

Good Morning Marshall

July 4th, 1942

The July breeze blew through my hair. I sat on the cool sand as the water from the oceans cool tide came sneaking underneath me, sinking me into the beach. I watched as the sun set into the pink horizon. The others were partying further down the beach, blasting their music from the radios. I just looked as far as the eye could see into the ocean, wishing I could see him. I wondered how big my chances were if I were to jump in and swim to Marshall.

“Rosalie!” I turned as I saw my older sister, Maria calling my name. “C’mon you’re missing all the fun. The foods almost ready.” I got up and slowly walked behind her. It smelled like they were grilling chicken over the wood fire. I could see a couple guys preparing the fireworks.

“Maria, I think I’m just going to head home.”

“What? No, you have to say,” she said with a smile. We walked to the party. Then we walked on the arch for the fishers. It was quieter there, peaceful.

“Rosalie, what’s wrong?” A question we both knew the answer to. I could tell she was trying to cheer me up but how could I when it was then I realized that we were standing in the exact spot where I met him.

“I’m sorry, but I have a headache and the fireworks are just going to make it worse,” I lied. She gave up and I left.

April 19th, 1919

Rosalie's mother was preparing dinner for Maria and her. "Rosy," her mother shouted, "Come help your sister set the table!" Rosalie was in her room playing with the dolls her father had bought her for her fourth birthday the month before he got sent away to Germany. Her mother told her that her daddy had to go work. "Coming!" Rosalie came running into dining room. She set down the plates with her older sister as her mother set down a bowl of cabbage and some bread. There wasn't much making weapons for the war in a factory could buy your family. There was a knock at the door.

Her mother opened the door with Rosalie and Maria peeking behind her ripped dress. There were two men, with American flags pinned into their suits, standing there. "Hello Ma'm. I'm terribly sorry. Are you the wife of Mr. Harris?" Before any confirmation was made, Rosalie's mother fell to her knees sobbing.

July 4th, 1939

I had never seen the beach so filled with people. There were several men playing instruments that turned the hot sand underneath us into a dance floor. It was nearing sunset and it was almost time for the firework show. My little sister was in the Atlantic with her fiancé Neil.

Maria was always the less shy one of the two of us. I was happy for her and Neil, but also a little jealous. That was something I wanted to share with the right person; *love*.

The party was getting a little loud for me and I needed a breather. I walked toward the beach, along the shore. I came upon an arch that went over the ocean. I walked to the end, leaned over the fence, and watched as the horizon sucked in the sun.

"What are you doing up here all by yourself?" It was an unfamiliar voice to me. I turned around. Tall, definitely over six feet. Blonde hair, that complemented his ice blue eyes. He had swimming trunks on, and no shirt. He had a very fit body with a light skin tone.

My face was flushed. “Oh, I uh, just needed a breather.” He stuck out his hand. “Marshall.” I smiled at him, and took too long to respond as I lost myself lost in his eyes. “Rosalie.”

That’s when we must have lost track of time. We talked as the sun set. We walked along the shore and watched the firework show from a distance. We sat down and listened to the ocean wave’s rise and crash.

I don’t why I was so surprised when we felt the sun light up the night sky from behind us. He helped me up and he walked me home. As I climbed the steps to my porch, I stumbled not realizing how tired I really was. He helped me, and as I opened the door, he put his hand on my cheek.

Our faces got closer and closer until I could feel the heat of his body. My eyes closed, and my mouth opened. His lips were cool, soft. My head was spinning, my body was floating. I put my hand around his head, and I felt the cold morning breeze.

He let go, slowly, and smiled. I smirked, embarrassed, not knowing if I was good or bad. “Good ni-...” he stuttered, still smiling. “Good morning Rosalie.”

“Good morning, Marshall.”

The next couple weeks were the best of my life. I spent every waking moment of the day with Marshall and I was beginning to think that this was what love is.

It was a beautiful night and Marshall took me out to the beach again. He brought a blanket and a basket. He set down the blanket and we sat. “What’s in the basket?” I said smiling.

“Look for yourself.” I unfolded the tops and pulled out a bottle of champagne and two glasses. He took the glasses and poured an even amount for the two of us. I rested under his arm and he rested his head over mine.

I remember, when I was a little girl, I always used to get in trouble with my mother for saying things I should’ve said. I always had the thought in my mind, and it would accidently just spill out of my mouth.

“I love you Marshall.” My face went hot. I felt his arm tense around me. He lifted his head and looked at me. His gaze went blank. He didn’t look as mad as I expected. He didn’t look mad at all.

His grin lasted from ear to ear. “I love you too, Rosy.” He kissed me. I kissed back. I still wasn’t used to the sensation. My head started spinning as it usually did. He pushed the glasses and the champagne bottle away and fell on top of me. His body heat mixed with mine. I was mistaken. *This* is what love is...

The beach was empty. The sun was bright through my eyes. It must have been noon. Marshall lay there next to me, still asleep. I woke him up. I got dressed, as did he and we headed home. Marshall’s home. “I’ll cook you breakfast. I make a mean omelet,” he said graciously.

His house was much bigger and nicer than mind. He put the key in the door and he saw a letter on the floor. It came through the door. I picked it up as he went into the kitchen to prepare breakfast. It was from the U.S. Government. Before I opened it, I already knew what it was.

My heart dropped to the bottom of my stomach and I could feel tears coming down my cheeks as I handed the envelope to Marshall and fell into his arms. Marshall was being drafted.

July 4th, 1942

It was getting darker. As I stepped into the house, I could hear the fireworks in the distance. The last letter from Marshall was still on the table. It had come in weeks ago and I still hadn't responded. I placed it in the shoe box under my bed with the others. I wanted him to see that I kept them when he came home. I'm sure he kept the ones I sent to him.

I sat on my bed and could feel the tears come again. I missed him so much. I got out a pen and paper and began. "*Dear Marshall,...*" It seemed like every time I started, I needed new paper because the paper got wet with tears. I couldn't help myself. I couldn't *live* without him. I decided it would be too hard to write to him tonight so I blew out the candles and went to sleep.

The next morning, found another letter from Marshall. I placed it on the table as I planned to read it with my morning coffee. However, before I stepped into the kitchen, there was a knock at the door.

My face brightened. Could it be? My feet were trembling. Could it have been that this was no letter from Marshall, but just a set it up? I ran to the door. I braced myself to meet my love again. My hands were shaking as I opened the door. It wasn't Marshall.

Two men in suits greeted me at the door.

Marshall opened the letter and read it carefully. "I'm leaving next week." That's all that was said. He held me tight and I was lost in his grasp. I wanted that moment to last forever. It wasn't fair that he had to leave. Why couldn't it have been somebody else? I started crying harder and I just had just realized I was talking out loud. He pulled my face to his and he kissed me.

He carried me and held me close to him as my lips caressed his. We went into his bedroom. My tears wouldn't stop. Marshall wiped my tears away as we fell on the bed. "I love you." He whispered it so low that I only knew he said it because he had to stop kissing me to say it. "I love you too." I barely got the words out.

July 5th, 1942

“G’ornin Ma’m. Are you Rosalie Harris?” My knees went weak. I fell to the floor. I clenched my hands into fists and punched the floor. There was a terrible screaming and I didn’t even realize it was me until one of the men helped me up. I saw that I was still holding Marshall’s letter in my hand and that it had been crumpled.

The day went on. I sat on my bed, crying all day. I stared at the envelope in my hands. This was the last letter I would ever get from Marshall. I didn’t have the courage to open it, not when I was like this.

A couple days had passed and I knew that I would get better over time. However, I still hadn’t opened Marshall’s letter.

I walked to the beach. The sun was covered with clouds. It was early and there wasn’t much light. I walked on the arch for the fishers. I leaned on the fence and looked over the ocean. I went into my pocket and opened the envelope. I took a deep breath and unfolded the paper.

“Dear Rosy,

I miss you. I can’t stop thinking about you. And I’ve finally realized that this isn’t right. I know this isn’t the way it’s supposed to be, written in a letter. But it isn’t fair. I love you Rosy, but you have to move on. Looking in your eyes, lying next to you, kissing you, it’s all I ever want. But I’m left with nothing but tears now. I love you so much, but too much pain has come from this distance between us and it’s become too much to endure. I want you

to be happy, and you can't be happy with me in the picture. I love you Rosy, and if you love me, you'll forget me. I wish you everlasting happiness.

Love, Marshall"

My tears smeared the letter. I looked up and saw a crack in the clouds as the morning sun lit up the ocean. I whispered, for maybe he could still hear me. "Good morning Marshall..."