

[Envelope:]

Captain A.S. Aiken
O – 406500
18th fighter Squadron
A.P.O. 986, c/o Postmaster
Seattle, Wash.

[Transcription begins]

Greenbelt, Md.

Hi Joe –

I've about reached my low point so according to the Dorothy Dix¹ I shouldn't be writing to you and lowering your morale—but as I always say what the hell's a husband for. Yestryday [sic] I got a letter from Peg Murray, the girl I liked the most in the bunch who went to Alaska, we had a lot of fun together since most of the other gals were on the watch and we were both engaged. He was an Air Corps man too and in India, sailed from Bolling on 5 hrs notice about a month after you first left the country. Any way he was killed on the 21st of February & as she says she doesn't much feel like ever coming home again. Then Mrs. Matthews answered my letter today. She had a baby 3 days after she got the telegram. It's a boy named R.D. Jr. It was a pretty bad letter, but I'm sure I don't blame her for going to pieces. She's stuck in No. Dakota probably for the rest of her life and says instead of 23 she wishes she were 73. I get what she means. Then on top of that you write that you won't be home in July—altho' I thought that was coming—still you could have picked a more convenient day to tell me. On thinking the whole thing over—I wish some kind soul would blow the whole damn world to hell—and I'd be glad to be among the missing.

I think it would be better to be in Poland or Greece where they kill all the family instead of one person and leave the others grubbing around trying to make a life out of nothing, like those two kids will have to do. I can't even feel good about us—if we do get out of it we'll probably be fat, frightened and always running around trying to save our own necks like most of the people around here.

I'll buy your old pen for you & also have the bracelet fixed—it certainly looks like you. Also we have to put off the New York trip a couple of weeks because Steve is sick and Helen couldn't get in to see him.

Darling, I do love you I guess that's what's at the bottom of feeling this way, I get worn down to a frazzle wanting you, and worrying, and hating the war, and hating the

¹ Dorothy Dix (November 18, 1861 – December 16, 1951), was the pseudonym of U.S. journalist Elizabeth Meriwether Gilmer. Her advice on love and marriage was syndicated in newspapers around the world.

circumstances it forces me into. I'm so unsure of you and I need something to be interested in and I don't mean a baby. The difference between Peg's letter and Mrs. Matthews was everything. Because she had a job she liked in a new country Peg could see her way clear to living for the next 50 years. If I can't have you I'm damn sure I don't want to help populate this god-awful place.

Evelyn Matthews wants me to write her anything you told me about the circumstances. All I can remember is that he made two passes, one of them unnecessary [sic]—and I hope to God he knows how much he's done to her. If I ever heard you'd done anything like that and hadn't gotten away with it I'd hate you for the rest of my life. He didn't have the right to be heroic.

Met Major Atkins, he was very nice, he's going to Orlando, he also seemed to think you'd be back at least by July, but I suppose he doesn't count on you volunteering your services. Every time I tell myself that it isn't your fault, I remember the time I had 3 days at Selfridge and you volunteered to work Saturday afternoon. Very commendable of you I'm sure but I still feel like a sucker.

Anyway I hope you feel OK now but you're getting awful damn old not to know how to take care of your own stomach. Not only that but I love you horribly and there's not a damn thing I can do about it—not even God-help-me join the lousy WAACs. You ought to be here where I could weep on your silly shoulder instead of so far away I can't even Remember what you look like. Anyway stay as long as you like and I hope you have a hellava good time.

Pat.

Why didn't you write a nicer letter to Mrs. Matthews [Transcription ends]