

TO THE WIVES, SWEETHEARTS,  
LOVERS AND MISTRESSES  
OF SERVICEMEN STATIONED IN VIETNAM.

THIS LETTER IS TO INFORM YOU THAT ON OR ABOUT....., ONE MUD SPLATTERED, WILD EYED, WATER-LOGGED, SLIGHTLY DEMENTED, COMPLETELY CONFUSED, PARTIALLY TANNED, WHISKEY-THINNED BLOOD, AND WOE-BEGONE INDIVIDUAL HERETOFOR KNOWN AS.....IS LEAVING SEWER CITY WHICH NESTLES AMID THE WAR TORN JUNGLE AND ODOROUS RICE PADDIES OF SAIGON, VIETNAM.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FORWARDED IN THE HOPES THAT IT WILL ASSIST YOU IN UNDERSTANDING SOME OF THE MALADAYS THAT HAVE BESET YOUR HUSBAND-OR WHAT BE HE TO YOU-AND THAT THROUGH THIS UNDERSTANDING, A RAPID RECOVERY MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED:

A. MENTION OF THE FOLLOWING WILL TURN YOUR MILD-MANNERED MAN INTO A WILD-EYED MANIAC: RATS, FLEAS, CANNED SOFT DRINKS, ROAST BEEF, DEHYDRATED POTATOES, WAITING LINES, SAIGON TEA, POWDERED EGGS, COFFEE IN GLASSES, RICE IN ANY FORM, GAMMA GLOBULIN SHOTS, HAMBURGERS ON PLAIN BREAD, LINEN EXCHANGE AND DAILY INSPECTIONS.

B. HIS TABLE MANNERS HAVE UNDERGONE SEVERAL SLIGHT CHANGES. PAY NO ATTENTION WHEN HE COMBINES POTATOES, MEAT, GRAVY, BEANS AND FRUIT SALAD IN ONE BIG PILE ON HIS PLATE. TRY NOT TO NOTICE WHEN HE PROCEEDS TO COVER ALL THIS WITH CATSUP, MUSTARD, SOY SAUCE AND WITH A GREAT FLOURISH HE STIRS IN A LIBERAL AMOUNT OF HOT SAUCE. DON'T BE ALARMED IF HE SOMEWHAT SNEAKILY WIPES HIS MOUTH WITH HIS HANDS AND THEN HIS HANDS ON HIS TROUSERS-HE'S FORGOTTEN ABOUT NAPKINS BY NOW.

C. IGNORE HIM WHEN HE CHOOSES TO SQUAT INSTEAD OF SIT, STARES AT SMOOTH ROADS, CHAIRS, AND CLEAN TABLES. PAY NO MIND WHEN HE URINATES IN THE GUTTER ON MAIN STREET, CROSSES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BLOCK COMPLETELY OBLIVIOUS OF TRAFFIC SIGNS AND BLARING HORNS OR ATTEMPTS TO JUMP ON THE BACK OF EVERY FLAT-BED TRUCK THAT PASSES BY.

D. SAY NOTHING TO HIM WHEN HE STANDS OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN FOR 45 MINUTES TO AN HOUR BEFORE MEAL TIME, MUTTERING SUCH THINGS AS "CHOI OI", XIN LOI (SORRY 'BOUT THAT) OR JUST STARES AT HIS DUSTLESS SHOES. YOU MAY ALSO HAVE TO LEAD HIM TO HIS CHAIR AT THE TABLE IN ORDER TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE TO STAND IN LINE AT LEAST THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE EATING.

E. DO NOT MENTION OR SUGGEST ANY OF THE FOLLOWING UNLESS YOU ARE PREPARED TO MAKE THEM READILY AVAILABLE: FRESH MILD, ICE, ICE CREAM, TV, FULL SIZE BED NEXT TO THE FLOOR, CHILDREN, PRIVATE SHOWER, TOILET, HOT WATER, SOFT TOILET PAPER, DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY, SHOPPING, VISITING RELATIVES, A THEATER WITH SOFT SEATS, POP CORN, SOFT DRINKS AND ABOVE ALL DON'T MENTION "S"E"X", TO HIM UNLESS YOU ARE WELL PREPARED TO SPEND ALL DAY IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED SOFT BED.

F. TRY TO BE UNDERSTANDING WHEN HE SPENDS TIME IN THE BATHROOM SOAKING HIS NEW UNDERWEAR IN THE COMMODORE. THE FREGRANCE OF SOMETHING NEW WILL BE DISAGREEABLE TO HIS SENSE OF SMELL AFTER BEING ACCOUSTOMED TO THE RESULTS OF SEWER-LAUNDEGED CLOTHING FOR A YEAR. IN TIME HE WILL ADJUST TO CIVILIZED WAYS. (WE HOPE).....

G. WHEN YOU INFORM HIM OF A SAD EVENT AND HE SIMPLY SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AND SAYS, " SORRY 'BOUT THAT OR " LOG IT OUT", JUST AGREE AND WALK AWAY.

H. WHEN YOU INFORM HIM OF SOMETHING PLEASANT AND HE GLEEFULLY REPLIES " ARE YOU SHITTIN' ME?" BE TOLERANT; DO NOT EXPRESS SURPRISE OR SHOCK. MERELY ASSURE HIM THAT IT IS THE TRUTH. IN TIME THIS TOO WILL BE FORGOTTEN.

I. DON'T BE ANGRY WHEN HE ASSIGNS NUMBERS TO THE FAMILY CAR, THE CHILDRENS BIKES, WAGONS AND LARGE TOYS. HE WILL PROBABLY INSIST THAT THESE NUMBERS BE USED RATHER THAN THEIR PARTICULAR BRAND NAMES OR ACCEPTED TERMINOLOGY. IN A FEW WEEKS HE WILL AWAKEN TO THE FACT THAT HE IS MAKING A COMPLETE ASS OF HIMSELF AND WILL ABOLISH THIS MILITARY PRACTICE IN HIS HOME.

J. WHEN YOU ASK HIM WHERE SOMETHING IS AND HE GLEEFULLY REPLIES, " IF IT WERE UP YOUR A.., YOU'D KNOW" REMEMBER, HE HAS SURVIVED THE WORST SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS TO OFFER AND HAS COME THROUGH A BASTARDLY WAR, SO BE NICE TO THE VET.

K. THIS DEGENERATED, SAD, SICKENED, EMANCIPATED MAN IS STILL YOUR LOVED ONE, AND WE ARE RETURNING HIM TO YOU AFTER BEING COMPLETELY DRAINED OF ANY VALUE TO US. HE MAY LOOK A LITTLE STRANGE AND ACT THE SAME; THIS IS TO BE EXPECTED; REMEMBER, BENEATH HIS ROUGH, WATER SOAKED, MUD CAKED, STINKING EXTERIOR THERE EXISTS A HEART OF PURE GOLD. TREASURE THIS-FOR IT IS ABOUT THE ONLY THING OF VALUE HE HAS LEFT. TREAT HIM WITH KINDNESS, TOLERANCE, AN OCCASSIONAL TALL GLASS OF ICED TEA AND EVERY OTHER NIGHT AN ALL NIGHT SEX ORGY, AND YOU WILL SOON BE ABLE TO REHABILITATE THIS HOLLOW SHELL OF THE MAN YOU ONCE KNEW.

L. STAY AT HOME, PAINT THE BEDROOM CEILING YOUR FAVORITE COLOR, (FOR YOU WILL SEE MUCH OF IT) STOCK THE REFRIG, LAY OUT YOU SEXIEST CLOTHES, SEND THE KIDS OFF TO GRANDMA'S FOR A DAY OR TWO, AND BRACE YOURSELF. HE MAY COMPLAIN ABOUT SLEEPING ON A SPRING MATTRESS AND REFUSE TO GO TO BED WITHOUT A MOSQUITO NET OR TRY TO SPRAY THE BED WITH DDT, BUT YOU HAVE WHAT IS NEEDED TO MAKE HIM FORGET SUCH THINGS.

M. MAKE NO FLATTERING REMARKS ABOUT EXOTIC SOUTHEAST ASIA, AVOID MENTION OF THE FUNSOUND OF THE MONSOON RAINS ON THE ROOF, AND ABOVE ALL ASK PERMISSION BEFORE MENTIONING FOOD DELICACIES OF THE ORIENT SUCH AS "FLIED LICE" (FRIED RICE). THE MERE REFERENCE TO ANY OF THESE SUBJECTS MAY TRIGGER OFF AN AWESOME DISPLAY OF VIOLENCE.

N. SEND NO LETTERS TO APO 96307 AFTER....., BECAUSE THIS SORRY LOOKING, EXTREMELY SEX STARVED, BLOODY EYED, DUST FILLED HUSBAND OR LOVER OF YOURS IS COMING HOME TO HIS FAMILY. IF ANY PROBLEMS ARISE, CALL TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE COMMANDER OR THE BASE AIR POLICE. IT WON'T HELP ANY, BUT THEY LIKE TO USE THE PHONE AND IT MAKES THEM FEEL GOOD.

O. HOPING THAT YOU WILL ACCEPT THE CONTENTS OF THIS LETTER IN ALL SERIOUSNESS. MY COMPOSITION OF THE PRECEDING MAY APPEAR TO YOU AS BEING OUT OF THE ORDINARY, HOWEVER, I HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING. SEWER CITY HAS ALSO BEEN MY ABODE AND I'M CONVINCED THAT IT HASN'T HAD THE SAME EFFECT ON ME AS ON ....., I LOVE THIS DAMNED PLACE. TREAT HIM RIGHT IN ALL THINGS, GIVE HIM PLENTY OF ALL HE WANTS, ESPECIALLY SEX AND WE ARE SURE HE WILL COME AROUND "OK".

*John A. Avery*

SIGNED: JOHN A. AVERY, MSGT, USAF  
NCOIC VIETNAM VETERAN REHABILITATION CENTER