

U.S.S. Hornet CVA-12
Photographic Laboratory

18 June 1955

At Sea

Dear Mom and Dad,

Hi there, hope you folks are getting along fine and taking good care of yourselves. I'm fine and in good health. I have the stinking duty tonight to be duty photographer. I sleep in the lab tonight and it's nice and cool. The temperature in the lab is nice but you have to sleep with a blanket on.

We are out operating now for thirty days straight. Sure didn't take long in getting out to sea after a few days in Yokosuka. Well, no mail the last couple of days so I guess I'll be snowed under with a pile of mail when we get back into port. I'll answer all of your letters before we get back in. I'm sorry but I don't like to stay on the ship when I have liberty and write letters. This cruise is sure getting underway in short order. After we come back in we will only have five months left on this cruise. Sure sounds good doesn't it? I'm quite sure that it does as I'm looking forward to returning to the states and taking things easy.

Well, we had our Division party Thursday night and it sure was a corker. WOW!, sure had a good time. Lots of fun and as usual the strippers sure raised some of the fellows' blood pressure up. Most of the fellows in the lab are here for the first time and they sure got a kick out of the strippers. Ha Ha. Me, Ha? I'm an old salt. Ha Ha. We all had a swell time and then returned to the ship prior to twelve o'clock as that is when liberty expires and there isn't anything to do here after ten thirty or so anyway.

I'm just about finished with the quarterly report and then I can sit back and take it easy until January until it's time for another report to be sent to the Bureau. Sure hope that I can get out of the store-room by then as I don't like to sit on my rear that long. I'll probably have one of the new fellows in the lab checked out by that time.

They are having hamburgers and coffee in the gallery tonight and the movie is just about over, so I think I'll go and get my blanket and pillow before long. I'm going to close the lab at ten tonight so I can sleep and not have anyone in the lab to make any noise. Tomorrow is Sunday and if they have holiday routine, I'll lay in the sun and study for a while and then roll over and burn the other side and study some more. I will have to be careful as I peeled like a snake shedding its skin from the burn I got in Hawaii. I'm still peeling and it's as tan as ever underneath all the dried up skin.

I went over to the ship's store the other day and was looking at some of the articles that we can buy for about a third of the original cost. I saw a nice string of pearls for \$100.00. They sure are beautiful and nice looking. Not fake either, as they are guaranteed for about \$275.00 in the states. Sure could make a present for someone wouldn't it? I thought it would.

Oh by the way Dad, I sold the Contax for \$170.00. Please don't feel hot under the collar about it as they can get them from sailors (bought in PX for \$200.00, new). So, I didn't do as good as I had expected. They are hot on the prices and the new models over here already. Sold it in the same place that I sold the Rollie last time over here. Also sold Rollie in same place. So, total up to \$300.00 for Rollie and Contax. How much did you pay for the Contax when you bought it? I have a sneaking feeling that you paid more than \$150.00 for it. Am I right or not? So, with the \$300.00 for two cameras and \$100 from payday, I have \$400.00. Of course, I spent a couple of dollars so it amounts to \$395.00. I ought to be able to get the Linhof now, shouldn't I?

I have the Rollie-accessories all boxed and ready to mail. I'll also send the fishing rod I picked up in Yokosuka this time in. Give the fly-rod a whirl and see how it works and if the action is any good at all. I spotted a couple of real nice ones that are sort of high but I think I can jew the merchant down a dollar at a time. Of course, it'll take an hour or so to get him down to my price, but I'll eventually make out. I heard rumors of going to Hong Kong this trip out, so I didn't want to hit there and maybe not hit it again this cruise.

So, I up and sold the Contax for \$170.00. I could possibly get a little more for it on the ship, but I would have had to wait at least two months to get all the dough. I won't spend the money

carelessly or foolishly. I'll keep it in the safe until it's time to use it. Besides, I get paid in ten more days. Seventy dollars in fact. I ought to have most of my next two pays as we will be at sea most of the time.

Going to Kobe, Japan around the early part of next month. I'll take a Speed Graphic over on the beach shooting 4x5 film to get used to larger size film. I can do it too as I'm the storekeeper and the new Photo Officer has a lot of confidence in me, so I have been told. In fact, he said, "Rich", "You and I are going to be as close as two cheeks" Ha Ha. You know where the cheeks are I can guess. Ha Ha. He sure is one swell fellow. Actually, we have been working together on the report that I hardly have a minute to shoot the breeze anymore. Of course, I get a coffee break now and then. But he sure is efficient as all hell. Sure knows his stuff too. I sure hope that I can learn a lot from him. Also, the formula for Kodachrome. Ha Ha. He said he would let anyone have the formula any time at all. I think he would too. We have all the chemicals but one and I don't think that it would be too hard to get if we got hold of some bulk Kodachrome film.

Well Mom and Dad, I'm going to close for now and get ready to hit the sack. It's now twenty minutes to ten and I just heard that Holiday Routine will begin at 0900 in the morning. So, I can get some time in the sun and study at the same time. Be good and wait patiently on my letters as they will be slow but always on the move. So long for now and you two had better take good care of yourselves. Write as much and not so much at one time. Wow!, sort of hard to answer all the mail in a couple of days with such long letters. Ha Ha. So long for now and be good. Say hello to all and tell them to write when they can. Be good, be careful, and save your dough. Ha Ha. See, I can if I want to. Ha Ha. So long for now.

Your Loving son,

Bobby