

dear Hel,

Nha Trang
April 26th
Wed.

Hi - am in a COROS room in Kelan, at
Nha Trang, where we all have found ourselves
the day after a rather narrow, frightening,
dramatic, tense, "escape" from MACV by
medivac chopper yesterday. A run down on
who is here consists of: Helen, myself,
Pat, Al, Uler, Tom, Barb, Dick, Rita,
Shirley, Ed, Ali, Gregg, Glenn and good ole
Mr. Wloughr (!). The group in Kontum who
were airlifted consisted of Pat & the kids,
Bill Rose's wife and son, Helen, myself,
Rita, Shirley, Ali, Ed, Glenn and 2 french
priests Fr. Currian and Fr. "somebody". Tom
was in Nha Trang visited Dick when this all
happened and John also in Nha Trang. The
events since my getting in Kontum were
rather a rapid succession of deterioration
going from bad to worse to worse!!
At 2:00 when I arrived everything
was "ok" - Rita, Helen & Shirley all looked
healthy and rested and they assured me
a hundred times that there had been

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nearly zero casualties since the day you & I
left 2 weeks ago, the hospital was quiet,
Pat hadn't had a drink in 3 weeks (!) and
looked cheerful & well - she was
visibly shaken by your not returning and
said with deep sincerity that you'd be
missed - there was no feeling of
unexpressed "grunts" or "humans!" or
whatever we talked about her doing
when she found you were traveling
home - I do think she felt your
loss as one which could not be
filled by any of us - so there!! Rita &
Pat had been making rounds, and
Ali & Shirley the other side, Beagle baby
did a lot of the "dirty" work of I.D.'s
cutdowns etc. and guess it worked out
well. They were not overworked altho
they had worked hard, and Nelson said
Shirley had been a pill, consistently,
and Ali, of course was her usual
creaky self - but Ali & Shirley worked
together so that also wasn't too bad.
And, as I said, things in the dispensary

were calm. No rockets - no casualties.
That was at 2:00. I went to work -
it poured rain - I was delighted to
be there (I was sick and sleeping all
afternoon in my bed; Ed was in your
bed) - at 6pm Pat left clinic to
go for a briefing at MACV. At 8pm
the Bishop came to the house & talked
an hour to Pat - at 9:30 we had
a meeting - in tears Pat told us she
firmly believed Kontum was finished.
All reports indicated the S. Vietnamese
would turn and run from any
confrontation to the enemy - there were
6,000 refugees on the road from Dak To
to Kontum 20 miles away and the
NVA were surrounding them as a shield
to advance on Kontum (protection against
air strikes) - basically Kontum was
surrounded by advancing troops, & we
would be over at 9am the next day to
tell us how we would be evaced by
noon. There was also a chance the
attack would be that night. We packed
until 1am. Pat didn't sleep all night.

She went to the hospital - Rita & I at 11pm to tell Gabrielle & Vincent and tell the night staff no one would be down that night. The next day we worked one or two hours while waiting for Glenn. Pat spoke to the hospital staff - in tears - looking like she'd collapsed she said she was leaving - Gabrielle was put in charge - she encouraged them to try their best - we all went to the house at 11 to wait for our plane - rockets started at 11:30 - Gabrielle, Vincent, the 2 priests, Kelan, myself, Shirley, Rita, all spent 3 consecutive trips into the bunker at the house - Glenn was at the airport - Bill Rose dodging the incoming while trying to get our baggage on board a C130 that was taking down the runway - hoards of Vietnamese civilians and soldiers trying to push their way onto the plane - we couldn't get on the C130 because of the rockets. So - at 2:00 we went to MACV where we flagged down a chopper to take Pat & the kids and

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Bill's wife & kid off to Pleiku - had
5 more incoming - into the MACV
bunker again. I at 4~~00~~ a medivac
chopper from Pleiku landed and all
9 of us remaining got aboard for
Pleiku - landed at 5 - another
rocket hit the Pleiku airfield and we
spent from 5 to 7 in a bunker there -
finally got on board a Air America Caribou
to Nha Trang. We were greeted by John,
Barb, Tom etc. - John was obviously
distressed - hardly spoke to me - he felt
I'm sure, very depressed that he was in
Kon Tum. ~~Pat~~ Pat had been beautiful
the entire time - beautiful in that she
was so shaken and torn apart by
leaving that she was expressing all the
love stored up, for her kids, and for
the Montagnards openly. I'm glad I saw
her lastly this way and not the hard
woman who begged me so much if
you know what I mean. Glenn was
sensational and probably we all wouldn't
have gotten out if he hadn't been there.

I must run off to a meeting - Glen
is trying to get us all to Saigon today,
and out of the country tomorrow - and
arrange for tickets thro CRS by phone
and a thousand other things — he also
is sending you a cable, now, hopefully
that would have reached you in
Bangkok..... I'm heading DIRECTLY
to Seattle so will you please call
me collect when you get to Fargo ^{whether}
in May - huh? I'm missing a lot of
things I want to say, but no time
now, and hope you get the idea thro this
~~chat~~ about what's happened or happening.

I miss you, Lil — it was a
sad departure to leave in Saigon
last Monday. Hope your trip is all
you hope it will be & take care -
everyone here sends their greetings -

Love,
Susan