

Dear Family:

27 May 2001

I am beginning this letter on I-95 North between Washington and Philadelphia, hoping the laptop battery will endure. Tomorrow is Memorial Day and, having attended our ward meetings with Grant and Jen, we are now racing them to Mom and Dad's where we will celebrate the holiday with Andrew's fiancée, Jessica Walker, whom I have not yet met, and her family (along with all my siblings and their families). As I'm sure the rest of this weekend's events will be letter-worthy, I am beginning this letter without any idea of how it might end. The suspense is killing me.

We enjoyed seeing many members of Crystal's family this month as they gathered from across the continent to attend Roland's graduation from medical school. The family split their time between our place (with its proximity to Washington's Constitution Hall—site of the graduation ceremonies) and Roland and Marci's new riverfront plantation in Chesapeake, Virginia (with its proximity to Roland and Marci's new boat and the water, and unfettered access to various types of rich people water-skiing-type sports). It was nice to see everybody.

Okay, the drive north suddenly got interesting. Our [expletive] car just died. I guess this means Grant and Jen are going to beat us to Moorestown. AAA has dispatched a tow truck, which hopefully is making its way here with all possible speed. Meanwhile, the pouring rain has discouraged me from getting out of the car and attempting to find the on/off switch under the hood. My money's on the alternator (hopefully just the belt) not that I know anything about cars—do alternators even have belts? Stay tuned.

I promised more Lucy details last month. Well, she seems to be handling this motionless car ordeal much better than I am. So I'm passing the computer over to Crystal: Lucy continues to grow. At nearly twenty months, she is substantially more solid and less frenetic than her older sister was at this age. Lucy's transition into the church nursery has been much less challenging than Hannah's was. It helped having her Aunt Jen as nursery leader for the first little while.

Lucy is getting more communicative and more adorable by the day. She's been a singer right from the start (she could sing "E-I-E-I-O" with the correct tune before she could ever say a word). Now she sings "Ginkle, ginkle little star" with the correct tune and creative words and makes up her own animal sounds for Old MacDonald's farm. She's also a real cuddler. This can be a little trying when Mom's trying to get dinner on the table or herself dressed or any task that's difficult to impossible with a small child on her hip. But it's hard to resist a smiling, cuddly baby.

Hannah gave herself a haircut (AGAIN), much to the dismay of her mother and the delight of one instructor and several students at the local hair stylist academy. When we went to get her hair fixed everyone in the place had to come over and ask her when she was planning to enroll. They congratulated her on her sense of style; apparently chunky is in. They were amazed that she could cut so cleanly with only a pair of Fiskars children's scissors. They suggested (can you believe it!) that next time she find someone else's hair to cut. I think this might have been stylist humor.

Hannah is becoming increasingly articulate. I'm often amazed at the things I hear her explaining to people. One example would be the "rules" of her new sports bottle. I've heard her explain several times to anyone who'll listen that she has to "suck and then stop and take a breath. Suck, and then breathe. Suck and breathe."

Unfortunately, in addition to being increasingly eloquent, Hannah has become increasingly whiny. Someone please tell me that this is a phase that will pass quickly.

Tim again. It's Tuesday morning and we're on the way home. It was the alternator. (Or, at least, the mechanic at Surly Bob's Auto Repair in Baltimore said it was the alternator.) Fortunately, they had one that fit our car in stock, and we made it to Moorestown before dark. Dad and Andrew, who had started driving to Baltimore on the off chance Surly Bob was unable to come through, made it Delaware before we called to turn them back. We appreciated the effort. Memorial Day, despite my bout with some sort of very unpleasant digestive system ailment from which I've not yet fully recovered, was a lot of fun. We all like Jessica, and are looking forward to next month's wedding.

Been great seeing some of you. Have a nice month.

Love,
Tim & Crystal