

Nice, August 3rd, 1945

Dearest Billy,

Yesterday we had the visit of your friend Albert who gave me your package. You can't know how much pleasure it gave me. But I am very very embarrassed and don't know how to thank you. You are really too nice my dear Billy. Today your friend is in Sospel and tomorrow at noon, he will eat at the house.⁸⁸ We can therefore talk about you and this will make us happy. But your friend told us that you have left Lecca for Pisa.⁸⁹ You must sorely miss the water of Lake Como. It is true that in Pisa you can swim in the Arno [river] and that you are very close to the Marina di Praia where you have the Mediterranean.⁹⁰ I suppose that you must go often. We received, tonight, your letter from July 28th for Jany. We will send it to her tonight. I suppose that Jany gave you her address in Marseille but she certainly messed up the number. She must have told you, like us, 44 Belsunce Court when Hotel California, where she is, is at 60 Belsunce Court. I thought I could send the photos today that we took on the beach but the store that was supposed to open August 1st is still closed until August 7th. The Niçois shopkeepers are not worried about it and are not in a hurry to serve their clients.⁹¹ Anyway... as soon as I have them I will get them to you. But my dear Billy, I will finish here for this evening. I will give this letter to your friend and in this way it will get it to you quicker. I thank you once more for your kindness and tell you, see you in Nice soon. When is your next leave?

Sincerely yours,

Gilbert

Dear Billy,

⁸⁸Sospel is a commune in southeastern France located near the Italian border. During the war, Germany rebuilt and fortified a bunker from WWI and bombed much of Sospel to prevent communication between the French Resistance and the Italians. The 517th regiment was responsible for freeing Sospel and is still honored by its inhabitants to this day.

⁸⁹Pisa is a city and commune in Tuscany, Italy. In 1943, Pisa was bombed by the United States Army Air Force which disabled the city's marshalling yard and also destroyed a lot of the city in addition to killing many of its citizens. Today, Pisa is most famously known for its Leaning Tower.

⁹⁰The Arno is a river in central Italy. During the war the Arno was the base of the Arno-Linie, a German defensive line centered in Florence. This line was the final obstacle between the US Army and the major German defences in Italy.; Marina di Praia is a little beach cove located in Italy found wedged between two rock ridges.

⁹¹Niçois are people from Nice

It's my turn to thank you for the package that you got to us through your friend. You know my soft spot. Therefore, think about how happy I was as well about your visit to Nice! I hope that soon I will have the surprise of opening the door to you after the doorbell rings. But this time, we will not let you go and all your leave will be spent at 19 Hotel of Ports Rd on the 3rd floor to the right. I will finish here dear Billy in thanking you again (To thank you better I give you a big kiss but Gilbert will make a face, too bad).

Gaby