

As I Look Back

How I hated to see the coast line of the United States fade into the horizon. Homesickness, tension, and unrest overtook me, but I was soon on my merry way. The International Date line—Equator—tar and feathers, and those shaven heads. Those beautiful grey and gold sunsets, and those pale blue and purple sunrises. Flying fish and porpoise the whole day long. Up sprang the continent of Australia. That meant liberty. Brisbane—Sydney—Melbourne—zoos—parks—botanical gardens—cathedrals. All good things must come to an end. That long unsure trip north—that great barrier reef. New Guinea—black natives—bananas—oranges—coconuts until I could eat no more. North again—north—north—north—only three degrees now. Orders, that first invasion—fright—and fright can not be defined—especially mine. Combat—Japs—hundreds of them, all good, because all dead. Back to peace again, forty degrees now. Life of Riley for three weeks, and north again. Crossed this time—invade!!!—nearer—nearer—nearer. Please God!!!—It is over now, and that smooth calm sea to peace again. Orders—plow on mighty ship to the next! Work—work—work. Sweat until I could sweat no more—that long awaited shower. Inevitable homesickness again. Word of a ten-day leave—satisfaction—thankfulness—and peace of mind. That short trip south. Sydney—civilization—the arrival—peace—people—clean double sheets—movies—chewing gum—automobiles—paved streets—smoke rising from chimneys—and that train whistle—and that long steel track. Those short ten days—alive again. To Hollandia—What is next?

Out of the clear blue sky—Orders!!! Hit the Philippines with all we have!!! That peaceful eleven-hundred ship convoy—power!! “stomping gear”!! “BB’s”—

HILLTOP—PAGE TEN

“DD’s” — “CL’s” — “CVE’s.”
Oh! and I do mean “stomping gear.” Those slim Greyhounds prying into the unknown, and those fleet minesweepers busy with their brooms like grey clad women cleaning a huge gymnasium. Land off the starboard beam!! One of the Great Seven-thousand. It was Leyte. Air raids — air raids —

A Medley

By Katherine Phillips

Life is a song . . .

Glad refrain, youth's rhapsody,
Mellow air of memory,

Ancient struggle seeking might.

And man's constant search for
Light;

It is love, and hate, and joy—

All emotions men employ;

It is mind, and soul, and heart,

Lure or beauty, knowledge, art.

Life's the patter of the rain,

And the cries of men in pain;

Life's the touch of Friendship's
hand,

When we cannot understand;

It's the good that evil mars,

New horizons, falling stars,

Laughter, worship, sorrow's tears,

Perfect love that casts out fears.

Life, like music, is sublime,

Such a melody and rhyme;

Bars, as gay as gypsies, surge

From hymns of grace to mournful
dirge;

Ecstasy of one brief hour,

Fleeting, as the fading flower;

Life's the song of heav'nly
spheres;

Death—crescendo to our ears.

peace and quiet — air raids —
peace — air raids — twenty-five
planes shot down — peace — air

By

Harrison Eskridge

raids — twenty planes shot down. Peace and air raids for sixty days with hardly time between to signify or tell peace from an air raid. Will they ever quit!!! This is not exaggeration; this is war and hell. HELL—HELL—HELL. Orders again. Proceed as directed. Please God make this the last!!! We landed but we paid with unredeemable life. IT IS OUT TO STAY, BUT WE ARE HERE TO STAY. Death—death—death—Need I say any more? Please get me out!!! Will we be next? Who knows? Plow on mighty ship that was not the last. Mindoro—Negros—Samara—Mindanao—Polloc Harbor—Panay—and, yes, Zamboango, “Where the Monkeys Have No Tails.” Cebu, the city, that gutted hotel. A four-year-old girl whom I fed—half starved to death—the rising scales—did she gain—did I lose. The look in her face was the only thanks I received. It was enough, and all that I wanted. An old church built in 1775. The life size dolls representing Christ and other Biblical characters—that huge glass chandelier—those mahogany seats—and the huge black type reading — “You will proceed to the United States of America for reassignment.” Typhoon — night — blackness — one hundred and forty mile per hour gales—Please God, let me see daylight!!! Please—I have paid the price!!! That blue sky, you have seen it. The slow trip to Hawaii. Those unbearable seven days in the Hawaiian Islands. The coast line of the United States of America. California — Nevada — Utah — Wyoming — Iowa — Nebraska — Illinois — Ohio — Kentucky — Tennessee — North Carolina — Asheville — Rutherfordton—MAMA — MAMA — AND MY HOME TOWN.

