

[Transcription begins]

#35 Monday May 1, 1944

Dear Douglas: I promised you an extra letter last week and then didn't write it and apologise [sic] but somehow the week seemed very full, mostly of housework and sewing and there seemed little to write, so the extra will have to be another time. By the way, we are constantly being urged over the radio and press to write the service men more often and I wonder whether you would prefer that I write you several short notes each week or the one long letter as I have been doing. I have the feeling that you [sic] correspondence is so large that you always have mail whenever a batch reaches your ship--am I right or do you sometimes hang your head in sorrow and slink away to your bunk to gnaw your fingernails? Tell me truly for I can do either way you prefer.

We have been more than fortunate with mail from you lately--#98, 99, 100, 101 and 102 all at hand and I shall try to comment on the various incidents you mention. We enjoyed your description of Lt. (jg)¹ Leggett's humorous GENERAL QUARTERS broadcast and your April Fool joke. That made us think of other little bits of humour on your part such as locking the lavatories on the inside at Columbia (by the way, did you know that they are referred to as "House of Lords" in the British Navy [?]) and the string of nuts, bolts, screws, etc. covered with wet black paint and suspended through the hole in the floor at Brown. You mention Spring appearing in the garden at home--yes indeed, everything is beginning to look lovely. The forsythia bush between our garden and Grays' is a mass of yellow blossoms bright as the sun and the daffodils and hyacinths are in bloom--Dad did his first bit of grass cutting last night and finished it tonight. No vegetables for us this year, for with three of us, we can buy the little that we use. Your "strange experience" the dream of the merry maidens accompanying you on your ship was most cleverly written and has caused exclamations of amazements [sic] from everyone to whom I read it and Uncle George wants it for the Odyssey but of course, I will be careful to omit the name of the ship! You mention rough water several times so I know that you are really getting to be an old salt and will have plenty to tell us when you return. I can't imagine you up the mast but am relieved to know that you reached terra firma or shippa firma safely. Hope it doesn't become a habit. By this time I imagine that your division Commander has arrived and the discipline will be more strict but your [sic] must have a pretty efficient ship or another one would have been selected as his headquarters. I hope you will receive the harmonica which Mrs. Jones so kindly donated. I am enclosing an article which I happen to see in the Journal which will give you a little idea of the scarcity of the aforementioned article. I shall still keep my eyes and ears open and pick you up a chromatic if I ever get the chance. I can remember when I read everything of Sherlock Holmes' that I could get my hands on and am glad that you had a chance to get the set. The book "Kabloom" Dad sent up to Joe Rapoza who is at Wallum Lake but if we come across anything as good as that again we will send it on. I joined the Book-of-the-Month Club this year but

¹ Lt. (j.g.)(Lieutenant (junior grade or LTJG) refers to the rank of a junior commissioned officer in various uniform service branches of the United States including the US Navy. A Lt.(jg) ranks above an Ensign and below a Lieutenant.

have not been pleased with any of the selections so far.

I think your question answering letter has covered the situation very completely to date. We will forward the "Naval Proceeding" as you suggest by first class mail. Just at present Uncle Hartley is reading the first three copies. Yes, I am very much at home now. I enjoy being there and am finding plenty to do. The storages upstairs are receiving a bit of my attention, sewing, gardening and cooking are other pastimes and for outside work, I go every Wednesday to Calvary for Red Cross Bandage work.

I am glas [sic] that you have plenty of drinking water but you must miss having an abundance of shower water for I imagine that it can be hot where you are. There, I think that I have commented on all your letters to date, the last one received being #102, dated April 20th and we had an extra V-mail.

[Written in the margin:] Mrs. Norman Holmes is at S. Carolina. Betty Shaw was a recent blood donor. According to the papers from Polly-next-door.]

Bill came home last night so Marilyn and Daryl have been down there for the day and they have gone out to dinner, while Daryl is here in her own crib. The minute we shut her door at night she pops up on her feet and we hear her talking away but pretty soon all is silent and when we go in to cover her up, she is generally asleep at the foot of the crib. She carries on regular conversations with her voice going up and down and putting in a laugh every once in a while, but all in her own especial jargon--you would swear that she were [sic] speaking a foreign language. She has many English words also and what she does say, she enunciated [sic] very clearly. She walks all over the house, but gets down and creeps if she is really in a hurry. She is a little mischief and can spot a cupboard door open or the dog's water dish on the floor in a flash and scurries to get to it before we see her. When Marilyn was her age we dressed children almost entirely in white baby dresses but Daryl has a little bright scarlet velvet skirt with straps over the shoulders to wear with a white blouse and someone else has just given her a blue skirt. She looks darling in anything we put on her. Her eyes are large and dark like Marilyn's but her lashes curl back against her face instead of being straight. Next Tuesday Marilyn and Mrs. Schmid are going to Philadelphia for a week or more to visit all the relatives and I am to have Daryl to myself. Bill expects to be shifted from his present base at Bourne by the first of June.

Dad and I went to church yesterday. Mr. Tomlin was away attending Bonilyn's graduation and Rev. Mr. Gates who is a new member of our church gave the sermon. The choir loft did not seem as full as usual but did a good job. Timmie Buffum and his parents were there. He is now an Ensign and today headed for San Diego so who knows--you may meet him there. John Brown also is heading for there and John Allen is on a destroyer 690 somewhere in your vicinity.

In the broom closet in back of the stove, I reached in to find a rag that had fallen down and my hand discovered a black rubber ball, you know they are impossible to buy now. I don't know its history but it had no teeth marks in it so it must have been there before

Chip's time. He hasn't had a ball for months and went nearly wild, but do you know, he hadn't had it more than ten minutes than [sic] he remembered about putting it under the piano the way he used to and had us almost crazy, getting it out for him! What a memory! Daryl loves to help us throw his toys but we can't let her play with him alone for he is too rough and is quite jealous of her. Bing is more tolerant and it is funny to see Daryl climb into the basket with him under the stove. Bing will stay for a minute or two then get up and go under the dining table to finish his nap.

We had a pleasant evening at the Dick's Saturday night, good supper and bridge and conversation afterwards. I have bought a gold colored "Topper" which is merely a short summer coat to be worn for all occasions when you don't wear a hat. I'm glad that you sent us the name of your tailor in New York, let us know if you should ever want to order any more suits.

Perhaps Tommie has intimated to you that things are not too happy for him and that his jg was denied. I think that he has had a very unlucky break but for his sake probably it is best not to say to [sic] much about it for his incoming mail might be censored. I'm sure in the end that it will work out all right but in the meantime letters from his friends will help to fill his mind. Mrs. Buffum telephoned me today that she had received your V-mail thanking her for the Christmas card just received!

Love from us all [Transcription ended]