

Wed. uly 27, 1949
Bethesda

Dear Mamma,

Your letter came this morning, bearing the card about Uncle Sam's wedding. Imagine that! Well well well, and no one knows exactly who she is, I take it.

I was in a dither to know what to do about that sofa, because as you know I simply love it, one, and two, I'd love to be able to "get it" at such a low price. As you must realize yourself, a hundred and fifty dollars is a very low price even if it does need re-upholstering, and seventy-five dollars is, naturally, even lower! Also, of course, I'd like to be able to help you out financially in to the bargain. There are two large and bony hitches: the first is that try as I may, I can't think of a single place to put it in our present house. My only thought would be the guest room, and I'm afraid there wouldn't be enough room to get around the bed if I put it there, as well as the fact that it wouldn't fit in at all among all that bedroom-y junk I've got in the guest room. But that isn't the main hitch. If I had the money in my own bank account I would get it myself, but I don't, and anyway I've promised William faithfully not to buy anything like clothes, etc., for three months until our finances recover from the rudeolt they got from the unit. Six hundred dollars is such a huge sum to pay out almost all at once that we simply can't fiddle diddle around for some time to come. Of course what I'd like to do would be buy it now, put it in the basement, and save it for when we go abroad again in two or three years. But buy it now is ust the thing I can't afford to do, right after William has kindly and lovingly bought me that expensive gadget in the kitchen- it wouldn't be right even to ask him. So that's my situation in a cocoonut shell. I hate to be ungrateful when you have given me so much, and when you offer me this wonderful thing that I dearly love and dote upon, so I hope you won't think I'm ungrateful about it, but contrariwise I can't be ungrateful to William either, and I'm afraid it would be a form of ingratitude to blithely ask him for seventy five dollars or even part of that at this time. I am, in fact, on the horns of a nasty old dilemma. If I paid out seventy five dollars now or in installments I couldn't afford to have the sofa recovered too, and in any case since I'd ust have to put it in the basement for a couple of years, there wouldn't be much point in it. Contrariwise again, I'd hate to think you need the money so badly you would have to sell it. Oh dear! Tell me what you think about it all, and pity my perplexity/

Dear old Stoneburner and Hughes came through with a big bang on the Disposall deal. They fixed up the dishwasher so that it works bautifully now, and Mr. Hughes brought back the disposall the next day all fixed up! He took it to a welder and had him put a new metal sleeve on the drain hole, then he installed it and it is even now working nicely. So now all we need to do is get the money for the repairing and welding from the Railway Express, and they should be grateful to us, don't you think? Anyways, I hope they will pay us for that. I am certainly glad I had S. and H, install it though, because they are really helpful as they can be. I told Mr. Hughes I would tell all my friends to call him up when they need a plumber.

-2-

We are going out to Ellicot City on Saturday with L.H. (That boy has fixed this typewriter so it simply won't write his middle initial, either in small letters or in capitals. I push that key and it just doesn't come up. See what I mean?) to visit a bit with Martha Bush and her sister Virginia. The next day, Sunday, will be the day we are expecting Annie and her family to arrive, when or for how long we don't yet know. Laurence John keeps saying he doesn't want them to come, and asking me to call them up and tell them he doesn't want to see them. I only hope he won't act that way when they really do arrive. It's also the day the Meleney's are expected back. We could really use a few Meleney's now- the few remaining children (since Jimmy Allen isn't here either) wander about aimlessly all day bemoaning their fates. The boy won't play with little Susan in back no matter how hard up he is for playmates, for some reason, and he isn't very fond of playing with Gene Slater, either, although Gene's mother now allows him to come as far as our house to play. He will play occasionally with Suzanne, and even with Larry Anderson, but both of those children are really too old for him. He's such a little snob about Susan, and to a lesser extent, about Gene! They both come around now and then hopefully asking me if Laurence John will play with them, and he says something like "I'm too busy," or "I want to play with Lawwy Anderson now", or "Go back home again because I'm playing by myself and don't want to be bothered" I feel sorry for them, but it's hopeless to reason with him and only makes him firmer in his unkind purpose. How young in life we become choosy about our friends! If he felt that way about Suzanne I could understand it, but I can't see what's wrong with either Susan or Gene as playmates. When I asked him once why he didn't want to play with Susan, he said "She's just ugly, that's all."

We have found our dishwasher a wonderful help after parties, as I think I told you. You can't easily do pots and pans in it, but one doesn't mind two or three of them if that's all there is to do. There isn't much space for glasses (only eleven can go in) but when we have more we just leave them out to do the next time. Now that the electrician realized his mistake and corrected it, everything comes out sparkling and clean. As for the Disposal, it's so new I can't say much yet, but it's marvelous not to have the dirty old ashes and cigarette butts hanging around the kitchen for days in the garbage can, and to be able to peel the vegetables and wash the peelings right down the drain afterwards.

I forgot to tell you that the package with the boy's clothes arrived- thank Jimmy very, very much for that. I still wonder what could have become of the slippers, though. I suppose they will turn up later. But we haven't missed them very much anyway, so don't bother to make a special search- you can just wait for them to turn up in the course of time.

It's time for Laurence John to wake up now, so here I go. I bought him some new blue jeans and at this point every single one of them is hanging on the line. He gets so filthy I have to wash him at least twice a day all over. HOW does he do it?

Love,