

Bethesda, July 5, 1950

Dear Mamma,

We had a glorious Fourth yesterday, Laurence and I. Will iam had to work, but he drove us down to the zoo in the morning, and we did all the appropriate things, including feeding the animals, having a root bear, getting tired, and chasing the pigeons out of some of their cockiness. That last named sport is Laurence's delight at the zoo. He leads those pigeons a merry chase whenever he spots them strutting about. We came home on the bus, which he said was every bit as fun as the zoo itself. We stopped at the end of part of the bus ride to have a drugstore lunch, and while we were there we saw a store which sold fireworks, so we asked the man to give us some with pretty lights but no noise. Laurence had heard some noisy firecrackers the night before, and reacted violently against them. We also stopped on the way at a public playground, where Laurence was able to slide down the biggest slide he's ever been on until he was just too hot to play any more. We came home on the Alta Vista bus, and he asked to take a nap. At night we lit the sparklers and some cone-shaped volcanoes with pretty shooting stars, and every one was very pleased with the whole thing.

Otherwise life has been quite tame and fairly uneventful. Laurence has now apparently reached the stage where he really wants playmates, at least part of the time, because he misses all the children who have gone away for the summer. He is reduced to Gene Slater, now. Last week Gene's big sister Nadine took us over to the lovely Glen Echo swimming pool in their car, and Laurence had an enchanting time. They have three pools and a sandy "Beach". The wading pool for children occupied most of his time, but he was pleased as punch to go into the deeper swimming pool with one of those plastic "inner tubes" around him, floating and kicking merrily. I wish I could take him there myself, but it takes hours by streetcar and bus. He simply loves being around the water.

We went to a wonderful dinner party given by a new member of the Colombian Embassy staff and his bride. Mrs. Garces was educated mostly in the United States, although she isn't actually American, but of Swiss and Italian origin. She went to Barnard. Her husband is very wealthy by inheritance, and very intelligent by nature. He was educated almost exclusively in England, and went to Cambridge, later studying medicine and finishing his internship, after which he suddenly switched to the Colombian Foreign Service, for some reason unknown to me. They were married in May, and have a lovely apartment opposite the Venezuelan Embassy on Mass. Avenue. Beautifully furnished and decorated. For this dinner party at least, she had two butlers and a cook, with the happy result that one didn't have to feel sorry for her. The other guests were the Ambassador of Colombia and Sra. Zuleta-Angel, the Counselor of their embassy (a completely British looking man, by the way, suave, pleasant, and apparently quite unintelligent - sad to say.) Also some people from the International Bank, and us. Mrs. Zuleta is a very nice woman, intelligent and conversable, though not over-talkative. She makes a startling contrast to the general run of Venezuelan women we meet. She is

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always nice to me, and eggs me on to tell Laurence's latest remarks by laughing at them heartily. For dinner (on gorgeous Itäänian linjen ) we had vichysoise, lobster a la reine, asparagus with hollandaise, and a most wonderful dessert consisting of ice cream on top of angel food cake, with a melba sauce. It is always delightful to go to those elegant dinners- to get a taste of luxurious ease. The Ambassador stayed late, so of course we did also, while Sr. Zuleta talked and talked about Peru, where he once served and in which he is most interested. He complimented me on William's "admirable" ability to act as chairman in a treaty- preliminary discussion series they are having these days. All in all, it was just wonderful.

We had Gail and Jim Lipenstine over on Saturday night, along with their good friends the Johnsons. Gail, alas, is leaving us tomorrow, and Jim is leaving in Septmeber to go out to Chicago for some st udyng there. Gail will go to Chigago when he goes, but for the present she is taking the boys up to lake Placid with his family for the summer. He will live in Georgetwon with some friends, and they will sub-lease their house furnished. Gail said she specifically wants people with children to get it, because she got so unhappy when they were trying to find a place in Evanston for next fall and so many poeple said " no dogs or children". She certainly is nice. Well, they are all fixed up with a furnished house out there now, but they were lucky to find it.

It is about to rain, and we can already hear the thunder, so I suppose I won't be able to write much more when the boy has to come in. He's been being so very good lately! I can see him growing up and becoming more mature under my eyes, fairly. He has finally learned that there are some things he just had to do, whether he wants to or not, and while the lesson is by no means fully learned, it is a relief to see that he's beginning to be able to say, "Oh, all right, mamma, I will". I think he learned part of it from Leslyn, who was pretty good about giving way to necessity without yelping too much.

William learns that his vacation must begin a bit later than he thought, so we probably won't start out until the week-end of July 28 and 29, or so. Laurence is anxious to see New York City, ride on a subway, etc., so I think we will spend a day there to show him the sights. Would it be all right with you if we came up via Flemington, spent two or three days there, and then went on? These plans are still fairly tentative, so don't hesitate to tell me if it's inconvenient or anything. William is going to be terribly busy for the next three weeks because about half the staff of NWC will be on vacation, including his new boss, Mr. Attwood. For that reason I m afraid we won't be able to bring Laurence up there to spend some time alone with you, as we had hoped to do in July. He will need to go to the office every Sunday, for sure.

Here comes the downpour! - and Laurence with it.

Love,