

Bethesda, Oct. 2, 1948

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Dear Pop,

As usual, duties call with voices imperious, but it is even more necessary for me to tell you Laurence John's latest sly tricks and ways: This very morning I put him out on the porch to play, and marveled for quite an hour at his peacefulness and lack of restlessness. When I was free, I went out to see how he was. I found him happily engaged in taking the stuffing out of a seat cushion, surrounded by a large pile of the interstices thereof. As soon as he saw me he ran and hid his head. I told him to put the stuff all back in the pillow through the same hole he had drawn it out, and he obediently set to it. But as I continued about my work, I heard him saying to himself in mild, sad tones designed to be heard by me also, "I'm so disappointed, I'm so disappointed; I'm too old to do that sort of thing. Why was I naughty? I'm so disappointed." Only his own little conscience knows whether it was a sense of drama or a sense of sin being manifested. I had not given him a cue.

The other day I bought him a piggy bank, which he has been wanting for some time, mostly because it squeaks when you put a coin in it. I asked him what we should name it, and without hesitation he said "I'll call him Donald Duck Door." And so he did - no one knows why. Perhaps for the same reason he used to call both his hobby horses Aguacate, back in Caracas.

Things go on at the same mad pace, but I think I can see land dimly on the horizon. For one thing, we only have two more parties to give before we will have paid off all the social debts contracted this summer, and be ready to start out afresh making new ones. We had Carl and Catherine Brueur over last night, along with Shelly and Mrs. Mills, William's boss and his wife. Shelly is something of a saint, in any case certainly a fine example of a Christian scholar and gentleman, and I am more pleased than I can say that William had the opportunity of working for such a thoroughly lovable and admirable man. Francesca, his wife, is equally nice and comfortable to be with. All and sundry oh'd and ah'd at my decorating job, which of course always makes me purr like a fat cat.

I'd better stop and write up my grocery list, since today is Saturday and shopping day.

Much love to you both, bless you,