

Western Desert - Egypt

Tuesday -
Oct. 27, 1942.

Dear Jackie:

Everything is still solid on the desert. The two squadrons, 64th and 65th, that fly off this field have been credited with fourteen confirmed victories in the last two days without a ~~single~~ single loss, not to mention several probables and damaged. Consequently the beers flow freely every nite in the tent we call the officers club and every night is party night. Aside from various other

WARHAWK: LETTERS FROM OUT OF THE BLUE D. G. "ROCKY" DENTON

I don't know how long it will take for the package to arrive. Also, I'm not sure of the quality of the bracelet - of course, the fellow I purchased it from assured me it was excellent merchandise. but

DEDICATION



This book is dedicated to my mother, Jackie Melton Wrigley Denton Zeitler, who was the original recipient of and inspiration for these letters. She also, as my recitation of her last names indicates, has outlived three husbands and certainly deserves consideration on that account alone!

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES OF GUY O. DENTON AND D. G. "ROCKY" DENTON

Guy O. Denton was a P-40 Warhawk fighter pilot with the famed 57th Fighter Group in World War II. Starting out in the 65th "Fighting Cocks" Squadron, he was soon transferred to the 66th "Exterminators." These letters from North Africa to his future bride chronicle the life of an American flyer living and working in the harsh conditions of the Egyptian, Libyan, and Tunisian deserts. They constitute a memoir, a love story, and an historical documentary. Photographs from that time and place add to the immediacy of the letters.

The letters have been compiled and transcribed by Guy's son, Douglas G. Denton. "Rocky," as he is more commonly known, is a retired high school teacher living in Ennis, Texas. He is a former Baptist minister and the author of several books of sermons published by Baker Book House. He also co-authored a travel book with his brother, Terry, entitled *Never Say "Hi, Jack!" in an Airport*. When his mother recently gave him the letters contained in this book, he felt they deserved a wider audience.

Born in Tallahassee, Florida, where Guy was a flight instructor, Rocky gained his nickname at birth. When the pediatric nurse asked Guy, "What do you think of your new son?" he replied with a fighter pilot expression: "He's a real hot rock." The name stuck and Douglas has been known as "Rocky" ever since.

Tuesday -
Dec. 15, 1942

Jackie; my Darling -

I received the watch today and it's perfect - it was awfully sweet of you to think of it. I wish I had been in a position to purchase Christmas presents - unfortunately, though, I found it quite impossible. I'm sure you will forgive me this time.

That must have been some party you had on your birthday. I hope I'll be with you next year on your birthday. In fact, I'm somewhat determined to spend several birthdays with you in the future, with your permission, of course.

I have been hoping that I wouldn't have to tell you this but apparently I have no alternative. Duncan went out on a flight last Friday from which he and our flight leader didn't return. I have been hoping that he bailed out and would get back, but we haven't had any word as yet. I suppose you know how I feel about it. He's the grandest guy I've ever known. It's possible that he's just a prisoner of

D. G. "Rocky" Denton

war. I'm counting on him turning up somewhere. Please include that issue in your future prayers.

I got a letter from you today dated Nov. 28th, the one in which you recounted the affair of your birthday. I've addressed my last two letters to W. College Ave. I hope you get them - Honest, darling, I love you more than anything, more even than I realized in the states. And it isn't just that "absence makes the heart grow fonder." I've had a lot of time for meditation in the last three months and I do know that I'm serious about you. If you are inclined to be available when I get back I shall spend the next few decades attempting to keep you provided with sloe gin fizz's.

I haven't written Duncan's family as yet. I hate to alarm them, but I'm afraid the war dept. will write them before long. I think I will wait a while. Maybe he will show up or I will hear something from him.

I love you darling,
Guy

P.S. We're really giving Jerry hell! I'll let you know as soon as I hear anything from Dunc.

Tunisia!

May 10, 1943

Darling -

Apparently this correspondence is doomed to be a one-sided affair for the duration. The postal dept. just absolutely refuses to deliver my mail to me. I hope you don't mind if I write occasionally even when I can't hear from you. There will probably continue to be a shortage of news but perhaps I will be able to keep you aware of the fact that you're the woman I love.

You will probably already know that we are engaged in polishing off what's left of the Axis in North Africa. I think Jerry has about given up and the Ities are surrendering in droves. The prisoners will probably get sent to the states - lucky boys. There's one reason I'd like to get back to the states for a few months.

Incidentally, do you happen to know a Miss Alma Ruth Moore in that fair city? I don't think I ever met the lass myself but A. K. Stahl, who came over with us, is engaged to her. She's a radio operator for Eastern Airlines. Just thought you might run into her some time. A.K. seems to

be under the impression that she's slightly terrific. But most men are gullible like that aren't they?

I haven't heard anything from Jenks so I suppose there's nothing I could say that would cheer Lee up. In fact, I'm beginning to be a bit apprehensive about that deal - but I wouldn't mention that to her because I have no way of being certain. There's no reason to worry her unnecessarily so suppose we wait and see if maybe he won't turn up. He could be safe without hearing from him for months.

We're pretty busy now but I'm thinking about going up to Tunis in a few days to see what cooks in that vicinity. We flew over the town pretty low this morning and it looks like a pretty nice burg. I doubt if there will be any stores open. If so though, I'll try to pick up something to send you from there. And I'll ask you again, is there anything in particular you would like from over here? When and if I get the right opportunity I want to get you a good bracelet, necklace and a ring. By the way, do you think you would like a dinner ring too?

Well, sweet, I guess that's all I have for this time. I'll write more as soon as things settle down a bit.

I love you, honest!

Guy

Tunisia!

May 15, 1943

My wayward lass,

Why I continue to idolize you I'll never know. I haven't heard from you in what surely must be years. In fact, I've heard from parents, brothers, uncles, aunts, cousins, four creditors, and the W.T.C.U. [Note: actually, the W.C.T.U., Women's Christian Temperance Union] since receiving a missive of esteem from the woman I love. The W.T.C.U. wanted me to address a local group in Miami - mainly, though, I think they want me to appear as a typical example of the evils of alcohol.

The boys left this morning - consequently, the place is a bit lonely tonight. A bunch of new sports are trickling in so I guess we will have to spend some time impressing them with the essentials of combat. I'm anxious to hear from the boys that left to see how much time they get off and what they're going to do now. Who knows, I may get back to the states in a few months. I don't have to tell you how eager I am about seeing you.

Incidentally, did I tell you that Ritchie is a prisoner of war? We hope to hear from some of the others soon. Now that the war has slowed down out here things are pretty dull. I'd like to get about a weeks leave somewhere before long. Maybe I'll get to do some shopping. By the way, did the stuff I sent from Cairo ever arrive?

Forgive me, but some whiskey just arrived - I'll finish this in the morning.