

Bethesda, Oct. 5, 1949- Tue.

Dear Mamma,

We arrived home safely, though we ran out of gas as we were on the Georgetown Rd., fortunately a block away from the home of our friends the Lobenstines! The boy thought it was alk very interesting, and promptly and tactlessly asked William "Why we were always running out of gas?" - which we considered most uncalled for, since it was the first time in his little life that we had run out of gas! I went to bed at ten and was asleep in notime at all, I'm glad to report.

Now about my diet: it consists almost exclusively of green vegetables and lettuce, cottage cheese, eggs and milk. I eat the usual fare at parties, but when we are alone at home I eat only the above. Whenever we have cube steak or hamburgers, however, I eat that, grilled. We have one or the other meat between two and four times a week. I think I haven't had any "rich sauces" since last Christmas, when I finally resigned myself to the fact that I'll always have to watch my calories. All desserts are out even when we have company here, but I usually have to eat them when I am having dinner at the home of someone whom I don't want to offend. I haven't suffered from indigestion since I can remember, and I feel certain that any doctor or dietician in the world would agree that I have made assurance doubly sure, by my diet, and that I'm very unlikely to start developing indigestion. Orange uice and lettuce have never affected me in the slightest degree unfavorably, although I'm aware that some people do seem to be kind of allergic to ~~xxxx~~ orange uice. In short, I'm darned sure that indigestion isn't the cause of my palpitations. The doctor down in Caracas told me that most people notice it especially when they have ust gone to bed, for the reason that it isn't till then that people are quiet enough to notice their heartbeats unless they deliberately stand still and stop to listen to them. During the day one is usually to busy to worry about that sort of thing. To return to the matter of my food, we pay about the same for our monthly food bills as most people of our income group, and whenever I want to splurge I do, but I certainly don't want to make a habit of being spendthrift either. We have plenty to eat. But as for my suffering from indigestion, the only time I might do that is when I'm eating out and have to eat more and richer food than I'm accustomed to eat - but luckily for me I've never been at all prone to indigestion.

Mrs. Lobenstine took me to the house of a lady who lives near her and who makes a hobby and business of raising plants and flowers. Her specialty is boxwood, but I bought a whole slew of ivy as well as three small forsythia shoots and two tiny clematis vines. She has a nice old house (circa 1890) and a huge three acre garden chockablock with all kinds of plants. I bought about 48 ivy plants with good growing roots, the forsythia and clematis vine for \$4.50! I'm so glad I heard about her, because I had wanted to put ivy in on the bank beside the steps on the driveway, to hide that horrid white cinder block retaining wall, and trail down over it, and I'd also wanted some more plants ~~xxxx~~ to put in the back - but it costs so much at the five and ten! The forsythia plants are each about three feet high, and she says they may possibly have flowers next year, although she can't promise. She's a sturdy, large lady of about fifty five or sixty, and you can see she dotes on nothing but plants.

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Her husband was also there, pladidly and happily separating gladiola bulbs. I went in the house, and could tell by the look of it that they hardly every stayed in the living room except in the dead of night when they simply couldn't be outside among the plants. It had the look of a house in which people merely camp out. But what a beautiful and inviting view there was from the front door! She is also very fond of her five grandchildren, she says, and they often visit her. They must en oy such a good place to roam about in. Well, this afternoon the boy and I are going to have to get busy and dig holes for all those forty eight ivy plants! That 's going to be quite a task, and I hope we are able to finish it todaya,

Tomorrow afternoon I have to park my poor little boy at the house of Gene Slater and go with Mrs. Mills calling on the wife of the Colombian ambassador. It is always collosaaly inconvenient for me to get out in the day time, and especially in the late afternoon, but I simply have to do this. Mrs. Melaney couldn't do it, because she's taking Tommy to the doctor. I couldn't get old Mrs. Bondy, because she had to be called for an delivered, and of course I don't have a car. Mrs. Slater kindly said she would watch out for him, and I had to take her up on it.

We still haven't had any word about that wedding, but I hope we will be invited sonner or later, because for some reason I'de "took a notion" to the idea of going off to Norfolk on a uncket.

I'd better wake the boy now so we can plant our ivy!

Love,