

STUDENT NURSES PAGE

An Open Letter

To all young women who could be nurses

By JEANETTE MADERE

DEAR SUE,

You knew that it was going on all the while. Certainly! Remember how proud your brother Johnny was when his number was the first to come up? My, those boxes you used to put up for him! And the letters you'd write—when you had the time. But not long after it hit you a little harder. You won't forget Pearl Harbor, will you? That's when things really came down to earth and touched *you*. Why, in the very week following the attack every boy in your "crowd" joined up, including Dick. You took that pretty hard, didn't you? Still, you managed to take it on the chin. You did want him to go to the aid of his country—our country!

And so there you were—stranded. Oh, your days were busy all right with Red Cross and war work. Yet with all of that you were lonesome. It seemed that you couldn't get accustomed to being left behind in the greatest drama of our lives.

You are unhappy! You have tried blindly to find a way out. For a while you thought that you'd be able to forget, so you began a merry life of doing things and going places. Remember? But even that did not work out. You soon saw how useless it was. Things come and have to be accepted. You cannot cast them aside like old shoes; neither can you laugh them away, nor pretend that they don't exist. You were sensible enough to know that they are an integral part of life that must be reckoned with.

Now that almost brings us up to date. It was just last week that you received the letter from Dick telling you that he was in sick bay. He said that his nurse reminded him of you "an awful lot." He said, too, that he often liked to pretend it was you because he knew that you would make a swell nurse.

And so, that's where you first got the idea. But you quickly brushed it away. Why, you, a nurse? Whoever heard of anything so silly?

And then again and again the thought crept into your mind until you began to wonder, "Is it really so silly?" Maybe that was what

you'd been looking for all the while, an opportunity to play an essential part! Oh, but then, when the girls heard about it they all laughed and said, "You, a nurse. Forget it!"

But you can't forget it; night and day you struggle, torn between two desires. You want to go and yet you are afraid. Perhaps I can help you! Not so long ago, I was just like you. But now, there is no longer internal turmoil—here I have found comfort in the assurance that mine is an essential part of the war effort. So, I say, come now, today, and join me and all the other young women who see in nursing a magnificent opportunity to serve our God, our country, and our fellow man! And don't mind what your friends say. They may joke a bit at first, but they will subconsciously admire your unselfishness and patriotism and before long many of them will be deciding to do likewise.

Don't think that you will be making the supreme sacrifice, however. No, don't feel that you will be making a martyr of yourself. For before long, you're going to find more peace of mind and happiness than you have ever known. Until you experience it you will never know the joy that can be found in living for others. And you will become more grateful and content, for by coming into such close contact with the misfortunes of others, you realize how really fortunate you are.

And see here! It's not as tough as people say. Certainly, you have to do a great deal of studying, but that is true of any professional preparation; and what you will have acquired in the next three years is yours to keep: "Nursing is war work with a future."

It will be a marvelous feeling—this living among Uncle Sam's favorite nieces. Think of having all the sisters you have longed for!

So, again I say, "Come, and come right now." Here there is no time for self-pity and war jitters. What is the use of writing to our boys and telling them to keep their chins up if you are going to let your own sag down?

Looking forward to greeting you soon, I am
Lovingly,

SALLY

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