

Bethesda, May 10, 1951

Dear Francesca et al.,

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Here is what is probably a foolhardy attempt to write a letter against overwhelming odds: two pairs of small but highly potent lungs screaming in a blood-curdling way for milk. They are upstairs and I am down, their door is closed, it isn't anywhere near feeding time so they have no RIGHT to be screaming, but still I can barely hear myself think. I feel capitulation, or a spirit of appeasement, creeping over me. They will probably win, and get fed an hour or so early.

No doubt about it, William and I are absolutely proud, not to say downright smug. I feel terribly sorry for the poor souls who only manage to produce one piddling baby at a time.

Also no doubt about it, I am doing a forty-eight hour a day job in twenty four hours and if I didn't have the straw of Guatemala and a nursemaid to cling to I should drown in a pool of my own honest perspiration. Up gaily at five or thereabout and to bed and a state of coma by eleven or so. I laugh when I think how I worried about preparing to leave the country in only two months. Of course I can't prepare to leave the country! It's out of the question. The day we leave I shall collect the baby's things and the formula-making equipment and go, that's all. I only hope I remember to take along my toothbrush.

It was kind and good of you to write me so many nice cheerful letters all unrequited-like. And the last one just came the day before yesterday. Laurence will be most impressed with his own particular letter from you. He is up in Flemington with grandmamma right now, happily installed as the fond grandparents' pride and joy, and frequently visits with his small cousins in westfield, so jealousy hasn't had a chance. We hope to drive up with both babies in one basket and collect him and grandmamma sometime this month. I will deliver his letter from you when he is here and able to gate the babies the kisses you sent.

The girls weighed six and a half and six and three-quarters pounds when they were born. We have high hopes that they are going to have reddish-brown hair like William's sister. They appear to look more like William than me, which of course pleases me greatly, especially since their eyes turn up at the corners as I had hoped they would and as their daddy's do. Their one interest in life is eating, eating, eating, so they are beginning to get quite plump and healthy. Mamma, on the other hand, is fortunately not getting plumper- I had the happy satisfaction of losing forty-five unwelcome pounds since April 6th, and now needless to say I am so busy stuffing their small gullets that I have no time to over-stuff my own.

They win. Once more thanks for your many letters!