[Envelope:]
Lt. A.S. Aiken
O – 406500
18th Fighter Squadron
c/o A.P.O. 937 Postmaster
Seattle, Wash.

[Transcription begins]

Greenbelt, Md.

Hi Light of My Life –

You know how you get the feeling of how high you really are when you fly over certain things—like a radio tower or something. Well I got a feeling the other night—sort of a realization that it had actually been ten months practically since I had seen you—and it didn't feel a bit good, in fact I felt rather panicky. Usually it just doesn't seem that long, which is a blessing I guess.

Got a letter from Mom tonight, she's fine, and said she had read in the paper that they were giving leave & would you get any. Sort of a coincidence because I hadn't mentioned that you might.

I feel very successful tonight because the boss informed me today that I was getting a promotion. It will be from $1440 to $1620, which makes me very happy. I was sort of surprised since several of the other girls have been there longer. In fact I have been working exactly 3 months. The days when I could go out in the afternoon & get a coke etc. seem definitely over however. Being carefree certainly has its points.

We came home tonight on the street that goes to Balling from Greenbelt. I think the last time I had been on it was when we (your dad & sister) took you over when you came from Detroit for the weekend. The apartments that were being built then have green lawns & flowers now—a lot can happen in 16 months I guess.

I laughed at the letter you wrote after Thanksgiving when you said if you got home for Christmas and got a couple of trips down, and I came back for Easter that you thought you could stand it till May. But it doesn't seem so funny any more. It's amazing how much one can stand if he has to.

Do you have a Catholic Chaplain up there. You've never had your promised instructions, you kno [sic]. I wouldn't have accused you of being such a procrastinator. There isn't much hurry right now, it seems, but it could be something to pass away the time.

I guess you can't tell much about my suntan, but it's pretty well bleached out already anyway. Elaine decided you'd like a picture of the ring—I thought the camera was plenty close, but evidently it wasn't.

How about those pictures you promised me—although I'll admit I'll settle for a letter at this point.

I wrote up the papers on Eddie Rickenbacker today, his getting 1.00 per day. (He's only had seven years of schooling) and Jaqueline [sic] Cochran's should be coming thru, they're in the other office now. I think she'll have to come in & be fingerprinted etc. She's getting $1.00 per year, and is starting this new Woman Flyers Auxiliary here. You have to have 450 hours or something like it—however. I think I should be about ten years older. Practically all of them are around 30.

Lue just got home—she's been working overtime for a couple of weeks & doesn't arrive 'til about 8:00. It's a great war!

Anyway she keeps talking and bothers me when I'm trying to concentrate on how much I love you. The kids I eat lunch with are having a wonderful time arguing about whether or not we should get married if you get leave. Right now there are more pros than cons, but you never know. Of course I have practically nothing to say, for the simple reason that I can't get a word in edgewise.

I love you so very much (without a beard, however). The time just has to go fast, because I want it to so much. Someday, I'm sure, we'll remember this all as only a bad dream, and I'm also sure that we'll love each other so much more enduringly, because we kno [sic] so well what it is to be apart.

Pat. [Transcription ends]