

France

20 August 1944

Sunday.

Sweetheart,

Happy Anniversary, honey. Another anniversary has come and is almost gone and again as last year we are separated by distance even though I know that we can never be truly separated. My love for you is so strong, Shirley, that although ~~there~~ there is an ocean and a continent between us I know that there is only one girl in this world for me.

Today, more than ever, I wanted to be with you to tell you how much I love you and how my love for you has grown stronger day by day ever since that first date.

Now, three years after the wonderful night when you became my bride, I realize more than ever how wonderful you are. No words can express my love for you, sweetheart. My whole life is pledged to you - to trying to make you happy.

Three years ago today I was very much in love, very proud, and very happy, but I knew nothing then of the love that was to be ours nor the true happiness that ~~we~~ we would know. As much as I loved you then I hadn't begun to love you in comparison with the love I had for you when we had found happiness in our little home. Then as the months rolled along happily, and we were no longer "newlyweds" I realized that our love was growing stronger and our happiness more complete. Yet, I was  
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a little afraid that there might be a tendency for our love to become an accepted fact and taken ~~for~~ for granted. I realize now that such an idea was pure nonsense — our love never will cease to grow & never will become matter of fact. Each day, each month, and each year will hold new happiness & new love.

Each month when we celebrated our monthly anniversaries we had as much fun as we had had on dates before we were married, and yet we had something more than we ever had before. Even a little box of candy, & possibly a card, brought us closer together and made our anniversaries something special.

I hope that your box of candy and War Savings Bonds were delivered today as I asked Mother to do. I sent the money two months ago, just to make sure it got there in time. I hope it was a pleasant surprise, honey. The celebration will have to wait, though, my sweetheart.

The sweet young girl I married has become a beautiful mature young lady. She is the loveliest girl in the world for me.

Oh, my darling, I love you so much. I live only for the day when we can be together again in our own little home and I can be with you always. I want to be near you, to watch your graceful walk, to gaze fondly at your lovely face, and to be able to hold you  
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in my arms. I want to kiss you and tell you how much I love you - how much I adore you. And I want to enjoy your tenderness and sweetness. I long to feel your hand stroking my cheek or your fingers running through my hair.

Today, more than most days I have been reliving memories - sweet, wonderful memories. I can picture you in my mind's eye just as you looked when we used to double date with Pat & Bob, and I very clearly remember a certain night on Ferris Hill. (Remember, darling, I said "Yes.")

I remember many little details about that Wednesday evening, the 20th of August, three years ago today, too. You know them as well as I. I even have to laugh inwardly when I think of the trip back to Redlands for the little piece of paper I had in my coat pocket all the time. I was not excited much - no!

Then I have some sweet memories of you in our little home. You were so sweet, and you got better looking & more lovely all the time. You made me so happy, and my love grew stronger. Even now I can picture that little twinkle in your eye as you sat across the table from me in that little home of ours. We did have fun, didn't we, honey?

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Then, honey, I recall many days when you were sick and I felt so helpless because I could not help you. I loved you so much and wanted to help you so much. Then, I can never forget that wonderful night that Laura was born. Maybe you have some very different memories of that night from what I have, but I know you were proud just as I. You gave me the greatest thrill of my life that night. I cannot find words to express how proud I was of you or how much I loved you that night. And even today I recall the wonderful thrill I experienced when I saw our sweet little daughter for the first time.

From that day on I really began to love you as I had never loved you before. You had become more wonderful than ever - more amazing. Not only had you been a wonderful sweetheart, a wonderful bride, and a wonderful wife, you proved to be a wonderful mother as well. And so I realized more than ever that I was the luckiest man in the world.

Now, more than ever before I know what I want out of life, and yet there is a job to do before I can go back to the happiness, love, & home I know you can give me.

Darling, I pray for you and Laura and you are always in my thoughts and in my heart.

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I pray that you will always stay as wonderful, as lovely, as true, and as sweet as you are. Always love me as I love you, sweetheart, and there is nothing I will not do for you that is within my power. I want only to make you and haura happy.

But, now, sweetheart I must say goodnight and pleasant dreams. Today has been a busy day & it is after eleven now.

I went to church this morning. Church was held in a tent and we sat on our G.I. helmets, but the service was as inspiring as if it had been in a chapel.

After work tonight I went to a movie held in the same tent and saw "Two Girls and a Sailor." It was very good.

Well, Shirley, I must go to bed. Tomorrow will be another busy day.

My thoughts & my love are with you, my darling. I love you more than life itself. You mean more to me than anything in this world, Shirley.

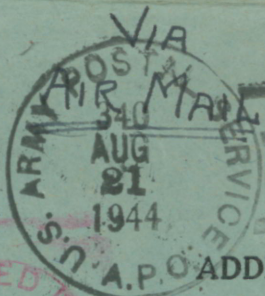
Goodnight, my sweet.

Yours forever,  
Cliff

**BLUE ENVELOPE MAIL**

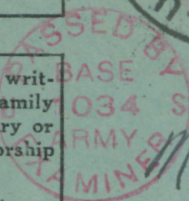
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