

10 Mai

Dear Shoe;

What do you know, another letter so close on the heels of the last one. But then I suppose there is no one to whom I could better write to and then I guess I haven't much to do these days except lay on my back, side, stomach, then return via the other side to my back. So it goes, day in day out. However in spite of my own peculiar situation in the hospital, they have been memorable days for us here in Italy, you at home and for the whole world including Japan. Although our activities are confined to mild exclamations and talk of the 'armchair' type we have followed the radio announcements with an outstretched ear. Although the regular hospital staff had an alcoholic celebration, the patients passed the day as well as could be expected. For the most part it was one of reflection and a feeling of 'its hard to believe'. For over five years up and down and all around we have in one way or another been heading for VE day. When it came, it left some of us sort of flat. We were still here. There is still a big job to do in Europe and of course Japan is far from down. Its like jumping deep into the water in the middle of a lake. You struggle to come to the top, suddenly after it seemed that your lungs would burst you burst forth into the air with great relief only to realize that you still have a long swim to shore. That is the way I feel anyway.

But ~~then~~ then we have come a long way and I suppose that every little bit of exhilaration should be squeezed from five years of hard work. And there has been plenty of high spirited activity in Italy. These people are emotional and half crazy anyway and they, along with the French, have finally after some aid from the allies won the war. Everybody kisses everybody else, the partisans strut around like satiated roosters. The red flags flutter along with the Italian and the allied flags. Fascists have a precarious time walking along the streets. Somebody is sure to take a poke at them or mildly stick out their tongue. Everybody of 'note' is spouting off congratulating each other, praising everybody and everything. Some German prisoners discuss the fight for Cassino with American parachutists. What a day. It happens only once every twenty five years.

And what is ~~if~~ even more astounding is that yours truly had nary a single beer to cool off his excited brow. When one has acute inflammation of the liver (prosaic what), demon rum is out and out poison with none of the alleviating qualities. (Something tells me that my fingers are not behaving very well this fine morning). Perhaps it is the thought of demon rum.

Knowing nothing of high strategy and being in a poor position to find out, I cannot say with any assurance that I will be home at five o'clock June second. It may even be in 1948. That I doubt though as on my sleeve I now have four little gold bars each one standing for six months. I hope they will earn me a passage to Washington Place, and subito.

Please find the enclosed, acknowledge receipt, breath through your knows? as its healthier and keep your mouth shut, its healthier also.

Worn and turned up at the toes, your

shoe