

Dear Family,

30 December 1999

My hope is to get this composed and transmitted electronically before the date change melts all our computers. As I'm confident that you've prudently made hard copies of all my previous correspondence, there should be little concern regarding your capacity to weather the impending Y2K disaster...at least as far as reading material (and/or kindling) are concerned. Happy New Year. Events of the past week have been significant enough to make me forget about most of what happened early in the month. This may be just as well for some of you fiction enthusiasts.

As is custom in the Washington area, the Christmas season attracted gawkers a-plenty to the Washington DC Temple Visitor Center for the twenty-something-eth annual Festival of Lights. As an esteemed bearer of the Melchizedek Priesthood, I had the distinct honor of spending 5 hours in the parking lot one Friday evening ensuring that drivers obeyed the "One Way" sign to which I was assigned just inside the entrance. It's not the most glorious parking lot duty. I did get to hold a cool flashing light stick, though. This might be considered something of a demotion from a couple of years ago when Crystal and I played the highly sought-after roles of Mary and Joseph in the overly hyped Festival of Lights live nativity. But, you know, it's not *where* you serve...blah, blah, blah.

As has become custom in the Henrichsen family, we simultaneously celebrated Hannah's third and Grandma's eighty-third birthdays on the eleventh. This year the festivities, held at Coco's pad, were attended by all the locals. Hannah and Grandma both got cool stuff, and what more could you ask for in a birthday? We have a hard time contemplating that Hannah has attended Nursery for the last time, and will start Primary on Sunday. She frequently sings what she knows of "Jesus wants me for a Suhhhn-BEAM!" around the house, so we feel she's ready. We still can't believe it though.

We thoroughly enjoyed Christmas. Mom, Dad, and Pete made the trip down on Christmas Eve morning bearing many gifts. And even though we had just been there two weeks before, we fought our way back into the District for a very pleasant Christmas Eve at Coco's place with all the local Henrichsens plus Britt, Christopher & Lindee back from school in Utah. Christmas Day was at our house. I provided my traditional moral support with dinner (by staying out of the way.) Hannah, who spent most of December muttering in her whiniest voice, "But I don't want to go to Christmas," and "But I don't like Santa Claus," changed her tune somewhat when she "learned" that he'd brought her a bike. Peter, whose love for (and belief in) Santa needs no buttressing, got one too. Lucy took the holiday with all the ambivalence one might expect from a 3-month-old. She has started smiling. The day was highlighted by a 2-hour phone call from Andrew. We loved to hear his voice, and hanging up was a chore. Everyone feels the same conflicting emotions of longing to see Andrew tempered by contentment that he's where he is.

Despite my ongoing bewilderment at society's infatuation with this time of year, I will endure celebrating the end of the penultimate year of the millennium with some very nice college friends of Crystal's. The only hope I hold for the evening centers around one of these friends who happens to be one of two Arabic-speaking State Department desk officers assigned to the Egypt Air crash. If we find out what the whacked-out pilot *really* said before he crashed the plane, we'll be sure to pass it along.

I submitted my resignation to my current employer yesterday (effective the middle of next month.) The ensuing memo announcing my departure, released this morning, has made today a perpetual Q&A session with different people dropping by at different times asking all the same questions. I contemplated hanging a sign in my window. It probably would have read something like this: My new employer is KPMG International (formerly KPMG-Peat Marwick.) If, like my parents, you don't know what that is, KPMG (together with Arthur Andersen, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, and Deloitte and Touche) comprise what is often referred to as the "Big Five" consulting/accounting firms. If you're really bored, you might also check out www.kpmg.com. Whatever. My title is Financial Services Consultant (or "Consultant—Financial Services" or something...I forget.) I will be dealing primarily with KPMG's bank and bank-like clients. While my office will be situated in Tyson's Corner, Virginia, the bulk of my time will be spent "on-site" with clients. Consequently, relocation plans will likely wait a short time while some unknowns sort themselves out. I feel an interesting mélange of excitement and apprehension. I suppose that's normal.

Hope the season treated all of you well.