

Monday, Nov. 29, 1948  
Bethesda

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Dear Mamma,

I was so interested to hear about your experience with the family and the two small babies. It is indeed an opportunity to help out, as well as for you to get out of your little environment. And the money is nice, just so you aren't leaving poor Jimmy by himself too long and too frequently, but I don't suppose the lady will go away that often. How nice to take care of two little babies like that! And to know that the mamma is out enjoying herself in a different way so that when she comes back she'll be able to enjoy the babies all the more! I hope you find that your able to keep it up, and that you can help other mamas too now and then. It certainly would be a worthy task, just so Jimmy doesn't suffer for it. And it should be an interesting change for you!

It would be nice if I could do more of an evening, such as going to the library, but William comes back so late, and it takes such a time to get L.J. bathed and in bed, that there is very little evening left after the dishes are done. We consider that it is normal to get them all done by nine or nine-fifteen. Laurence John can't wait for daddy to come home to have his supper, and anyway William and I like to have a meal alone. William usually gets here between a quarter of seven and seven. He bathes the boy at seven thirty, and that takes till eight o'clock at least. By eight fifteen William and I are ready for supper, usually, and it takes us a little more than a half an hour to get our talking and eating done. The dishes take about a quarter of an hour or so. And so you see, since we have to get up at seven (or at least I do - poor William has to get up at six forty-five) we have to go to bed before eleven, and that makes only a hour to an hour and a half of reading, and no time for any galivanting around town. Not that I really crave it, fortunately. I'm always happy to settle down to my reading at home. I do wish, however, that a source of books was a little nearer. The library is in a place about three long blocks from any bus, and is very awkward to reach. I only get there on Saturdays when we are out grocery-shopping.

I was so pleased to hear that you might be able to come on the boy's birthday. I know he will be delighted, in his own way. He remembered "wid it" yesterday, and has been saying "Puppy, puppy wid it!" quite often. He remembers the Thunder bird very well indeed, in fact a sort time ago when it thundered he reminded me himself of the thunder bird up in the sky, ~~whitexixxaxxtxxxxxxx~~. Write to tell me for sure if you think you can come on that particular weekend, and then the Thursday night before that (Thurs. Dec. 9) I'll call you on the telephone and we can arrange about the hour you are to be met. Great excitement will reign in the house for days ahead.

L.J. saw his first snow yesterday afternoon, and was most delighted with it, running around from window to window to see if it were on the other side also. He finally shouted to William,

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"Daddy, the snow goes everywhere!" He thought it was especially funny that it went on bushes and cars. I think he hadn't realized that it was everywhere at once, like rain. Alas, the pretty snow soon turned to rain and melted the snow that was on the ground clean away. "Just like the tigers in "Little Black Sambo" melted away into ghi!" said Laurence John. He has been in all day for two days now, and is quite a trail of my patience even though he's pretty good considering his burdens. I had to break down and give him one of his birthday presents ahead of time, simply to keep him out of my hair. We have read each of his favorite books to him at least three times, between me and William. Oh for some sunshine! Or some nice dry powdery snow he could play in! Right now, however, he's up in his room being as good as gold, as far as I know.

Time for his lunch. I'll continue later.

Later: When he woke up this morning L.J. announced he was a little, tiny baby. By the time breakfast was ready, he was a big fierce daddy tiger, with long sharp teeth. Then he was a truck-driver for a while, in honor of the garbage truck which always passes by on Monday mornings. Then for the benefit of his new pre-birthday diesel train, he was an engineer. By the time lunch came around he was alternating between Little Black Sambo and a Daddy Tiger. At one time he hurt his head, and came to me saying he was just a little boy, and he'd hurt his head, and wanted it rubbed and kissed. When those ministrations had been accomplished, he walked off roaring fiercely, so I didn't need to ask if he had once more assumed the personality of a tiger.

At the library last Saturday I got another book by C.S. Lewis, called "Out of the Silent Planet". It sounds like well-written Astounding Stories stuff, and I think you would enjoy it as much as we did. We both put aside everything else to finish it. It appears there is a second book on the same line, called "Perelandra", but one reads the other book first in the series. Very exiting. I also borrowed from the library a copy of a translation of Fenelon's "Christian Perfection", which I had heard about long ago in my French Lit. courses but never read. Huxley's "Perennial Philosophy" recommended it strongly, so I am reading it. It is indeed timeless, and as Huxley ~~xxxxx~~ says, shows an insight into psychology that is remarkable. In addition, it is a beautiful thing.

I went to bed early after a hot bath last night, and had a hot whiskey toddy brought up to me by dear William. then I settled down with Bishop Fenelon for a quarter of an hour, and was soon sleepy enough to turn off the light. Thus I seem to have managed to nip an incipient cold in the bud. I'll do the same thing again tonight, though, because I can feel lingering traces, and cigarettes irritate my throat, which is always a sure sign with me. I shall be very pleased indeed if I do manage to squash this cold before it develops, because I just don't see how the Krieg family could go on if I were "Horse of combat". Not with the whirling dervish around.

We had our thanksgiving turkey at the Parke's house, and L.J. was thrilled to be invited just like daddy and mommy. He was good as gold inspite of missing his nap due to excitement, and ate with a will. Oh dear, no more twist. Love