for the little body so sweet and soft and ~~tender~~ or seen them grow to manhood of her own, she has a wonderful kind Mother heart from all her experiences. What a priceless teasure it is to have good true friends like that. I thank God for them and may he bless her with much peace in her declining years.

Well Angel of my Heart. I hope you get this letter before you move or soon afterward and maybe you will feel better in a larger town, where there is a church and more of God's people for he has his dear ones everywheire.

I just had Bobby out again and it is milder than when I came home. I hope we have a spell of warm weather for a change. If it just don't get cloudy now and cook up another storm. I wore my old spring coat today but with my sweater under it and it was very comfortable even early this morning.

Mrx. Loomis was on the bus and he said she had been and is still sick again she is having another gall stone attack. He said the reason why they had not been over was because she didn't like to go away from home not feeling well and all but she goes to town with him on Saturdays. She is a funny person. She doesn't llook any too well and she may have a stroke at any time as she is threatened with them all the time I geuss.

The bride and groom is getting their curtains and shades up tonight so I suppose they will be moving in soon. I don't care to know them but it will be nice seeing someone in Roxy's old home anyway but how I do miss her. She was queer in the way but she was at least company and someone to talk to that I knew and had known for a long time. I cannot be sociable with Jenny's daughter as she is so different and then I can't stand that man of hers either. I wouldn't trust him a foot but then it is better to be friendly with them than not to be. I will go down and see them some time when the days get longer and the weather milder as Jenny has asked me down. She and Myers have fixed up the shop and are living in it and have put a porch on it and it looks like a little cottage out there now. I have seen Jenny up town and she asked me why I don't come down but thro the day I am busy and at night I stay in so that if you should call I would be here and some Sunday afternoon when they are at home I can drop down to call on them for a little while and that will be enough. She is a great card player and of course I don't fit into that you know. Ethel has a service flag in her window for her boy too.

The Court Hill bus drivers have come to know me and that I am working up there and they show me little courtesies now and that makes life a little better. Several who have sons in the service come in and see me wearing the dear little pin you sent me and they ask about me as to how I am getting along and if I hear from you and how you are and where you are and all like that. I geuss we are all more or less kindred souls now.

Well it is nearly time for the news so I will listen to that and then take my little dogto bed. He is sitting here on the rug with his little head hanging down and he wants to go to bed. He is rotten, so if you smell something stinken it is him. I think he is mighty sweet tho. I put a pillow in the rocker and he is satisfied now and is up here by my side. If he could he would write and tell you how he misses you and how much he loves you.

Well my precious little darling, Mother is going to sign off and listen to the news. I haven't heard a word today. I overslept this morning and had to really fan it when I got up., So now to my little Lover and the sailor with the Navy Blue eyes, but I hope you never sail, I will say Good night and God's richest blessing be showered upon you and your life, and keep your hand in his stretched to the glorious cross of Calvary and he will guide your steps and mine so that our paths will meet again and we will be happy praising him together again. It has done my soul good to write this letter tonight and it does me good to get one from you, you are such an inspiration to me. I need you for that if nothing else. Good Bless you I pray and keep you well and safe under his protecting wings, until we meet again.

*Love from Mother  
+ Bobby*

P.S. I took over sixty some dollars tithe into Marggret Ferguson Sunday night and you should see her open her eyes and her herthank me. I don't know what Welshons said when he heard about it because I took it in after services as I didn't have the amounts separate but I had them all itemized so that she would give you credit for \$15.00 and me for two weeks of \$3.40 and then some \$49.00 and odd cents on the other. I had it all figured out for her so that she could enter it in the proper places. I haven't received your amount from Morrells as yet but as soon as I do I will take care of the other income tax business for you, and your ordinary for \$18.00. Thank God for his providing hand. Bless his Holy name.

Ottumwa, Ia.  
Feb. 4-43

My Darling Boy:-

Here comes the loneliest mother in the world to greet you again so far far away. Yet it may be farther in the future, I do not dare think of it but ask God that it will not be so for I don't know how I could live thro it all. It is now 9:30 and I would like to get to bed right after the news. I have come home and relaxed, in fact I had to lie down because I was so completely all in and then I fixed the fire and had supper such as it was, Bobby and I snacked on things we could find and had some coffee. I will have to get coffee tomorrow because I used my last tonight and the present coupons expire the 7th. We just fight women all day long on coupons and the date of expiration and all that until I am just sick when night comes. I don't know what will become of us when the point system begins on rationing. They nearly drove us crazy on ~~sliced~~ sliced bread being discontinued. You would think it was the death sentence for them.

It will mean headaches and more and more work for us. The store will have to bank their coupons taken from the customers and the points just like dollars and cents and draw upon them in the same manner for getting more stock. I dread it but I guess it is take it or leave it. Roosevelt and his henchmen can think up more ways to waste time and money than anyone that was ever in the white house, they have Hoover beat a thousand times over. The butcher takes Mrs. DeVol off in a corner every day that she comes to the store and carries tales. I would like to bust him right in the mouth, he is the dirtiest two faced skunk that ever lived. Brough said today that one of these days she was going to have to decide whether he stayed or the butcher stayed. He causes every deliveryman to become dissatisfied and to leave. He is working on the new driver now. If he says anything about me I am going to tell him off plenty and Mrs. DeVol too. I have had to put him in his place so many times that I am sick of it.

She seems to be fair minded but could be swayed some and I just hate that man of hers. He listens to everything the butcher tells him and believes it. He is just about as dirty as any of them. I told her today that what the butcher needed was a wheel chair and a pretty nurse to tickle him under the chin and then he would think he was in heaven and as far as I was concerned that would be as near heaven as he ever would get. She said, he was a case but that she was lucky to get him because all the younger butchers were taken for the Service and she is right on that score. But I hate an old turkey buzzard that is forever calling the women honey and dearie and all that sloppy stuff when they are just customers. Some of those old sisters swallow it hook, line and sinker.

Speaking about hooks and sinkers reminds me that the old Des Moines river is on a rampage now with ice. It has broken up and all the farmers have been given radio warning to get their stock out of the bottom lands as the river is rising at the rate of two feet an hour at Eddyville and it is going out of the banks down here now. Ice jams are reported from Tracy to Ottumwa. We had rain night before last, a hard rain and you should see good old Iowa mud. I have to wash and then polish my shoes every night. The zepher just came in, did you hear it whistle? I wish you could. The willow trees on the river are beginning to show the green in the branches, that is changing from the deep winter's brown to the lighter color. Well with some more rains and warm days like we have had things will begin to look better here. The temperature was 40 tonight when I came by the thermometer on the north side of the house and the house was warm and my little Doggie met me at the door and believe me he got that kiss you sent hem and many more thrown in for good measure.

It may be a nice little ~~xxxx~~ next egg for you some day when I have kicked the bucket and am rotting away in the ground. Eh?

Angel Dear, I will turn in your prayer request you can count on that, your Mother will not let you down or turn from your lest request as long as I am able to raise my hand and sometimes I think I won't be able to do that. You can tell by the many mistakes in my typing tonight that I am not up to par and I just have to fight to keep going. I am doing it all for your sake so if I fall down I hope you will forgive me for being a mill stone about your neck.

Did you get to use any of the gas tickets? If you don't use them somehow please return them to me because as soon as the weather gets mild as it is now I am going to use the car more. If they take the tires and maybe the private cars I want to make use of Jennifer as long as I can. It will break my heart if they take her for we have so many wonderful times to remember from that dear little old car, haven't we? Then I could use it to my own good this summer. I will fight for it as long as I can, I will say that I need it to go to ~~xxx~~ work and things like that, so I want to get my driving license as soon as possible. I may have to transfer it to my name to do so.

So try to get your furlough thro as soon as you can so that you can come home and have as much pleasure with it as you can. I saw Atterbury in the dime store today and she said she missed you and the harp so. Some fellow who used to have a harp and he said used to chum with you, I geuss she ment someone down at work, wanted to buy hers but she don't want to sell it and I said that yours was not for sale either as long as I had a place to keep it for you and it has stood wight where you left it, the music rack and the music just as your own dear hands left it. I forbid anyone to change the pages for the hymn book it open to your last song. "Des Jesus Care" and that way it will stand until your hands come back to change it. Both of Atterbuy's son-in-laws are in the service and as I said before, Opal is expecting a baby in the Spring. Atterbuy said she would like to write you but don't want to say things that she feels and she mopes and feels so blue about it all that she said she couldn't write a cheerful letter if she did write. What would she be like if it was her one and only son like it is mine, if she were in an empty house day and night like I am? She wouldn't amount to much would she? She has a husband to help her and keep company and she has the two girls and still she is a Mope. I geuss from what poeple say I must be brave but they don't know what heart ache and loneliness there is back of the front that I put on. They don't know how my very heart is dying within me. I know what a doctor would say if I went to him but there is nothing he could do for me because the only cure is your return and God is my only help and yours too.

Another Ottumwa Boy is reported lost tonight. His name is Bard and he graduated in 1933, the same year that you did, but his name is not in the Argus that you have. He must have graduated at some other time. Ruth Bush finished in Dec. and she is working at Kreseges 10 to 1.00 store steady now.

Well it is 10:30 and now I must fix the fire for night and go to bed. It just seems that I cannot make it before eleven or twelve every night and that is what is getting me down. Up at six and at it all day, just hurry, hurry, hurry. It would be different if Jack were here to help carry out the ashes and have the house warm when I get here for he gets away much earlier than I do. Two hours ahead of me or more. Tell me if you approve of it. I don't want anyone here that you would not approve of. And he don't drink or tear around and I have never seen any indications of him even smoking. They may not want to come under the circumstances but if they do I would rather have your approval. They would have the back bedroom and they have no furniture but the baby's buggy and her little bed.



It will mean a lot of changing and fixing but only in the closets and places for their clothes. He may be able to help me do things around the home that I couldn't get done otherwise. Still they may object to the dog and if they do they can go jump in the river, my little boy's dog comes first. They can't find another place in town that will have the baby in the apartment so I guess if I put up with the baby they can put up with the dog, it will be 50-50 on that score. You can remember always that your mother will be true and faithful to you and anything that you leave in her care will be defended with her very life. Will you do that for me dearest darling?

Bobby is asleep in a rock in the dining room now, bless his heart he is so shut away from the windows all day long and the rest of the house because he will pee on things when he is alone and gets mad. I don't blame him in a way but I sure wish he didn't do it. I got some of that Chaperone powder but he just says "To heck with that and pees on it for spite. Oh he is a bad one. I would stretch a wire at the back so that he couldn't get out on the north side of the house and out that way so that he would have to take his exercise in the front yard as usual and if she had to let him out during the day he couldn't get out. He was always good to mind Aunt Lily when she let him out but I don't know about someone else whether they could make him mind or not. I don't think he would try to get out if the wire was put up to keep him from going out on the north side. He takes spells that he is going to the garage to find you whether or no and won't even come back for he. He goes to the door of the garage and barks and jumps up and whines thinking you are in there. Don't tell me that he has forgotten his boy for a single minute.

Well precious I must close or I won't hit the hay at all tonight but I could keep on writing and talking with you forever, that is how much I love YOU and I am not musy about it either. My love is not the sloppy soft soap, B.S. that a girl will give you and she will even make you believe it, so watch your step, they are out to get the men with uniforms and the money that they have. Remember if you have any money to spend on girls that you have a home and Mother who could use it for your sake and yours alone.

Now good night my darling, and do write me soon because I just die when your letters do not meet me each evening when I get here. I know the mails are at fault but do write me a little scratch each day. It is all that I have to go on you must remember and it is the best way to start killing me that there is. It wouldn't take much to finish me off and if you don't think so, well, I guess I can't make it any plainer. so darling don't forget your lonesome old Mother. I love you so and want you to be happy but I do want to know that you haven't got too busy to write me and love me always. God Bless you my dear and let me know how the furlough is coming on. Bobby and I are praying every night before we close our eyes that our Boy will come safe home to us and come to stay some day before so awful long forever.

Good night darling, Mother loves you Oh so hard, you first, last and always in my heart and on my lips to all the world and to God for his loving protection for you.

*Good night. + God Bless you,*

*Mother + Bobby*

