

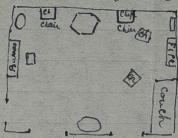
4963

La Souza

1st Nov. 18

Dearest beloved Pippa - I heard last night from Ray that you were ill again with that beastly lumbago - which makes me miserable. One thing is that this time no doubt you will recognise it at once as an old friend - and not think it any other fell disease. But it is vile.

It is very wonderful to think that Mama really means to come - though I really don't believe it as yet. I rather hate to think of her going by the Havre as it seems so very long, but Daisy will no doubt manage it for the best. It is a great mercy having her escort - I shall love having her and Ellen will be a great comfort. I have re-modelled the drawing room since you were here & greatly improved it I think - as follows. The Chip chairs



& the inlaid table from your room underneath the book case. The couch where the bureau was - the bureau on the wall

opposite the fire. There seems to be more room & the arrangement is more commodious. Mama will be in your room - and I am going to get a carpet for it and give her a large writing table and armchair which were lying pedue in the studio. Ellen will have the little room Ray had, Julia Janie's room, & Janie will come into my room into

1098

Simon's bed. Simon will have a shake down when he comes from Sat. to Mon. only alas! This will be while Julia is here i.e. until Xmas. Julia is very good - at times so exasperating that one goes perfectly wild - but all the same amazingly good. She and Jamie get on together perfectly. Julia is a very odd character and a strange combination of extreme cleverness and the reverse. I think she is probably destined to make a fortune by writing very bad novels or else ^{painting} atrocious Xmas cards. She does everything with perfectly astonishing facility and will do nothing except with facility. She has n't the remotest notion what it is to try. She absolutely detests making a mental effort of any sort, though she really might be very intelligent. I have (at the cost of superhuman efforts on my part) taught her quite a lot of French and grammar - and if she were really to try or even begin to want to try, she might learn French - or anything else very well. But I really am afraid she never will. Her painting, her verse writing and her music are all exactly the same. She hates everything that isn't easy. She is a very great contrast to Zoum as a pupil, and I think nothing whatever interests her really but the weaving of her own romances.

Dolores' young man is at home on sick leave. He has got a month. He is very anxious to marry her, but she is cowardly about it, and won't.

make up her mind - though she is extremely fussed. I have told her I should thoroughly approve if she did but I don't think she will. She is delighted at the idea of Mama's & Ellen's coming, but she is more harum sharum than ever, of course, in the circumstances.

I was perfectly desperate at the Vandens not coming. It was a thoroughly unexpected twist. The chief reason seems to be that the préfet of Limoges wants to get up an exhibition of Jean's pictures & hopes that he will sell some. Nobody knows when this exhibition is to take place. Jeanne I gather is furious as she hates their friends & hosts the Detroys and is pining for St^e Lucie.

Janie has not been at all brilliant in health since we came from Mont Dore and had several colds more or less bad - but for the last week she has been distinctly better. She reminds me of Lytton by her uninterrupted flow of giggles, even in the most adverse circumstances. She is intensely happy at having Julia's society. Simon is naturally rather depressed but so far he is being left in peace at his American Hospital and he is really very well treated there and quite comfortable. He enjoys coming home for the week end.

Since the little flare up in Champagne we have all

been growing steadily gloomier - and changing ministries
doesn't inspire me for one with any particular confidence.
Most of the time one is either blue with funk or crimson
with fury - but in moments of calm one still believes
that they can't hold out very much longer.

I should very much like to know whether Jan Hamilton's
return is a disgrace or not. Serbia is a wretched
business. I wonder how the poor Scottish Units are getting
on & what will become of them. I think the Belgians
must feel rather cynical at all the fuss made about
Miss Cavell. But what inconceivable idiots ^{the Boches} they are.

Now I must stop. I hope you won't be
laid up for long. I suppose you have overworked and
are gnashing your teeth at being forced. Dearest
creature it is horrid to think of you as ill.

Your loving
Dorothy