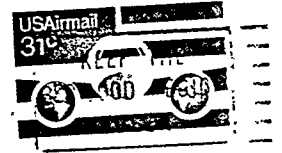




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Beloved daughter-in-law Paula,

We were absolutely ecstatic to receive those pictures of you! Sure enough, you STILL ARE the same lil' ol' Paula--no neck stretching brass rings, or bones in your nose, or bare bosom with G-string of cowerie shells tied to your middle, or any of that sort of jungle attire. You have been there for so long now that I began to imagine that maybe you had gone native, if truth were out, and just plain forsaking all of your Yankee ways. (You really got yourself an imaginative mother-in-law here, Kiddo, and there is just no limit to what goes through her mind without some tangible evidence to the contrary.) Anyway, thanks for sending those pictures. I sent one to Grandma Wheeler too. And thanks for sending some of little Monique too. I was pretty excited there for awhile when I thought maybe she was the first of a lovely batch of new grandchildren; but learned from Tom that her mother still keeps a bit of a "string" on her in a manner of speaking, so that the arrangement is lasting only to the amount that she will permit. Monique is certainly a dainty little thing, isn't she--like our Carla. It is really heartrending to know that she has been damaged by a heroine addicted mother. Hopefully, she can still be raised to her optimum, so that she can have as good a life as possible. One never knows what talent lies within any individual, and if it can only be found and polished how much it could add to the pleasure or comfort of the rest of mankind.

I sometimes think about a very repulsive looking paraplegic that I met in a Convalescent Home up in Oregon, who Hitler might have thought better extinct, but who was so gifted that he could draw pictures with a typewriter that looked exquisitely sketched by hand. You just wouldn't believe it possible, he made such fantastic copies of Gainsborough's Blue Boy, sketches of the Cathedral of Chartres, portraits of presidents, and things that you had to look very close to realize it was all typed. He was so badly crippled that he couldn't hold a pen to sign his name, but was persuaded to sketch an X, which was most difficult for him, but I certainly treasure as now I own one of his "autographed" prints. He may have been very sad to look at, but he had a very thrilling talent, and beautiful soul. Well, little Monique is beautiful, and no doubt has a lot more to work with, so hopefully she can do something wonderful too.

We have been having some good rains here lately, and I have been able to put through the first wash since last year, here at home.

Donna and family went to Disneyland during Christmas vacation, and said that they sloshed through rain the whole time but enjoyed every minute of it anyway. They figured that they probably got to go on more rides that they might have been able had the crowds been up to normal. They had to cut their vacation short by about four days though, when they received a phone call that Wayne's father was in the hospital and things looked serious. The call came just after an exhausting day of sight-seeing through some of the huge shopping malls in L.A. but Wayne was afraid to delay getting home so they started out immediately. Wayne says he drove almost the whole way himself and never got the least bit tired. Some of it through about two hundred miles of downpour that nearly swamped the windshield wipers. They got home at six o'clock in the morning, Wayne showered,

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ate breakfast and went immediately to the hospital. He stayed with his father all morning, and was with him when he died. We have been quite busy helping the family through this extremely difficult period all week, but think that his mother is finally beginning to cope at last. His father was an meticulous diary keeper, and the family has been getting some post mortem jolts over the details that he recorded. Donna says that she would have lived much more carefully had she realized how methodically he was recording it all. It is one thing to believe that your Guardian Angel is following you around making notes, but it is another to see it all in neat black ink right there before your eyes! Mack was a relief fireman, and a deputy sheriff years ago. (All those people who got into trouble, and then went to court to have their records expunged--Ha! It may have been expunged on court records, but how could they ever know that that there was a compulsive historian in the background.) Ah well, there was a whole lot of little bits of paper, notations, that had to be burned, but the main diaries are reserved for the succeeding generations. They will not only have some personal glimpses as to how life was lived since the thirties, but weather reports as well.

Have signed up for another semester of photography. Thought I might switch back to literature and get that AA, but when it came to sign up time, I just had to go for one more semester of photography. I spent all this morning trying to get some bird pictures but so far haven't been successful. My interests are on a collision course with the neighbors. Their stupid cats seem to think I am trying to attract my little feathered friends here for their benefit, and am forced to throw rocks just as the birds get within reach of my 135mm lens. It is terribly frustrating, and sometimes I get urges to use something more decisive than rocks! Did Audubon ever have to contend with such things?

This last Saturday we spent with Tom. We went to Berkeley and walked around for a bit staring at the native life, then sauntered over to the Greek restaurant for shish kabobs. There was no sand in the lettuce this time, and everything was delicious as usual. The cook sang lustily to give atmosphere, and we enjoyed it immensely. It was a very interesting thing to note that we saw only two people smoking on the streets the whole time we were there. They passed a law that you can smoke only in designated areas in Berkeley now. It seemed sort of odd to see a sign say "smoking permitted" in a store window as though it were something unusual. That's the way it should be though. A much more healthful kind of world, methinks.

Hey, I sure do appreciate those pretty stamps that you affix to your envelopes. Collecting stamps is one of my hobbies, and your adding some very nice ones. Thankyou much. Do you think it would be possible to slide a light insignificant coin through the mails there too? I don't happen to have anything from Guyana, and it would be nice to fill in that gap. Of course, if it costs three dollars to mail a dime, forget it. I just meant something that would pass through without getting noticed.

Guess I told in the last letter that Matthew now has his driver's license. Well, so far he has parked on the side of a slippery hill and slid into a ditch. He has taken his eyes from the road and ended up in a field, and has scared his grandparents nearly silly with cutting in and out of traffic at 70 miles per hour in Marin County, of which I got a picture ~~to~~ to prove. Naturally we promptly told his mother who gave him a thorough bawling out. He can't imagine who saw him, but thinks it was some ratting neighbor.

Well, that is all the news that can be squeezed onto this page.  
Lots of love, and take care--  
Mother Adams  
ahem, that's other Adams