

"With the Lincoln - Washington Battalion still at rest.
How long Brethren - how long"?

Aug. 16th, 1937.

Dear Min.

I'm a naughty, naughty boy. I haven't even 40 centimos left to take a shave, so I'll have to do my own scraping today. 500 pesetas - squandered in 48 hours. I was so pie-eyed and dizzy with the sense of hardness, with the feeling of freedom, richness, relaxation and forgetfulness, that I "lit my cigars with ten dollar bills." It was spontaneous combustion. Four months of training under strict military obedience; up at 5:30 to bed at 9:30, no holidays - no vacations. Then a month at the front without sleeping hours, without sleep; only bullets, cannons and airplanes. Now suddenly (though expected), I'm handed a salvo - conductor for "48 hours to Madrid, not counting the time for transportation."

I was berserk, a kid, a new born babe. I squeaked and squealed; said "god-god" at everybody, kicked my heels. I was in my Madrid. It was New York once more. Street cars, subways, theatres, Broadway, cafes, bars, whores, shops, life, gaiety. Millions of people of all shapes and sizes; men, women, kids, soldiers and officers - too many officers. I walked into the Hotel Alfonso with its plush carpets and gilded ceilings. Named after our late lamented King, this gorgeous joint, where previously only tourists, and the bourgeoisie had the privilege of seating their fat asses in its velvet chairs, Hotel Alfonso is now controlled by the "Partido Comunista", with pictures of Jose Diaz and Joe Stalin in its lobby. They charged me 3 pesetas for a swanky room, which included telephone, bath and douche bowl; the latter I used to wash my feet in. It was on a floor, half of which had been ripped away already, by fascist shells.

The Alfonso was my day residence. Nights I spent at the Hotel Florida, the only place Dolores would consent to go to. The little bitch probably got a rate off from the management. Mornings I spent shopping and afternoons, guzzling scotch and cognac in the Gran Via Cafe; (all lights out at night, so the cafe close at 7:30) waiting for Dolores to

complete her heavy morning's business, and what a business they do these days. I was drunk continuously, I was happy, I returned to my little town singing "Nancy Brown", while peeing in the gutter. Broke flat - but goddam, it was worth it.

So now I'm chippies as a chipmunk, and anxious as all hell to get the next battle over with, which I sincerely believe will bring us much closer to the victory of the war. So close, that I could then name the month of my return, if such is my good fortune. Madrid is marvelous, but now more than ever, I yearn for New York + D. W. O + Youth Theatre and the comrades who make life easier with their letters. I yearn to bring the Spirit of Madrid to N. Y. That spirit of those fine, good Spanish people, who refused to evacuate even in the most trying days of November. The spirit of the pretty S.R.D. girls who never tire of making the rounds with their collection boxes, while they smilingly say softly as your coin clinks "Americano? Tu mucho bueno." I want to get back and describe personally, not my boozing and whoring around, but that, all that was good and fine and anti-fascist in that city, which despite my drunk edness, left its lasting impression on my heart.

I wrote a letter to your brother Paul, and incidentally gave a few pointers on him to S. Marion the Daily Worker Correspondent who is doing an article on the students in the Brigade. Bernie finally sent me a note, which said not to believe any ~~rumours~~ rumours about him, that they are all lies and that he is sick and expects to go home soon. S'funny, I'm not so aw' him anyway. I appreciate now, what war can do to a guy, and Bernie was nothing compared to the others. He still has qualities that are good, and they must be brought out. It's my job, because I know that he has more respect for me, than for anybody else.

Did I tell you that my parents are re-united? Yes - war does strange things. My Salad and love to Bea and Sonny. Have you seen Mike yet? I suppose everybody knows by now. There's not one of my performers around anymore. Just me. And the old "giems" gone.

Peter Fry of the N. G. J. is here (in my company - just arrived) and maybe will attempt to get enough cooperation to put on the Sifters "Give thy Lessons to the Wind". The cast calls only for men and is about seamen. As our battalion is composed of at least a very good portion of seamen, maybe something will come of it. I got a hold of the Mass chant "Spain", that you did back home. If I can get it translated into Spanish - maybe the J. S. U. here, would be willing to work on it.

What's Alex doing these days? Still flitting around I suppose. You know, I haven't seen or heard from Milton White, not once since that time in April. I heard that he's O.K. Does he ever write? As for you madame, I miss the frequency of your mail, but I can very well appreciate what your work entails and how busy you are. Well, I guess that's all. Resting too long is monotonous, and I'd like to see "stand by" orders come in again. Hip, Hip! Salud!

Love
Harry

Harold Malofsky
% S. R. J. (Lincoln - Washington)
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P.S. Last night, we had boxing bouts on the handball court. Handball is a Spanish national sport and many of the smallest towns have built concrete courts. A regulation ring was set up, with lights overhead. The whole town turned out, even the Mayor and his eleven children. Between bouts, I jumped into the ring ~~at~~ and for the first time since we left for the front attempted to lead mass singing. It worked. The fellows gave all they had and sounded swell. I'm glad. It proved the old time rookie spirit was still there.