



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Fri. Oct. 15, 1948
Bethesda

4-46 p 1/2

Dear Pop,

Here I am with the usual number of vital matters hanging fire, but if I don't get some of L.J.'s zany remarks off my chest soon I'll forget them, and that, at least in my opinion, would be too bad.

There's nothing very special, but just the general tone of his conversation that intrigues me. For instance, he is a great jokester, and a staunchly opinionated arguer. He thought of a great joke yesterday: "Cocktail parties don't have tails, do they mamma? - Ha ha ha!" Today he was thoroughly enjoying himself all during breakfast because he told us he planned to say "Goodbye, Spam and eggs!" instead of the usual "Goodbye, Daddy!" - when William left. His laughter at the ridiculousness of that filled the house. The other day he and I argued for some time about who had brought a certain letter to our door. He said it was the postman, I told him it had been a special messenger.

"It was the postman, mamma."

"My dear boy, I saw who it was, and I know it was someone else not our postman."

"Actually, it was the postman who brought it, as a matter of fact, mamma."

"All right, but you should say 'brought' it."

"Well, brought it then, but he DID brought it!"

Another conversation, at lunch:

"It occurred to me I haven't had my chocolate kiss yet, mamma. It just occurred to me."

"First you must finish the rest of your lunch, boy"

"Yes, but it occurred to me I might as well remind you."

"All right, I won't forget."

"I'm a little squirrel, and chocolate kisses are my acorns, so I have to save them for the wintertime."

"All right, little squirrel."

"Don't say that mamma, I'm not a little squirrel any more, I'm a big chocolate kiss truck, and I'm carrying a whole lot of chocolate kisses in my back part."

"All right, little truck."

"And don't say that either, mamma, because I'm a great big truck, not a little one. Here's my motor-- brmm, brmm, BRRMM BRRRRM! Oh dear, the motor doesn't work any more, it's stopped. We'll have to take the big truck to a garage to be repaired. Brmm, brrrmmm, BRRMM! There, NOW it goes. The light has turned red, so the truck can't go again."

"Too bad, because your chocolate kisses will melt!"

"No they won't mamma, please don't say that. Please don't, I want my chocolate kiss, so they won't melt, will they mamma?"

"Well I guess not, boy, it's too cold for them to melt."

"Now I'm a big garbage truck that opens up in the back."

See me open?"



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

4-46 p.2/2

-2-

....And so on. I called him the Metamorphosis Kid this morning, and of course he asked what a metamorphosis was, after first denying absolutely that he was anything of the kind, as a formal precaution. I told him it was any complete change, and he remarked "I saw one at the zoo- a great BIG metamorphosis!" Oh well, that stopped me in my tracks. Surely, James Thurber would agree with L.J. that metamorphoses are to be found in all really well-stocked zoos. A member of the hypothetical family, closely resembling the common forest isocetes. I do wish you could be around the boy for a while, and get to be one of those privileged to hear his really intimate conversations.

Work in progress here. I'm finally getting around to decorating the guest room, still encumbered as it is with all our trunk extra chairs, suitcases, and the like. With the invaluable assistance of the mother of my main sitter, I am sewing up the dust ruffle I made for our beds. Handsome, but perhaps much more trouble than it is worth. I am going to tackle the bedspread for the guest room bed, now that the curtains are done in there. Slow but sure. We are having our usual one party a week, but this week we are having two, because on Monday William's thirty-fifth birthday occurred. Jane Dawson assisted me in arranging a surprise party for him, which fooled him completely. We had quite a time, still retiring fairly early. On the Friday before that we had Mr. and Mrs. Herve L'Heureux and another friend of William's Stuttgart days, B. C. Hart. You may possibly remember that Herve was Consul General in Lisbon when William and I met. He is now Chief of the Visa Section at the Department. B.C. Hart is a good young man, but never ceases talking. He is in the office of the Secretary Himself. We went to the Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning, and out to Buckeystown to visit William's great-Aunt Ella in the afternoon. A sweet old lady, with a wonderful garden. Tonight (if I ever get about doing the preparations) we are having a party for the Cunninghams and the Rewinckels. The Cunninghams are assigned to Saigon, and he was a classmate of William's at the Foreign Service School. Milt Rewinckel is the husband of the very pretty Bulgarian girl, and we had dinner with them over in Alexandria recently. But as I say, there will be no party unless I get down to business and start cooking it.

Would you please give me five or six hints as to what general type of Christmas present Helen would like? Muchas gracias.

We were delighted with your whole trip to Norway, and turned all shades of green with happy envy.

Much, much love,