

Bethesda, Dec. 6, 1950

Dear Pop and Helen,

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Just received Pop's letter telling of your tentative plans for the distant future, and your immediate plans to stay on at Point O'Rocks. I do wish they would call it Point of Rocks, especially now that you are going to stay on til 1 February. I may get balky and address my letters to Point of Rocks vacation apartments anyway, just to demonstrate my feelings on the matter. I had been under the impression that you were going to house-hunt, and so bought a kind of a house-y Christmas present mostly for Helen, but fortunæly it is quite small in any case, and at the present rate of my Christmas preparations (exactly one present bought- the above mentioned-) it might not reach you until Easter any way.

All goes well. I am indeed back on the old schedule, more or less. There is a lot for me to do during the hours I am awake, so by the time I get to bed around noon I am all ready for it. I still don't seem to be quite caught up on the odd jobs and extra cleaning chores that have accumulated, but slowly we are working down the surplus. Of course Christmas and Laurence's birthday are both putting us off a bit right now. Mrs. Watkins is kindness itself, and is always suggeting little or big cleaning jobs for herself, and practically always stays late, by half an hour or so. Yesterday she took me shpping for the first time- what excitement! I no longer get car sick, fortunately, so that although I was terribly tired on my return home from the stores, I felt triumphant nonetheless. Bought myself a large black velvet hat! My idea is to balance my large black velvet figure, and William says he thinks it works out nicely. Also bought four small presents for the four ladies who carried Laurence in their car pool until the Melenys left on the first of December. Now William takes him to school every day except Wednesday, when Mrs. Krätz takes him, and since she owes us rides, I don't feel obligated to anyone any more. Mrs. Watkins picks up her little Freddy every morning except Wednesday, at getting out time. Laurence seems a good deal more reconciled to school now, and even tells me a good many things that happen and games that are played. Betsey is now in the afternoon session, but fortunately he took the blow stoicly, especially since just before she moved, he and Betsey had had a fight and parted with harsh words on both sides. Something of a lover's quarrel. In any case, all is, if not forgiven, certainly forgotten by this time, and he is looking forward to next Saturday when we are going to celebrate his birthday. The children will come for cake and ice cream right after their lunch, and then William will take them to the children's movie program in Bethesda. I thought that would be the easiest way for me to manage it, even if it is a bit rough on poor William. There will be only five children, but five can turn into legion at times. I suggested cake and cocoa one day when Betsey was here for lunch. She said "Oh. Cocoa. Well, my favorite kind of ice cream is chocolate marshmallow." So I saw the way the wind was blowing, and we are having ice cream rather than cocoa, weather or no weather.

We have reduced the injections to one every four days without my feeling bad, so I think I am at last standing on my own feet as far as nausea goes. I still have to eat, but I imagine that will

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continue for the next four months unabated. Of course I am gaining too much weight as a result, just as I did five years ago, but since there is nothing I can do about it that I am not already doing in the way of saccharin, skimmed milk, and no desserts, I have decided I might as well stop worrying about it. It's wonderful to feel good again, anyway. Virginia and Bain Davis came over last Sunday night for some talk and some canasta (with William's new birthday canasta set) but so far I haven't been out in the evening. The only party we have been invited to was a huge affair at the Peruvian Embassy which wasn't at all my idea of the way I wanted to start getting back into the social whirl. Also, although I think I'm ready for small parties, none of my friends have asked us to any, since they still think I'm not able to go out and one can't call them all up and say "Invite me to a small party!" In any case, I do still get quite tired in spite of my daily naps, and usually feel more than ready to crawl into bed at ten or ten thirty. But now I have that gorgeous new black velvet hat I can't wait for an occasion suitable for wearing it! It matches both my black velvet jacket and my red velvet jacket so beautifully!

Laurence has come out with several interesting remarks recently on various topics. My favorite one is this: we were discussing the fact that mother and daddy both loved Laurence very much, and we hoped that he loved us, too. L.J. was in a philosophical mood, so he thought for a while before answering. Then he said, "Well, I guess I do love you as much as I love any grown-up, mamma." But when he saw the involuntary look of slightly pained surprise on my face, he hastily (and tactfully) added, "But don't take it too hard, mamma- that's just the way children are." I told him I wouldn't take it too hard, and realized that grown-ups are indeed something of a nuisance to children, and that was the end of the matter. Facts are facts.... The other fascinating thing was a song, one of those continuous childish songs that flit from subject to subject. I caught a verse here and there, but the one that intrigued me most sounded something like this: "Oh my little sibling, my dear little sibling, what is a yoyo? What is a yoyo, my darling baby sibling?....." and tailed off into other matters.

I'd better get up there and get to bed before Laurence comes home from school and catches me at my nefarious task. You know how he reacts to typewriting on the part of mamma!

Love,

P.S. I forgot to tell you- Ruth Havey came and stayed the night of Monday with us. No room at the Mayflower. It was nice to see her!

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