

December 9, 1948
Bethesda

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Dear Pop and Helen,

Although I just wrote to you yesterday, I am doing so again in order to tell you of the arrival of a heavily laden Santa Claus. He was postmarked Germany, and most of his burden has been deposited in the guest room closet, top shelf, for safe-keeping until Christmas. But since the boy and I are both deep in the heart of a common cold (in both senses of the word common) and since I noticed the words "picture only" on one package which arrived here at home, I opened that in order to keep the hounds of ennui off the boys footsteps. He was enchanted with the picture, as was his mamma. But he thought very little of the little doors and windows in it, and very soon had them all off, the better to see the objects inside. It looked so foreign and moyen-agey to me! I didn't have to tell him that the little men were elves and gnomes and leprechauns, because he seems to know what they should look like from my descriptions.

William and I had a distinct feeling that one of the packages contained a CUCKOO CLOCK! So we are going to remove it from its wrappings ahead of time and install it in his bedroom for his birthday, next Saturday when he is out playing. The problem will be to get it high enough to be out of his reach, which has expanded considerably lately. I have a feeling that could he reach it, the little cuckoo would be snatched out and made into cuckoo pie before you could say cuckoo three times running.

We both say thank you, very prettily, to Santa Claus, both for that which we have received and that which shall be opened later. I trust that in spite of the late longshoreman's strike your Santa Claus will arrive in time for the festivities. I read with pleasure the Army's assurance that mail for Army personnel abroad was still moving in spite of the strike, and I suppose that would include you, since you have an A.P.O. address.

Much love and many thanks,