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no 1022/1093

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November 1, 1993
(got it right, this time!)

Dear

Halloween is over, Thanksgiving approaches and I'm writing Christmas cards. One of my favorite jobs of the season, believe it or not. I enjoy thinking about all the people we no longer get to see much, and many of you are kind enough to write a reply to this all-purpose letter, which is great. Actually, be amazed that you are getting one this year. There are days just now when I've no idea how I'm going to fit another thing in.

Why? Well, I've taken a first tentative step out of my front door, after 12 years of being a kept woman. As my baby no longer is one, I thought it was time to get my act together and so, after much internal debate ("is there anything I can do beside teach?"), I'm teaching. What I found was a Montessori teacher-training course, which involved living on an ocean-side campus for 4 weeks in the summer (so hard being away from the family for all that time!) and I'm now interning for the year in a local Montessori school. In my spare time, I'm producing masses of course work and doing plenty of PTA stuff, too. Hence the full timetable. Still, I had it easy last year, so I was ready for a change in speed. And getting a paycheck again, after all this time, feels marvelous!

The rest of the family cope with the neglect of their mother/wife without turning a hair. So much for my worries about being a working parent. The kids all had a ball, with Mick, in the summer and he with them, in spite of the juggling he had to do with work. Of course, they're all getting so big, now. Andrew's 10, in 5th grade, and girding himself for a move to the Junior High next year. Ellie turns 9 in 2 weeks and is in 3rd grade. They opened up a new elementary school near us, in September, and Andrew and Stephen go there. But we decided to leave Ellie in that multi-age program, because she was so comfortable in it. She'll probably move over next fall. My friend, Stephen, who's 6, finally got to ride the school bus. He's in 1st grade and holding his own surprisingly well. And Gregory is 5 next week and is still at the Montessori. It's not the same one that I teach in. I'm the kind of mother that may cramp her children's style at times (!), so we thought it would be best to give Gregs his own space (doesn't that sound good and American?). It works out very well for both of us.

Mick is at Xedia. It approaches its 1st anniversary this month and is still in business, always a good sign in the start-up field. He works plenty of hours (what's new?) but he seems very comfortable there. Will this one be the 2nd IBM? You never know, which is part of the attraction. The house is as ever. We did toy with the idea of moving in the spring, (again) but it all fizzled out after I realised that what I really wanted was a

bigger house right where this one is! It'll keep for another year or so, when the pressure to move becomes more insistent.

Life under Mr. Clinton has much the same feel as life under anyone else, although reading about what he would like to do passes an afternoon quite pleasantly. From the outside, though, it looks like politics as usual, which hasn't surprised many. Endless debate on issues that no-one seems to understand, such as health care reform or NAFTA, show little progress, although gays in the military are no longer being asked, which must be a small measure of comfort to them. Hilary takes a lot of stick, but handles it all with dignity and intelligence. I'm quite the fan, of course. Now that I'm a citizen of these fair shores, I feel obliged to be somewhat more committed! Trouble is, there has been nothing for me to vote for, up to now. I can't wait!

We've had a couple of visitors this year, but could handle more. We're hoping that some of you will take us up on our standing offer this coming year. It's 3 and a half years since we were back and we're feeling out of touch with folk. So, fly on over, the weather's great! As ever, we hope you have an excellent Christmas and New Year and a successful 1994. We'll be thinking of you.

Love from