

Nice, July 29th, 1945

Dearest Billy,

I received, from Jany, at the beginning of the week the flint that you expedited to her for me. You were very nice and I thank you very much. This did me a favor because in Nice, it is absolutely impossible to get, at any price whatsoever, matches or flint. These products are even rarer than rain. But you must already know that Jany has left Nice working in Marseille to sing in front of your friends stationed at the Delta Base. She left last Tuesday telling us that as soon as she arrives she will send us some news. But it has been 6 days since she left and we haven't received anything yet. I think that Jany is forgetting about us a little bit. Additionally, I don't have her address to forward her her mail and this morning I found a letter from you for her and well I am waiting for her address to expedite it to her. We are very happy, Gaby and I, to know that Jany will debut. We went to hear her at her audition at Bagatelle.⁸⁴ She sang Begin the Beguine and was perfect. Besides she really pleased the soldiers who had to hire her. Should I tell you more? In Nice life is still the same. It is very hot and our only pleasure is to go swimming. We mostly go in the evening. The water is better or if anything seems better than during the daytime. And you my dear Billy, what becomes of you in your beautiful Italy? Are you still in Lecca and can you still swim in Lake Como?⁸⁵ I suppose that over there, it must be hot as well. Yesterday evening, I saw one of your friends with "La Libertad" on his arm.⁸⁶ I accosted him and ask him if he knew you but he is not in the infantry and is a part of the Engineer [corps].⁸⁷ He didn't know you and I was a little disappointed because I would have liked to talk about you with one of your friends. Maybe, by chance, I will meet one. I hope so. Tonight Gaby will not write you because she is very busy. In fact, I see her over there in the kitchen carrying her laundry back and forth. She is doing the laundry and begs me to give you all

⁸⁴Restaurant in France where there must have been a stage where performances and auditions were held.

⁸⁵Lecca or Lecce is a city in Italy where US Army Corps Engineers built an airfield which was the 15th Air Force B-24 Liberator heavy bomber base. This base manufactured and strategized how to successfully bomb Germany. Lecca today is known as "The Florence of the South."

⁸⁶Another term for the Torch of Liberty insignia of the 442nd regiment.

⁸⁷The United States Army Corps of Engineers, made up of the Engineer Regiment, military construction and civil works, was assigned across Europe during WWII. In 1944, the army specially trained the combat engineers who were assigned with blowing up underwater obstacles or clearing out defended ports. In Europe, they were also responsible for building numerous bridges including floating tactical bridges which were often destroyed after use. The engineers were also responsible with maintaining or even reconstruction roads to prevent any transport or traveling interruptions.

her regards and to kiss you on both cheeks. But will I do it? Because I am very...very jealous. Yes but [I will]! And my dear Billy, I leave your for tonight. I don't have the photos yet. The store I gave them to to develop was supposed to deliver them to me on July 23rd. I went there on that date and I found the door closed. These people are on vacation until August 1st. So I will get them to you as soon as I have them. Hoping to hear from you soon my dear Billy

Sincerely yours,

Gilbert

P.S. Do you have good news from your parents and from your charming sister Carol? If I wasn't already married, I would ask you to marry her. Learn loads of impressions for you to do for us on your next leave. When will you come back to Nice?