

Feb. 5 1951

To Pop + Helen

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P 1/2

Re hernia operation

Note: The blank top half of this page may have resulted from Philinda, in her agitation, forgetting to put carbon and copy papers behind the main sheet. When she noticed, she rectified the error with carbon and copy for the second half; but rather than re-type everything on the copy, she simply entered the date, recipients, and subject of the letter:

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And then again there was the Spartan- no, he was Roman, wasn't he? Anyway, that boy who hid the wolf cub under his tunic and let it gnaw at his vitals rather than admit anything. Now depending on the point of view that brave act could be considered either greatness of soul or rather pointless.

Having led up to my point by gradual degrees I'll now come right out and say for heaven's sake why didn't you tell me all about it instead of being so completely silent on the subject. I want to know, and not just a la Charley Spiegel's mamma, because I would have worried so. You have a bee in your bonnet, or at least a gnat in your bonnet, on the subject of not telling me anything. For one thing, how do you think I feel after having spent hours over the typewriter pouring forth my symptoms to you, gloomily but gleefully enumerating them one and all? I feel silly, that's how I feel. Have I ever begged and pleaded with you to stop telling me about your aches and pains? No. On the contrary. Was it perhaps your idea to spare me in my weakened condition, so I wouldn't worry? Well, from now on I shall assume that you are probably sick, diseased, have broken all four limbs unless I get detailed bulletins on your health including all symptoms, good and bad. From sad experience, I shall assume that no news is bad news, coming from you. You may practice tight-lippedness on the rest of the world, but don't go around being silently bwave with me, because from now on I hereby announce I won't stand for it. I don't think it's either stoical or thoughtful- it just irks me, so STOP IT!

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My goodness, what a tirade! I feel much better, now that I've got that off my chest. I hope I haven't sounded too mean and tyrannical. I love you dearly, and I hope you are really going to be all better from now on, but will you tell me about it, please? William tells me every time his head aches or he sneezes, and I guess I've just become accustomed to being told. I worry if he sneezes too often or his head aches too much, but fundamentally I don't worry as much as I would if I thought he made a habit of "sparing me" and generally carrying wolf cubs around under his tunic, as it were. I consider it one of my wifely duties and rights to listen to all symptoms and worry as much as I see fit. Same applies to Pop, and down with wolf cubs!

It has suddenly occurred to me that it was a fox, not a wolf cub, maybe. In any case, it doesn't really matter.

William has spoken to our prospective ambassador to Guatemala (shh- it's still a deep dark secret, but I KNOW it will be safe in your hands!) a Mr. Rudolph Schoenfeld. William was panicky, because he had heard Mr. Schoenfeld was extremely old school and protocolaire. No smoking, no hands in the pockets, and such like. Well, William made sure not to smoke nor put his hands in his pockets, but it all ended happily with Mr. Schoenfeld saying that as far as he personally was concerned he would be delighted to have William as his second-in-command if Personnel still agreed next summer. He kindly volunteered that he had heard William's wife wasn't well, and wanted William to be sure to wait in the U.S. until I was all better, adding quite truly that the Department has a habit of rushing people off to new posts as if they were firemen on the way to a fire. William thought he really meant it, within reason. I was quite relieved to hear it, in any case, having feared the Dept. would insist on our leaving smack at the beginning of June, or such. Maybe we could make it July. Of course you realize that all these plans are perfectly capable of going down the drain in five minutes on their own little feet because it is suddenly discovered that William is urgently needed in Afghanistan. However, as such things go, it seems to be a well developed plan. Mr. Schoenfeld was formerly our Ambassador to Romania, and has been lecturing at Swarthmore on the general topic of the Iron Curtain. He announced he was pleased to hear I had been to Swarthmore, fine school, fine school, etc.

The book of verse which Helen so kindly ordered finally arrived, a couple of days ago. I am hesitating as to whether to send it to Flemington or wait for him to read it here. On the whole I think I'd prefer to wait, being anxious to see his reactions on the first few readings. What a fund of quotable quotes William and I shall have before long! Thank you, because that was one of the books I've always wanted to own.

Having been feeling much stronger lately, I went to the doctor's today fondly expecting that my blood count would have reached staggering heights. Therefore I was positively angry to find that it hadn't gone up at all from 65. In fact the nurse said it looked more like about 63. Most ungrateful, after all those capsules and thick steaks. So I started a new series of shots, shall continue the capsules and make further raids on the Texas herds. William says it's time for bed, and so it is. All our love to you both, and many wishes for improved health. Do write all the gory details as soon as possible, so I won't worry!