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San Juan, Puerto Rico
11 June 1963

Dear Mother and Dad,

The separation orders on the people with discharge dates in early August are already starting to arrive. I should (with a date of 24 August) see my orders soon...hopefully. I have been recommended for the Good Conduct medal, and this means that I am near separation. Can you imagine how eagerly I look forward to my separation?

The current cycle of trainees is really bad, and I mean that the trainees are bad. So much military justice action has been taken against them on the Company level (courts martial, etc.) that the Company has run out of disciplinary action forms. The instructors, all of whom arrived here with me in 1961, are nervous, distraught, and fatigued...and the current trainees are increasing their anxieties. It seems difficult to imagine that a situation like this could be funny, but I'm afraid that it really is. Yesterday, while I was standing near the trainees who were in formation for their English classes and talking with one or two of the other instructors, a ball of paper flew through the air and hit me on the head. Poor Sergeant Toole is being attacked before his own formations. Things have come to a sad turn. There are almost no platoon sergeants left in the Company; those who have been transferred are not being replaced. No new instructors are arriving. And last week a large team of officers from the Pentagon descended upon the English classes with no notice and plied me with questions about the Training Center. Someone in Washington is about to close up our little operation, I believe. If the current group of instructors was extended in the service for any length of time, there would be a series of nervous breakdowns, etc. My sanity has been preserved by being out of the classrooms. If only you know how ludicrous this "Training Center" is, a place where almost all the trainees this cycle are wearing stocking caps. It is a general practice for Puerto Rican men to use pancake make-up on their faces and to use neutral polish on their fingernails, and it is not unusual to see a trainee opening a compact during a break in the English classes, or working on his nails. What a frightening civilization exists on this island: ignorant, cruel, malicious, infantile, self-centered, undependable, and very proud withal.

Today I shipped parcel post a box containing some of my belongings. It should not take too long to reach New Orleans. There is really nothing of value in the box, but I insured it for \$30.00. There are three small phonograph records in the box which I would like placed somewhere in which you can remember them for they are about the only things in the box which have any personal value. My radio and typewriter and my most valuable possessions, but I will have to ship them carefully later.

I should be in the United States within two months.

Thanks for the book.

Love,

Ken