

August 12, 1937

My Darling,

As you can see, wounds are stubborn things. My right hand and arm are still not harnassable. My left hand will still have to speak to you; in its rickety way of course. If it were just a matter of where the bullet passed thru, I would be ready to return to the front any one of these days, so well healed are the punctures. But it's the partial paralysis in the fingers (three of them - thumb, index and center) which takes time and sometimes very painful waiting - until the torn nerves repair themselves or if possible are repaired by the surgeon's skill. Hence, you will be happy to know that I am under the vigilant care of one of the greatest neurologists in all Europe.

(Because I am not certain as to whether you received my last letter, I will repeat to you that I was shot thru the right arm (above the elbow) on the 24th day of July @ a little before sundown). It was on the now famous Brunet sector. How did I come to be wounded? It was on account of a mule (still one of the chief methods of transportation in this land). Our battalion was readvancing to a position which for strategic reasons we had temporarily retreated from. We had not gone 800 yards when we bumped into a fascist military patrol. Naturally, we strung out and started to go to work on the bitches. But we were short ammunition and I started back for ammunition to our temporary base 800 yards back. I got there, loaded a dark skinned donkey with four cases of bullets and started towards our fighting comrades. But the donkey had his own idea of how fast to go, and he deliberately proceeded to stroll leisurely down this field of whistling bullets as if it were Sunday on 5th Avenue. I spoke to the donkey in my best English (I had too much to tell him to say it in Spanish). I said to the donkey "See what a damn fool donkey you are. You think your dark hide will save you. You think you are camouflaged. But no one is aiming at you in particular. See how the bullets are coming over in all directions. If you really had sense we could take this gap on the run. The comrades will not believe their eyes if you come tearing up with their ammunition. They will positively adore you. You will be a donkey such as never was on sea or land. This argument does not move you because you are a typical product of the old order. You prefer to drag along at the pace of all your forefathers, when some real speed would give us both a glorious lease of life. As it is you will probably be the death of both of us. That is where you conservatives always lead into". So I spoke to this unreasonable donkey. And you may believe me the donkey supplied me with plenty of time to say these things. Nor was he a bad listener; his only fault was that he merely listened. And so it came to pass it was no more than thirty seconds, after I delivered myself of this exhortation that one of those countless bullets swished-shot thru my arm and I was forced to drop to the ground, shouting aloud for first aid. A Spanish comrade,

stooping very low came quickly to me and speedily applied the first aid bandage we all carry with us. You may be sure that I did not let go the reins of the silly donkey. I turned him over to another comrade who came stooping by, with instructions for him to lead the donkey all the way around to the right and then to the battalion, since there was no way of making him run straight thru. I also took care to take all the battalion records from my knapsack. Then, assisted by the Spanish comrade, I cautiously and safely made my way back to our temporary base, where I delivered the papers to the proper authority and myself to the medical station.

You know darling that I am not able to write much more. I must revise my estimates of my return to the front. Perhaps it will be another month before I return. I cannot handle Jewish with my right hand, so I propose you read this letter to the folks. Meet everything head on. I think, also you had better continue writing c/o Bender, Service des Cades, Bauca de Esaph, Albacet, Spain. Kiss little Toby. She will probably enjoy the story of how her father was hit and you darling have no worry at all. Here is my love. Write me often, lovely darling.

Ruby