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AIR MAIL

Mr. & Mrs. ~~John Toole~~ John Toole
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San Juan, Puerto Rico
15 July 1963

Dear Parents,

I am scheduled to depart Company "A" on 6 August and proceed to Ramey Air Force Base for a 7 August flight to Charleston, S. C. From there I go to Fort Jackson and for what I hope will be not more than a day or two of separation prodcedures. Therefore, I should be In New Orleans within a month.

This past weekend turned out to be one of the best I've had since I've been in the Caribbean. I spent it in St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. The brief flight from Puerto Rico really takes a person to another world, a very pleasant and "upbeat" one. After too long in the downbeat atmosphere of this unfortunate island, it is good to see a society where there is some hope, at least. For one thing, St. Thomas is populated principally by affluent Americans who have made it their permanent home. And, let's admit it, there is nothing like a little money to improve the atmosphere. St. Thomas is a lovely, clean, quiet, and courteous island. The night life is sophisticated and entertaining (another change from Puerto Rico by night). The natibes, West Indian negroes, are sensible and courteous, two adjectives which could never be used to describe Puerto Ricans. The whole place is very charming, and I seriously regretted the fact that I had neither the time nor the money to remain there longer. It reminded me of the fact that there are places in the world where people live in an atmosphere of relative quiet and conduct themselves with at least some grace. And, in spite of its sounding parochial, it was good to be surrounded by Americans onee more. Iknew, however, that I must once again face reality while I was sitting in the bar at the airport in St. Thomas awaiting the return flight late Sunday. The bar was quiet and plessant and civilized tourists were civilizedly drinking and maintaining civil conversations; then three Puerto Ricans entered the bar (a man and two women) and began their normal raucous screaming at one another in their inimitable whine and wail and everyone in the bar ended up staring at them. I don't want to appear a Mrs. Grundy, but I am afraid that Puerto Ricans are really hopeless. They have neither looks, charm, manners, sense, intelligence, nor decency. I await my impending rescue from them.

The time seems unbelievably short now. I can hardly wait to board the plane and be done with this place for onee and for all. I want to ask two favors: please attend to the car so that it will be in fairly decent condition when I return. I want to use it for perhaps a brief trip or two. Another favor: please see about dyeing that suit that I ~~XXXXX~~ mailed home. When it arrived here in 1961 via air mail, the trousers near the knee ware discolored, and I have never been able to wear it here. Perhaps some good dye house could dye it a nice dark gray. It is a good suit that I would like to be able to use in the future, so please attend to this.

Love,

K.