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Box 84
Toledo, Wash.



Mrs. Art Serr
926 So. Cleveland Ave.
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

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St. Lewis apt. motel
Dec 30, 1952

Dear Marion + all:

Well, we're still sitting and waiting for Thorgel to get his assignments. When he came home last night I thought he might have heard, but no such luck. He said one M/sgt got orders yesterday, and there is one other M/sgt besides him waiting, and one Sgt., and all the others are draftees, etc., who will be sent somewhere for basic training. I asked him what he does to kill time, and he said most of the time he just goes to the PX or reads in the day room. I can see that the inactivity is hard on him, so hope he'll know by tonight when we can leave, and where.

Thorgel heard yesterday there was 17" of snow on Inyo National Pass, and motorists were advised to follow the snow plow over in convoys. We've had 3 more days of rain, and that means snow in the mountains. If we should be sent to N. Mex., Thorgel would like to take Hiway 101 south thru Calif. and then over, which would avoid traveling thru snowy mountains. Then after we'd seen the post + where we'd be living, we'd drive up to S.D. from the south; of course that way it would take longer before we'd get home, so it's torn between which would be better to do. However, until Thorgel gets his orders we can't do anything.

Keeping Kathy happy in a motel on rainy days is quite a problem, too. I really look forward to her nap, and today she didn't take one. Her fourth + last molar is just ready to pop thru, and she is feverish + restless from it. Her third tooth came thru around Christmas. It seems to take at least a week for each one. I'll be so glad when the last one is clear thru. It seems as if she's been teething forever.

Oh, before I forget, your cards arrived last Sat., so the address you used was okay. When we got home to the motel we found them slipped under the door. It was nice to feel that communications were established again.

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This has surely been a ² funny Christmas. So far I haven't opened a single package and the cards from you folks and a couple from Thorgel's relatives that came to the folks at Toledo are all we've seen. It begins to look as if our Xmas will be pretty late - unless Thorgel gets his orders soon we won't be home until the weekend after New Year, if that. It would be nice to be home while you have a couple of days off, but it may be later before we get there.

Our motel apt. is quite cozy, and we are really okay here. It's about 7 mi. from Ft. Lewis. We have a bedroom, a l. room with davenport + chairs, floor lamp, desk, etc., a bath room with shower but no tub, and a little kitchen with sink, tiny elec. refrig, elec. stove, + table + chairs. Our stove is a joke. The oven door turned out to be so warped that it is always open about an inch. As a result the first (+ only) time I tried to fix a roast it didn't do right by me + resembled leather instead. Next I tried to fix it a la pot roast so as not to waste all that meat, but the burners on top of the stove are so old it takes a half hour to make coffee or boil eggs, so that didn't turn out much better.

Thorgel gets up at 5:15 + has breakfast in camp. Kathy + I breakfast here after she gets up, + then we have a little lunch here, too. We usually eat out at night, after Thorgel gets home, which is generally between 4:30 + 5:00.

Saturday we drove to Tacoma and looked around. It seems to be an easy place to find one's way in, and we drove past some of the big stores so I could see their windows. Tacoma has terribly steep streets, they are really hills. It wouldn't be possible to get up them in icy + freezing weather. It's a good thing they have good weather here most all the year around. We stopped at the Ford dealer and looked at the '53 Ranch Wagon, which is what Thorgel wishes we had instead of our car.

lover,

It would be perfect ³ for traveling - we could haul so much stuff. But they are nearly ³1000 more than our car - so we'll let someone else buy them this year. I've never seen so many used car lots full of good cars as they have here. The car men told Thorgel there's no work here to speak of in winter, & they aren't moving ^{cars} at all. It seems there was a 23" rainfall shortage last year in this area last year, and as a result there's such an electricity & power shortage that a lot of places are shut down or closed partially, or else limited in production, so it's thrown a lot of people out of work. For that reason, too, people didn't have any Christmas decorations of trees or displays outside of their houses, altho' most had Christmas trees inside. We even saw a trailer camp near here, and lots of the parked trailers had little trees inside, all lit up.

Well, this prolonged stay in the motel is giving me some time to work on Ruth's sweater. I have the back & both halves of the front done, and am part way up the first sleeve. Maybe by time I get home I'll have it ready to wrap up.

If I'd had any idea we were going to be gone so long, I'd have packed a little differently. I surely wish I'd borrowed your travel iron. I kept one at Thorgel's folks, I haven't had a chance to iron, and all my clothes that need to be ironed are now out of commission. Thank goodness for nylon blouses and Kathy's carduroys, and my gold wool jersey blouse, which, with my brown skirt, came back today from the cleaners. I guess I'll be able to keep going a while, yet, but my trusty iron would be handy. Alas, I wish we'd taken our little radio. There's a good radio in the motel, but it plays only 2 hrs for 25¢, and so I don't use it very lavishly. We could also use our toaster and electric coffee maker. We're making out all right with substitutes, but if we'd had the Ranch wagon instead, we could have hauled a lot more.

I gave (as Santa did) Kathy a little book of Xmas carols for Christmas stocking, and I wish

(turn to back of sheet #1, please)

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you could hear her sing "deck the halls with boughs
of holly" and "A Christmas tree". In the latter, she
says "A kismuss tee, your gay g'een d'ess
delights us. You do not fade in winter's snow,
you b'oom wiz yites when cold winds b'ow"
and it is so cute to hear her. She has also
learned "Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabella" and
part of "Hark the herald angels sing." I don't
know if you saw that same book there or not.
I got another for Carol, so she can play the songs
on the piano. Hope it doesn't duplicate any one
else's gift. My main thing for Carol is a red 'n'
white checked nylon blouse.

Later

Thorgel came home - no news to report. So
tomorrow I'll wait + wonder for another day.
Maybe well be home by Spring!!

Sunday we drove to a little town near here
and saw Mrs. Williamson + son, who were old
neighbors of Thorgel's in Minn. They have a
real nice place and we had a lavish
lunch - she'd baked coffee cake, fruit cake,
2 kinds cookies, home-made buns, etc. These
people out here really love to bake!

I've spent all this time talking about us.
We hope you all had a nice Xmas, including
Nancy. Yesterday I heard Kathy murmuring
in the next room, apropos of what I don't know
"I'm sinking of buying this for Nancy baby."

Kathy talks about you folks all the time,
and even remembers Buster, too. Today
she said "Ted + Mary have a doggie and they
call him Penny, but I call him Buster, but
Buster isn't his name!"

Aid I tell you about Kathy calling Thorgel's
duffel bag his "stuffer bag?" Can't remember,
but I probably did.

I'll close for now - guess this is all the
news. Tell Dotty if an allotment check comes
for me, keep it till I tell her when well be there
for sure.

Marion, if I don't get home before you're
ready to pay your phone bill, I'll send you a
blank check + you can fill in the amt of those 2 calls.

Write! well probably be here a few more days. Love,
P. T. K