

October 10

Dear Comrade mother:

After Paul made the new family relationship for me, I thought that maybe he was putting his foot into it, ~~with~~ because he didn't consult the most important person concerned. Sons usually feel sympathetic for stray pups but when they bring them home the mother might say, "Now son, I know this shows you've got a heart of gold, but —"

I don't know if Paul told you exactly how this happened so I will. You see it just that I haven't got a real mother. It's just that she can't be consulted or confided in on questions such as my active participation in the Spanish war or any other activity which might endanger my personal safety. The tree ~~is~~ after over 8 months in Spain is ~~the~~ my folks only know that I'm here involved in some sort of technical work and ~~write~~ write a general picture of the Spanish scene and no doubt their sympathies are with the loyalists but they are more interested in having us come home than anything else. That's a pretty brief explanation of my family relationship.

Overhead there is the ~~roar~~ roar of airplanes which continually interrupts the writing of this letter. While I was writing the preceding paragraph, the air alarm rung about five times and ~~a~~ dog fights were going on in various parts of the sky. They go so high that it's almost impossible to see who is who. But you can hear the crack of machine guns. Here they come again. The roar is tremendous but they're only little specks in the sky. A few minutes later we hear the thump of distant bombs falling. Here's a large squad returning. They're comparatively low and have our markings.

Life under all this air activity goes on

② with remarkably little excitement or fear displayed. You see the kids and women running "gaily" (I guess that's about the best word) to the bomb-proof dug-outs. We stay out "bravely" (I think that's not the best word) wondering if were they objective or whether they are our planes. But so far we haven't been bothered. On a large-scale aviation is about the most ineffective of all the death dealing instruments of modern war. It depends more on breaking morale. It depends upon you thinking "Well, there is the enemy over my head, what if he should hit me, what if one of those bombs should land on me or close enough to me to tear me apart" It's not a pleasant thought to entertain. And all of us ^{with} this fear more or less when we see the warbirds coming. But it doesn't break our morale because we have something to look forward to and a strong support based on firm convictions. The broken morale appears on the Fascist side among their soldiers. When we took Reddite only the officers fought to the last. The men gave up as soon as they conveniently could.

Coming back to the original subject, Paul let me read your letter in which you welcomed me. It was a swell letter and made me feel right at home. So far I can't send you a picture of myself. Photographers are scarce around here.

Probably you won't be satisfied with my short letters. But if this satisfies, I'll attempt to write longer ones and more interesting ones.

Salud!
Harry