

Dear Family:

25 February 2001

I just hung up with my mother-in-law who asked if I'd started this yet. I can't remember if I lied or not, but I'm starting it now.

Sunday evening. We just returned home following dinner at Roland and Marci's. The two-mile drive there was made slightly more memorable by the drunk who rear-ended us on University Boulevard and fled the scene. The story isn't over yet, and most of the details are probably outside the scope of this letter (yeah, right). Suffice it to say that chapter one ended with a Montgomery County police officer driving me to 4 other police cars surrounding a blue Plymouth Acclaim with front-end damage and a disoriented-looking man in cuffs up against the trunk. As we approached, the officer instructed me to look around and let him know if I recognized anything or anyone – gotta love the police lineup with one guy in it. We think everyone's okay. The jolt of the accident terrified Hannah (but not Lucy). Crystal might have a stiff neck. The drunk (who also had drug paraphernalia in his car) doesn't appear to be worth much, so my neck's fine...for now. The damage to our car appears minor and, unfortunately, is probably not proximate enough to Crystal's fire hydrant dent to get a twofer.

Speaking of car accidents (what a segue!) I was a little surprised to see the ten-hour snow-induced 116-car pileup on I-95 between Washington and Richmond seep into the national press. On the off chance someone saw it and worried I might be dead, I'm not. I missed the whole mess by exactly one day. Lacking any real evidence as to the cause, authorities have been left to assume that the incident was touched off by some idiot in an SUV with California tags.

In non-traffic news, the real highlight of the month was fast Sunday in Moorestown and Morgan's blessing. The event was attended by all of Matt's non-Utah-bound brothers as well as Coco and Andra's parents. Apart from Lucy's 103-degree fever, from which she recovered remarkably quickly following her escape from South Jersey, it was a fun weekend that included watching Peter's culturally diverse basketball team annihilate a bunch of white kids from Sewell. It wasn't Peter's best performance, but he did take a lot of shots.

I finally got around to tiling our once hideous kitchen floor. I laid the tile on Saturday, resisted the temptation to grout on the Sabbath, and was rewarded by getting released from jury duty at noon on Monday. I was then faced with the ethical dilemma of going back to work versus grouting. Naturally I grouted (after calling for pointers from Roland who was home "sick" working on his own house).

This month also saw Mom, Dad and Peter come down to help clear the remaining items from Grandma's place. That sentence is misleading. Mom and Coco did all the work, while Dad, Peter and I mostly messed around. It was fun though. Due in no small part to proximity (but to others' generosity as well) many very nice items found their way over to our house. We are grateful.

This should be my last week in redneck Richmond – a community in utter devastation in the wake of Dale Earnhardt's tragic passing. If this turns out not to be the last week, I'm going to start envying him.

It's not that bad. Sometimes you just have to keep telling yourself that. But it really isn't

Love,
Tim, Crystal, Hannah & Lucy