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John D. Goodin

Mrs. Glenna Goodin
R F D #1
Erwin,



Oct. 21st - 44.

Dear Mam,

We'll wait - have been moving around today but am getting a little sleepy - getting good light, tho, and so will write you a few lines.

Shorting the hull with the logs, I'm not getting very far - this is all I've written in 2 hours now.

Mom - I appreciate you not wanting any feeling of hatre in us - that they have mothers, too - but - if you have any of your old time fire - I'll bet you'd beat their mamas up for raising such a stinking bunch of bastards, now - wouldn't you ?? Seriously Mam - I hate nothing but pity - sorta like killing a sheep - killing dog, or an egg-snacking day - just can't break them of the habit. The nearest I've come to God was because I had little enough sense to leave the comparative safety of my tank to help a wounded German - but enough of that. They aren't human, Mom - they're machines. But - these little kids - they're darling - a little girl about 3 - the saddest cuteas thing I've ever seen - and storm? - Wow. But - a perfect lady. Hildegard - H, cleaned up our room, washed my

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socks, patched my torn jacket. Even scratched my back. It may be hard for you to realize the tremendous difference between the German mass-produced mechanical soldier, and the family he has left behind. These kids & their mamas go to Mass every morning, are perfectly reverent to be young ladies, are properly grateful for chocolates & sweets. No, mummy - there'll never be any hate in my heart to that extent. I don't gloat over their dead, and except for the desire to take them prisoners instead of shooting them - I ~~had~~ would not have lost two good men. It was a bitter lesson for a pupil who was brought up on the Ten Commandments, and on love, affection and kindness. But - its value will not be forgotten and God saw fit to let me learn without injury to me - so - while retaining the quality of mercy, I still must exercise the law of self-preservation - which may not be God's 1st of Ten Commandments, but is Nature's first. It is this latter law that makes a stinky sunrise and hug the earth, to call on the good Lord for strength and courage, and to not be afraid - and a coward. And it is God's will that overcomes Nature's law, and a few from

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within that drives the physical being into an atmosphere drenched with danger, fraught with fear - to risk destruction in order to save others from possible annihilation - and the almighty with his angel of death (who has been called a wretched prostitute because she sleeps with all, takes anyone promiscuously - and her price is the same to all) held in check, graciously allows us unworthy souls to continue our living - or existing, from day to day. But gives us the courage to smile, even as Death looks at us - not conscious perhaps that we are still impudent and ungentlemanly enough to smile at anything in a skirt, and to flirt with any angels - or wink slyly at just any girl!

So it goes - Mam, my dear. One of my greatest joys in France and Belgium was to smile, wink and tip my hat to some old lady (or gentleman) who sat back from the howling, screaming, adoring crowds of liberated people - and occasionally blowing them a kiss. I somehow felt the glow that sparkled in their hearts - and could see the twinkle in their eyes - and thanked my Heavenly Father that he has so graciously spared my Mam from the

horrors of occupation. And - I'm proud - tho' you
would never know it - that I'm a part of their
liberation; that I have sacrificed in sweat and
blood ($99 \frac{44}{100} \%$ sweat!) for their freedom - that
I'm doing something real, worthwhile - how wonderful.
You must know the feeling - of releasing a trapped
animal, taking a splinter out of a dog's paw - pulling a
 nail from a child's foot - (might I even say milking
a very tired old cow whose "Mo" neglected her - you
did help Marie, didn't you????) its the same
glow of self-satisfaction from practicing the Golden
Rule.

And yet - I wonder about my insatiable love of hunting -
is it the feeling of freedom of doing as I want, in
hunting what game I want, the thrill of perfection
as a shot finds its mark? Or is it the lust to
kill, to demonstrate man as all-powerful and ruler
of the lower kingdoms? Or matching wits with Nature's
own children, learning their tricks - as the wily,
squeamish squirrel, or the possum? Again - is it
the confidence one receives - knowing that if necessary,
one could live on the game of the forest, and successfully
manage to live if all nests and clothes of
civilization were thrown away and primal conditions
were forced on one?

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Many questions, Mam, dear - which in my youthful ignorance I could not imagine to answer satisfactorily. But you - who are wise (your letter - I quote - "now that they know I'm crazy" - ha!) - you who dropped so many little pearls of wisdom - (yea, verily - almost before swine!) perhaps in your communions with God, you have found the answers to my feeble brains' questions. I am not at all convinced that the good people who wrote "young men shall dream dreams, but old men shall see visions", made a mistake in not including old women. Sometimes I find myself taking strolls into the hills with you, or sailing madly off ~~some~~ mountain top - "4 wheels and no books" and I wonder what it would be like to have you here to witness the liberation of a just proud people and the conquering of an arrogant array of Anyans. But, I must content myself with many musings and hope that, the Good Lord willing - sometime soon I can sit down and discuss things with you. And - I have your law - welcome letters to me - always a comfort, and of late, a frequent comfort as you have been writing quite frequently - sorta like a gentleman whoimbibes too much beer and

and finds it necessary to make frequent
"trips" - finally, pouring his beer into the can
so as to cut out the middle man - I hope
to cut out the middle man soon - and
talk straight to you, and vice versa.

And now, my dear Mom - it's after 1:00 and
your Jokiny must have his - beauty nap - gray
hair may be distinguished looking - but the
face under it must remain awake.

With all my love, as always,

Jokiny
S. " "