

Per 4/23/76  
①

H<sub>1</sub>: Dad Mom & Granny

People that say that Puerto Rico is like Hawaii are out of their minds! Temperature & humidity are comparable but nothing else is. San Juan has a population of 2 million and its like L.A. It will be a very interesting year. Major crimes are almost unheard of here but there is lottsa burglaries & car thefts. Consequently 80% of the houses & apts. have bars all over the place. It is partly the Spanish influence but partly fear of being ripped off. The bars are all decorative so it looks kinda pretty on the outside but inside ya can't help but to feel like a prisoner of sorts. And everyone who has a car worth keeping removes a vital part of their motor and carries it with them to help ward off theft. It is pretty once ya get out of San Juan. A few people from AMC and Marly & I took a drive around the island. It's very pretty but not quite as pretty as Hawaii. The unemployment rate is 20% so there's lottsa barrios. Another problem is there are lottsa stray animals. Catholicism is so heavy here and it goes against the grain of the people to get their pets neutered. So dumb! It tears my heart to see all these dogs running loose raiding trash cans for a living. Many of them are maimed from colliding with cars. They are mutts and mutts tend to be the cutest dogs 'cause of the strange parent combinations. Catholicism is a very destructive religion - not only does it make people feel obligated to bring more people into the world than they can handle and afford but it makes 'em do it to their pets too and if there's one thing I can't stand it's someone who messes up an animal. My pets are fine. They are shedding quite a bit but they don't seem to be suffering from the weather. James is taking a medicine to prevent heart worms. Cats don't get heart worms. That is a bad condition carried by some mosquitos. It isn't as prevalent as I had feared it was so James'll be okay! Hookworms are another buggy here. I forgot to ask how that is spread but those are curable worms so im not as worried about them as I am about heart worms. There are lottsa lizzards here. They're all kinda cute though I don't recognize what kind they are. My cats are fascinated by 'em. They (lizzards) like to stick to the screen during the heat of the day and Toto & Spooky just watch 'em. I think if one was in the house that they'd just watch it or run and hide.



James doesn't mind 'em either which is a relief. IF I had to pick up dead lizzards every time he went outside he'd have to learn how to use the toilet and have to do push ups for exercise!! We have a pretty nice place - lotta good hiding spots for Tot + Spook and no rug so James has a cool floor to lay on. Marly is close too so that's good!! Haven't decided yet where I want to work. There are several places that look good and don't require Spanish so will make up my mind when the time comes. My savings can't last forever so will make up my mind pretty quick! There's a nice big yard here for James. There's even a little metal storage shed! People before left sacks of leaves + stuff in it though and I was gonna clean it out yesterday but a little mouse ran when I opened the door. I'm not afraid of mice but I don't want to work around 'em so I'll hire a gardener to get that cleared out and get the yard shaped up then I'll maintain it. Boy dad you should see some of the trees + bushes here. Gorgeous. I've seen some Tj plants that would make your molars grow back! I want to send you guys some cuttings or seeds. Is there anything in particular that you want? Tropical plants are so pretty!! There are three gorgeous bushes outside this house. You have 2 of 'em there but the third is something I've never seen. Has bright yellow trumpet shaped flowers. I'm gonna name some of my lizzards. I guess they're pretty territorial 'cause they always go to the same spot. I'm so glad ya taught me not to be afraid of lizzards. This would really be a nightmare if they gave me the creeps. Marly doesn't like 'em. There's lotta dragon flies and he doesn't like them either. He doesn't like it here but for a year it will be interesting for all of us. I found out why Amc is so willing to do anything. Infomag was getting all the business. Amc has been running on mediocre people because of mediocre pay. Amc Doleta is gonna be sending all the flying head programs to Amc Caribe because Puerto Rico gives all sorts of things to companies that bring jobs here. Like, ya don't have to pay taxes on anything for 20 years! This (along with other breaks) more than makes up for any taxes that the states may levy on imported goods. Amc Doleta is gonna become almost strictly proto type and Caribe will handle established orders. They will be sending 3330's and Winchester's. Those are the programs that I raised from infancy there. They will pay me good money to get them rolling here. I may do it but I would prefer working as a waitress or something in the Condado-



P.R.'s

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which is Hawaii's version of Waikiki. I won't work days and AMC has only that shift. Once they start expanding and filling other shifts I'll consider but until then I'll work with Joe Public. Spanish is nice but not required in the Condado. Thank heavens!! I'm getting brown! Haven't been real stupid by trying to do it in a day (plus it rained two days) so I may not feel like a banana. The trip here was something. I gave James tranquilizers but they wore off by the time we got to Kennedy. We had to transfer him from United to Eastern and he was so happy to see us that parking was not sweet sorrow. I had given him more tranquilizers there but before they took effect he literally chewed his way out of the kennel and got loose where they handle the baggage in the basement. They paged me and I thought I'd die 'cause I knew something was wrong with my pets. By the time I got to the basement he was lashed but they didn't want to try to put him in the new kennel (free by the way!) They just loved him 'cause he was so sweet. Everyone was so nice and helpful. If I didn't know James I wouldn't want to try to catch him! They teletyped San Juan to let 'em know that a dog may be loose in the cargo. They let us move up to first class upon descent so we could be the first off the plane and before they opened the hold they took Marty out there so James would find who he wanted right away instead of having to roam the runway looking. It turned out that the trans's were still working and he was safe in his kennel. That James nearly gave me a heart attack!! But we're all here and safe and happy so what else is there?? Gotta go now. It's late & I am sleepy. See ya!

Love,

Karen

P.S. I meant to mail the other letter in Oregon but forgot. Sorry! Didn't mean to neglect you so long! (over)



Toto has an ear infection and I put her medicine in her ears today. She gets real sulky after I do it so she went under the kitchen cupboards to make me feel worse. I was putting away her stuff after fixing her ears and she was sulking under the cupboards. Suddenly Spooky came running down the hall full bore and I heard tiny toenails 'cause this floor is bare. I thought "oh craps - a lizard got in the house." Then James got in the picture and they cornered ~~him~~ ~~in the~~ behind a corner table. I started rounding up the pets to put them in the bedroom 'cause I didn't want to pick up lizard pieces. Toto decided to quit sulking when she saw all the commotion and I grabbed her as she started to whizz by. By this time Spooky & James had flushed it out of the corner and it turned out to be a mouse!! Yuck! I couldn't bring myself to escorting a mouse out of the house so I put Toto down and walked outside. The last thing I saw was 4 animals about to collide. I'm sure the mouse escaped due to the non-hunting abilities of my truly domesticated animals. I waited for a neighbor to come home to check the house for blood & parts before I came in and there was nothing there! I don't know if it's good that the mouse escaped but I know it's good that he wasn't toyed with. This really isn't an awful place there's just let's a natural things goin' on. Natural aint always nice. (cont)

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Things are very expensive here. Cigarettes as 6<sup>95</sup>! (5)  
Put that in your pipe & smoke it! The only  
things that are more reasonable are Puerto Rican  
Rum & piñas (pineapples). The people here are very  
nice. I thought it'd been into some anti-American  
sentiment but none so far. Don't know why I  
expect people to hate me every time I move to  
a different area. Communication is difficult  
but with their little bit of English and my  
little bit of Spanish coupled with a lot  
of manual communications I get by.  
It's kinda fun actually. Should close  
this mess for now and get it in the  
mail so you don't think I died in transit.

Love,  
Al

Avenida Milagros Cabezas #B-11  
Carolina Alta  
Carolina, Puerto Rico 00630

Carolina is to San Juan what Loma  
is to Santa Barbara.



Dec. 5/88

①

Hello there and many happy returns! Shame on me for letting so many letters pile up before I respond. I'll answer all the letters before adding new stuff. Puerto Rico "Waikiki" is about 10 Kms from here. Night jobs are definitely out of the question except for hookers, pimps, and thieves. Since I don't fall into any of these categories a night job is out. My cats finally caught a mouse. They ate from the waist down and left the waist up as a wake up surprise for me. There is nothing worse than having a head of a mouse and two proud cats to contend with first thing in the morning. Two lizards have gotten in but I found em in time to let em out while they still had all their limbs. James didn't chew out of his cage in 4 hours. It didn't even take him 1/2 an hour. We gave him to the porter at 9:30 and before 10:00 I got that scary page. I'm seriously considering taking a boat back why not since AMC is paying so I don't have to traumatize my pets like that. Again I'm also considering your advice to let him dog-paddle to Florida & drive from there!! AMC doesn't pay well at all here. One lady has been here 4 years and she just got a 15¢ raise that put her at 2.72 per hour. No wonder all American companies send their plants over seas. They have everyone over a barrel here since jobs are hard to find. People don't rebel 'cause a pittance is a pittance. It really blows my mind. I believe that 50% of the people are still on welfare. When I go shopping about everyone I have seen pay with food stamps. It sort of makes me sick to my stomach to see their carts filled with cornish game hens & pineapple upside down cake mixes. It seems to me that in order to eat well one must be poor. And these same people that pay with food stamps invariably have really nice clothes. Generally speaking, Puerto Ricans are very appearance conscious and won't go out of the house unless they look smashing. Puerto Rico truly is precariously balanced on the economic tight rope. Good to hear it only takes 3 days for letters to travel. I don't feel so out of touch with you. Dad's greenhouse sounds like P.R. only here you can't walk out the door for relief. The weather seems more oppressive here than in Hawaii. That's probably because in Hawaii I was on the beach and here in not. So nice you people got a power mower!!! Know it makes that chore easier for both of ya! Don't feel guilty about my having used a push mower. Powers kind of scare me so I prefer push. Mark's mom has been in touch with him. She was kind of concerned about her Roseburg property but felt better when she heard Louise Evans Realty was overseeing it. She's gonna go up there (over)

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in a while to visit it. The company phone privileges have been sharply curtailed. It used to be anyone could call anyone but a couple of big bills later they're allowing only plant to plant calls. And even then the callee must get permission. There is an English newspaper called the San Juan Star but not many of them find their way out here to Carolina. Most everything is in Spanish - messages from utilities, flyers from Sears, even salesmen are Spanish. It is a good way to learn the language though so I'm not complaining! My household supplies finally arrived - 5 weeks after mailing them. They came by boat. It really torqued me off because so much of the stuff was broken. The crock pot + juicer I sent in the original packing. The crock pot was in a million pieces, even the metal was dented. The juicer was okay except the collection cup was cracked. Of 4 plates 2 were okay, 4 bowls 2 were okay, 3 cups one was okay. Mailey had packed the stuff up for me 'cause I didn't know when it was so he filled out all the claims. I was so mad. All the packages had FRAG/US written on 'em and yet as near as I can figure they threw 'em in the hold of the ship and when they heard a "thud" they'd throw something else in. I'm gonna get every penny I paid BACK 'cause I didn't pay \$50. And wait 5 weeks to have them deliver that crap to me. My pans made it okay and so did the silverware. Those are about the only things they couldn't do didn't damage. I have found a store with pretty low prices. It's called Bargaintown and it looks like Two Deys and has service like Build's Emporium. It's about as cheap as ya can get here. The only awful thing about it is that carts get ripped off so to keep that from happening they have made it so ya can't take the cart any further than right outside the front of the store. If ya have more sacks than ya can handle you have to keep an eye on the cart (or try to) to make sure someone doesn't run off with what ya couldn't carry. It is a nuisance if ya don't have a friend to stand guard over your remaining parcels. There's a legless man there who sits in his wheel chair every day all day begging. He's pleasant enough - he just says "Buenos Naches" and if ya give him something he thanks you. You could bet money that he will be there no matter ~~what~~ what time or day it is. There's also 3 regular dogs looking for a hand out.



Thanks for the pictures! You sure did a lot of renovating on my cat house. Didn't realize you were gonna forget glass parts of the walls too! That must have been some project! Glad ya had Mike to help ya. The dogs didn't look good in those pictures but I looked so thin so was glad to get them! The dogs hadn't been very co-operative with the hats at all so I guess I should have expected them to look disinterested and pestered. I haven't had a cookie since I got here. Didn't bring any cookie sheets or cake pans 'cause I figured with the heat I wouldn't want to do more cooking than necessary. Reading about cookies is better than eating 'em. I've gained weight since I quit venturing. Seems like just yesterday Chuck joined UCSB. I'm sure to mom it seems like only a decade ago that he joined. There is TV here but to get English ya have to get cable. It's only \$7 a month but add to that the price of a TV and the total is out of my range. It doesn't bother me not having one anyway so it's ok.

Ponce is on the other side of the island.

We passed through it on our trip around the island. The dotted line shows our trip kind of. It took 5 hours. It wouldn't have taken that long but the roads were narrow and mountainous for about 1/4 of the journey.



That shows how small the island is. How long will ya have to wait before you can get towing service again? It's funny that people that need use it the most get it withdrawn because of their need. Ya're trip sounds super. Surprised me that it was hot there - I always figured it to be cold. I wouldn't like staying at a European hotel. I like my bathroom close & clean! That pension is a good idea. I ought to do that here - I certainly have enough room. I'm glad you had a good time. I thought your roses would get there before you left. One of your letters said you were leaving Sunday & another said Tuesday so I banked on Tuesday. I was wrong huh? No, the man didn't do the yardwork but the landlord gave me a mower & will deduct any garden necessities from the rent. It's almost all picked up now & really quite nice. It was badly overgrown and difficult to do the first time but maintenance will be a breeze. The yard isn't level at all and the wheels get stuck all the time plus behind the back yard is a rubber tree and the roots are stretched all over that yard & makes it difficult. But the yards aren't as big as yours so that's a consolation. Each yard is about 1/2 the size of yours. Plenty shady for James & enough  
(over)

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sun for me! I'm used to all the lizards now and have discovered that there's also a lot of frogs. In one day I saw both the smallest and the largest frog that I've ever seen. One was about 1/2" long and the other was the size of this paper folded in half. The small one was so cute I held him and looked at him real close. The big one looked mean & nasty and he probably had teeth as big as James so I just stood away & looked at him. I'm kind of working for AMC at home. It works out really well 'cause I don't want to work in a plant again but I probably will once they bring my programs down and they'll pay me decent. This job works out perfect 'cause I can sit in the sun & work. I'm dispositioning old parts to see if they fit into any current specifications. I'm making enough to send me and it's a good way to make money while getting tan. The car hasn't been vandalized. There is moisture in the gas tank from the trip over and it's been acting very strangely so will get it siphoned when I get near empty. Had to replace the gas & air filters 'cause they were filthy. It's been back firing and drives jerky in 3<sup>rd</sup> gear. At first I thought it didn't want the other cars to think it was a foreigner so it acted as old & decrepit as the other cars around it. As it turns out it wasn't status conscious it just doesn't like to drink water. The car made it in fine shape other than that - not a scratch on it. I should have sent my bleedin' household goods in the container! I almost quit smoking. Next time I'll do better. Marty doesn't work nearly as much as he did in Naha. He works maybe 50 a week. In Naha he rarely worked less than 70. They already are trying to get him to stay longer than a year. After 9 months they're gonna give him a 20% increase. That's total 50% for moving here. Not bad for a 24 (almost 25) year old kid!!! I'm not quite fully brown yet. May is the rainy month and it certainly deserves that title! Once Juno rolls around I will be black. I haven't heard of "Lake Beach". In fact I haven't heard of any English-named beaches. The best shell hunting beaches are Juguillo and Loiza. The closest and homiest beach is Isla Verde. They're the only ones I go to. They're all clean sand & nice water beaches. Plus there's enough people to feel safe and not so many that ya feel cramped. These beaches aren't as nice as Hawaii's.



The water is as warm but not as clear and there's more kelp. There's not much coral but these 3 beaches have gotten really rough sandstone reefs & general obstacles. This stone hurts even my tough old feet. I would never trust my life on a raft here. In fact, I don't go in the water much deeper than my waist cause I think I feel an under tow and I don't care to be dragged out to sea. It's not a strong current and there aren't the gigantic waves like Hawaii but I prefer to be safe than drowned. I can't imagine anything on this island being "neat and clean". Everywhere you can put your eyes you can see litter. People have no pride in their landscape & countryside. It's sad 'cause any tropical place could be gorgeous with the lush growth but if you have to look past trash & decayed bodies of cars it loses a lot of its beauty. I will never adjust to the plight of these strays. I have never seen such an awful mass of dying animals. The tropics are not kind to strays. Mange, sunburn, disease, and malnutrition afflicts many many of the animals here and I will never get used to it. It hurts me a lot to see walking skeletons. I want to take them all home with me and get 'em all fixed up but where would they go after that - back on the streets? And where would I put 200 dogs? I really want to try to do something but it seems so futile. I would like to drum up funds so at least the worst could be put to sleep and the others could be neutered so they don't keep making more of the same. Nope, I could live here 100 years and not adjust to the plight of these animals. And I gotta do something, feeling sorry won't good enough. My animals are doing swell. James loves to sit on the front porch (it's all quilted in) and watch the world go by. It's shady & windy all day. Toto & Spooky like to watch the lizards on the outside of the screen. Toto's new hobby is to climb up the screens to get the lizards at the top. I don't wish to deprive her of fun but to replace screens here would cost at least \$60. probably more so I whack her when I catch her doing it. All the screens have tell tale signs of her new past time. I brush & comb the pets everyday 'cause they're shedding like crazy. I figure in 2 weeks they'll be bald and I won't have to worry. James likes Oregon better but Toto & Spook like Lizardland best. Johnnie & more sure have been in S.B. a lot huh? I'm glad the VW is fixed. When you're that mobile it helps to have wheels. He's 26 now huh? It's good he's working. It will help in their move to North Bay. That has to be better than A. Glad to hear Ludwig & dad made it through mom's absence!

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That pretty much brings ya up to date. A water main broke and all of Carolina was without water all day. Now the water is so murky. It's only good for flushing the toilet & showering. At purest it's good for drinking or brushing teeth. It has dirt in it. A small glass of it looks dark brown and after it sits it's  $1/4$  mud and  $3/4$  agua. I'm glad it's on now as they thought it wouldn't be fixed til sometime tomorrow. After sweating all day it is necessary to shower. And they say mud baths are healthy! My Spanish is progressing slowly. I don't learn languages easily. All my neighbors are so nice and help as much as they can. This is a good neighborhood. It is noisy but, along with litter, is the problem of noise pollution. Horns are used a lot here and people spend lotta money to get a "nice" horn. One horn plays about 6 or 7 different notes. Most horns can manage only 3 notes. Blowing your horn is not considered rude here 'cause you too! For everything not just to tell someone to hurry up or watch out. I'm getting used to the driving though I still think it's insane. I had a little teensy weensy accident. It was in the rented car and I didn't know how its brakes responded on wet pavement. My estimate was off a smidgeon and I kinda nudged someone who was stopped at a red light. There were 3 high school boys and the driver got out to survey the damage. Neither car had any little thing wrong so he okay'd me to go. I had frozen in the drivers seat, there was no color in my face, and my jaw was open so far my chin was in my lap. When he saw my expression he laughed and said "It's okay, really!! It's okay!!" We had to drive side by side for awhile 'cause of the heavy traffic and he honked when he pulled off towards the airport. All but one person that I've dealt with has been super nice. I was so glad they hadn't yelled at me. In spite of all of R.R.'s faults it has an awful lot of nice people. I suppose that's all the new news. Dad, for your birthday I'd like to get some plants for you. Do that okay or are you all planted out? They do ship plants to the States from here. I don't know what kinds you have or would want so if you aren't all planted out send a list of what you would want. I'm sure any plant in Hawaii would be here also. Would one of you call Dr. Wright and find out if I can get my retainer removed and if so is there a good orthodontist in San Juan? I'm afraid if I don't get this off soon my teeth'll rot. Thank you for that & all the nice letters. Love to ya all  
Tomallo



Hi!

If you look real close you can see cat foot prints on this letter. No one can say that I don't use fancy stationery & maybe I'll cover 'em all up with ink. Got your many letters today! I love to get letters! I'm glad that you researched the plant stuff. The guy at the "Flousteria" said as long as the plants were in great that all was AOK. But the next time a person goes back to the States I'll send some with him. That oughta be OK. A man named Mike is going back to S.B. towards the end of June so he can be the carrier. I'm sure I'll be happy to do it. Plants are so cheap it's a shame not to take advantage. Bromeliads (very nice ones) are 3 bucks, pineapple plants with tiny pineapples are 4 bucks, and I gotta great big plant for me and I don't know what it is 'cause I forgot to ask but it was only 20 bucks. And I got two other just green ones that I forgot to ask what they are but they look like upside down feather dusters and they were only 1.50! I bought 5 plants while looking for plants for you DAD. You're a very bad influence even though you're 4,000 miles away. My bromeliad has an orange center and my pineapple is about 7 or 8" from the bottom of the fruit to the top of the top. Can be an addicting hobby huh? And I didn't even put w/ahy like plants! All check with the Agriculture Dept at the airport to make sure Mike can bring 'em to ya! Mom you mailed Frannies letter with dad's letter. You are cracking up! Steter is an unusual circumstance. The plant manager here pays his own rent etc. The only thing he gets is a company car. The difference is when you signed up to do what where. Steter signed up before the company started cinching it's money belt so as long as he stays in Korea they will have to meet the terms of the contracts that they drew up. At the same time that Dick went to Korea they sent a man named George Stockton to Portugal. George also has living like a King but as soon as he got fed up with Portugal and wanted to transfer back to Lolita they said "Nope" and canned him. I'm willing to bet that the same holds true for Dick - as long as he's willing to stay in Korea filling a figurehead (only) position he can stay on but once he gets tired of it he won't have a job with ANIC. Dick is very much solely a figurehead. There are four U.S. transplants working at ANIC Mike who is QC manager, Rick plant manager, Mauty Production Supervisor, and me resident dummy. Oh yeah, there's a lady from there working in accounting but she's such a dreadful complainer that everyone always forgets to mention her. Her name is Jean Peterson and she smiles upside down - really!



All she ever ever does is nag & complain so no one  
cares to spend any time with her. So there are 5  
and the plant employs 100 people. They are gonna  
be expanding once they get "my" programs over  
here. James is on dry food. The a 30 lb. bag is  
3.25. Kat litter is 1.34 for 10 lbs!! Back home it  
was that much for 25 lbs. James gets one can of  
food a day and all the kibble & cookies he wants.  
He went on a hunger strike for awhile 'cause he  
didn't like his heartworm prevention medicine  
and he got pretty skinny but he's getting better  
now. It won't cost a mint to replace the crock  
pot because there are no slow cookers here yet.  
Fine huh? Yeah, I claimed the full price. Pastor  
Hobby sure has it easy. I'm glad Robert got a  
job but - good heavens - what's ol' Hobby gonna  
do with his time now? He never could find some  
thing to do before. Can't say I particularly like or  
respect that man. 21 hours of slides!!! That  
is a little much. I don't know how anyone could  
find that many things to take pictures of! That's  
nice that Jenny's coming. Nice company for Manny!  
How old is Jen now? The spray would help  
Judwig and the blue raid would help your house  
and his chair. That's nice you're getting outside  
dad! You must be brown now huh? That's a  
good idea to have someone send stuff with Amc  
shipments. Al Hopkins would do it I'm sure. In  
five ports cigarettes are 2.50/carton. Do you want  
me to pick up a bench and send em to you  
sometime? I'm goldo? For that cheap I'm sure  
shipping couldn't ~~be~~ make the total cost more than 3.00.  
Have I told ya how the trash pickup can be anywhere  
from 2 to 12 days between pick ups? I had a 12  
day spread and it was a real killer. Ya have  
to leave your bags out or ya may get stuck with  
it and the dogs were raiding it every night so  
I thought I'd get foxy and leave food out by  
the bags so they'd get full before they had to  
rip the bags. It worked swell for a couple nights  
but word got out and one night when the  
second batch of dogs came by there was no food  
left so they ripped my bags anyway. I get  
tired of gathering my trash every morning. They  
got a little behind schedule last week and ended  
up coming by 5 o'clock Saturday morning. I  
thought I'd die 'cause it isn't a quiet operation.  
I'm not gonna leave food out anymore 'cause the  
more ya leave the more they eat. What else is  
new?



There's a coin shop that we been trying to go to get Kathy's birthday present (im really behind schedule this year) but everytime we gone they've been closed - like 4 times. It's in the heart of the tourist area so I can't imagine why they'd be closed so much, they don't even post their hours! Marty's decided it's a front for the Mafia and they spend all their time in back bookmaking on the cock fights. Nah, it's just lazy proprietors. I haven't seen any other coin shops and everytime im near a phone book I forget to look. Jot & Spook's latest hobby, in addition to screen climbing, is plant eating. No wonder I never could keep a plant alive. Spooky was surprised when she ate the first bite of my pineapple plant 'cause the funds have sticklers and it bit back! But it hasn't kept her from snacking on the bromeliad. I can't get upset at 'em 'cause I knew when I got 'em that the cats would be tempted to nibble. I'm a foster parent to a little doggie. He was one of the 3 that I cried 'cause of his miserable condition. The plant manager is paying for his vet bills and im just feeding him and letting him stay here. Vets are cheap - only 32 bucks for 2 office visits, 4 shots, 2 bottles of oil for his skin, a bottle of shampoo for mange, and a whole lot of mange pills. He weighs about 15 lbs, and is as sweet as can be. He was a real mess but he's a lot better now. Marty named him "Dumpy" but when he gets real handsome in a couple months he's gonna need a more dignified, refined name so he'll become KING Dumpy. Jot's amazed at the change in his life style and is very appreciative. The vet said he's a genuine Puerto Rican Terrier which is the same as being a distant cousin to a "who-done-it!" When he gets better ill send you pictures of him so you can see if there's anyone around there who would want him. He's 1 to 1 1/2 years old. He can't be brought to the states unless he's disease-free so whoever gets him will have a sweet, healthy, handsome boy. He hasn't been introduced to my pets but Jot & Spook ~~both~~ have seen him and think he's an ugly cat. James doesn't mind having him around. It will be a couple months before his fur grows back but if ya hear someone say that they want a little dog tell 'em if they wait a while you know where you can get a Genuine Puerto Rican Terrier. Rick will pay for his shipping.

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That's all my new acquisitions. I HATE my 'frig.  
I have to defrost every 2 weeks. Major appliances  
are so expensive that they're used until the  
house burns down and the house is made  
99% out of cement so ya know what I mean?  
House fires here are almost unheard of. The  
only wood thing is the door jambs and this  
place has termites there! I can see why  
wood is used so sparingly. Dad I wouldn't  
want to try to talk you into coming here cause  
it's no Hawaii but Mom I'll tell you what I  
told Kathy. How often will you have to charter  
to come to Puno Rico and waste only your  
time and money to get here instead of wasting  
your time, money to get here, money for food &  
lodging & around island travel? You may  
hate it but it would be cheap. We see  
enough so I can entertain you for a week  
or so. Do ya wanna come? September &  
October are supposed to be very hot so ya  
gotta try to make it some other month!  
But whenever is fine. Again, this is no tropical  
paradise but it would be "interesting". Let  
me know huh? Also, please call Dr. Wright  
and find out when I can get this bleedin'  
retainer off before my teeth rot out of my  
mouth. Keep them cards & letters rolling in!

P.S. Mike had his  
rent-a-car  
stolen and the  
second day he  
re-ordered some-  
one with the  
replacement  
vehicle. AMC  
pays!! Kurtz  
hates to hear  
the words  
"Mike Ruddy"  
and AMC.

Love!

Karen  
Dempy  
Jones  
Toto  
Spooky  
Marty  
Etc.  
Etc.



P.O. 6-28-76

Hi ya'll

There isn't much to say so this will probably be a scrawny letter. Decided your eyes needed a break anyway so works best all the way around! My pool plants are already knocking on death's door. Three starting shriveling up not a week after I got 'em. The bromeliad was shriveling up 'cause Spooky was pruning it. She started pruning only one side but she's evened it up now. It's height is about 4" less than when I got it and the tips have that gnawed at look. The rubedendron (for lack of a better name) started turning yellow and dropping its leaves. I think it's 'cause I wasn't watering it enough since it was in the living room and I didn't like the way the water mud leaked out the holes in the bottom of the can so I didn't water it enough. I moved it to the front porch (it's shady all day except from 8 to 9 o'clock in the morning) and water it every morning and evening and it may pull through. The pineapple leaves are yellowed and droopy but the fruit seems to be doing okay. It's added a nub all the way around. The feather dusters are doing fine so far though they aren't growing much. IF they die I can just spray paint 'em green 'cause they're the kind that retain shape for months. Once these die I probably won't get more plants because even though plants are cheap here if ya gotta replace 'em every other month it would be an outrageous luxury. Mike would've been "smuggling" the plants in. The department of agriculture checks and fumigates lab plants at the gate before boarding. If the plant survives the physical and fumigation they let it go! But that is a hassle so have settled on a different method. That's real nice getting the "Parade" gossip section! That was the first place I headed on Sunday mornings papers. You have been married for 30 years?!?! I thought I did good lasting through 2 years! I should have been home or called you for that one since it's a biggie. Due to present circumstances you'll just have to settle for a "Happy Anniversary" live from Puerto Rico. I have had this retainer for over a year I think and it's so difficult to floss and brush with it that I'm really afraid my teeth are gonna rot off the face of this earth. I still wear my rubber thing every night. It got badly stained but a soaking in vinegar fixed that. I'd rather wear only the rubber piece. Dr. Wright did a blooming business with the Shavers.

42,381 .50 SHEETS 5 SQUARE  
42,382 100 SHEETS 5 SQUARE  
42,383 200 SHEETS 5 SQUARE  
42,384 400 SHEETS 5 SQUARE  
MADE IN U.S.A.





As for Dumpy, Rick pays the doctor bills and I buy food and scoop poop. All keep Dumpy if no one else wants him. Rick lives in a Condo with no yard plus his gone an awful lot and wouldn't be a proper daddy. I'm gonna be taking pictures of some dogs here and send 'em to you & Kathy to see if you can find homes for 'em there. People at work will chip in for certificates of health and shipping. I'll also send a brief personal description of each dog. They're all genuine Puerto Rican Terriers though their appearance may vary a lot. First, though, I have to borrow a camera. The dogs are so sweet and inseparable from someone who is good to 'em so whoever gets 'em can be guaranteed of getting a loving and appreciative pet. Dumpy has fitted right in though he barks quite a lot. He tries so hard to please so when I holler at him he'll usually clam up. He has strength to play a lot now and usually when I look out he's wrestling with his blanket. Sometimes he gets so knotted up he can barely get out by himself. He gets bathed once a week with some smelly green shampoo and he hates it but he usually behaves since bathing him seems to give me so much pleasure. He gets greased every day. James has an ear infection that I'm working on. Poor Booboo. Joto & Spooky are swell. So keep an ear out for people wishing they had a nice dog 'cause we got lotta nice dogs in Puerto Rico! Ojai huh? I don't think we ever seen that. What's it like? What's the population? That's nice ya gotta new TV! Now no one will have to imagine the colors. And Sony is supposed to be one of the best brands. Neat-o! That's good Dranny had company for that time. So Jerry fat? I hope Dranny's arm is okay. Sounds like everything is going swell there. Like as soon as I left everything perked up. Well, I LIKE THAT!!! I appreciated the article that you sent me on the riots in Puerto Rico over Joro's visit but you can rest assured it was a tad over-dramatized. In the first place the Socialists have had their grand pow-wow scheduled for months to be June 27th. That is spray painted all over everything. That will take care of one of the two days will be here. The closest the demonstrators can get to the motel is 3/4 of a mile and they discourage fast knowing that the object of their hostility can't hear 'em.



They picketed 2 years ago when Kissinger & Rockefeller stayed at the Dorado and passions fizzled out in a couple of hours. The Independence & Socialist are having squabbles so the worst that can happen is they'll shoot each other while picketing the same people and as far as I can see that would be no great loss. Nah, the only trouble Ford will have will be eating toaststones & fried bananas. The people are pretty much political passionate since there is a lot of discontentment with the present living standards. There is a 90% voter turn-out and voting here is a hassle so that ain't bad - at least people feel they can change and rearrange with a vote and not violence. That is good! There are some fairly scary things like the man that the Socialists are backing, Juan Mari Bras, has very strong ~~close~~ ties with Castro. For this reason the neutral people are voting for someone else so at least they don't get a pink-p for a shepard. It doesn't look good though because of the poverty, the 18 year old vote, and where the rest of the world is heading I wouldn't be a bit surprised if P.R. doesn't go communist in 10 years. I have decided 18 year olds haven't lived long enough to know what they want. I'm 23 and wouldn't vote for Carter 'cause of his silly grin and how dumb is that? I'm not capable of voting so how can someone 5 years my junior be capable? The largest party is Peoples Democratic Party and they want statehood. The next largest is Peoples Independence Party and they want to remain a commonwealth. Next is Peoples Socialist Party and only heaven knows what they want. There are a couple of new parties too with pink over tones. I read in the paper (I bought one!) about how other countries are doing and it sure looks grim. I should have not bought a paper and remained blissful in my ignorance and the same paper it said 50% are on food stamps in P.R. That is \$155 million a year for food stamps alone. They are cutting back highway expenditures from 15 to 12 million which is just as well 'cause I can't see any road maintenance worth that much. The roads are INCREDIBLY bumpy & unkempt. That's U.S. tax dollars. It wouldn't bug me if I saw efforts on the part of the people to improve their own lot but poor people go to a tavern for their booze, middle class buy it at a store and take it home 'cause it's cheaper and rich people import it. And the poor people are the ones we buy food & clothes for?! I say "Let em



import it!" A little bit of levity never hurt a serious discussion. There are political car rallies with horns blowing, banners flying, and people yelling. I wonder if anyone really thinks and invest gates the politician that they back but I wonder about that more here 'cause there is so much in the balance. Anyhoo, there will be no bloodshed over Ford's visit just a little bit of indignation. Other than that everything is normal - work is fine - Marly is fine - and only 10 months to go! When are you coming Ma or have you used up all your vacation days and forgotten your bouncing baby girl?

Love,  
All of us here

P.S. Kathy hasn't written and I've written her probably 5 letters. Is she alive somewhere? Is she mad at me? Have you heard from her? Is she sick? Did she break her arm or develop ~~some~~ amnesia? I hope she broke her arm otherwise I'll have to be mad at her.

I guess there is more to say. The weather has been positively horrid over the past month. If there's been a week of nice weather I'd be surprised. Clouds blow in and once they get here all winds stop and rain starts. Between 80 to 85° temperature, at least 100% humidity, and no wind it can be quite icky. One person said May was the rainy month, and then said June. I'd tend to side with June's side 'cause May was quite nice comparatively speaking. AMC Toledo is experiencing some difficulty. The program that I was on last, Winchests, was gonna be AMC's big money maker and the other programs were gonna be phased out but Infomag put a damper on that. Infomag reported to the Customers some of AMC's sloppy ways like how Memorex gets the best carriages and Sax gets the others unless they're a complete wipe-out. They reported all the machine errors and inadequacies. Infomag just inherited AMC's vice-president who



had tired of AMC and he told them a bunch of  
stuff. Consequently, AMC's orders have dropped from  
500<sup>+</sup> to 150 and is considering exiting Anymag.  
Considering there's a minimum of \$105,000 lost per  
week id say AMC would be outta line if they  
socked it to em. Anymag doesn't even strictly  
by the book either! I can't believe it, a \$105,000  
loss on one program alone. It's raining again  
and the sky is as black as night. There's  
thunder storms but I have yet to see lightning.  
The thunder sounds much more threatening  
here than anywhere else! This thunder doesn't  
scare my pets though 'cause it's a long low  
growl not a sharp boom. It's a day later and  
finally we had a nice day. There was scattered  
clouds but no rain and enough wind to make it quite  
comfortable. I got some ear medicine for James & the  
cats (the cats only need prevention but James has ear  
mites bad). It only takes a week for mites to clog up an  
ear. James is such a good boy - ya really have to dig  
to get all the mite residue out and he was very  
patient. I didn't take him to the vet 'cause they ALL  
use muzzles but we seen mites before and know I  
made the right diagnosis. Next time ya go to or talk  
to the vet please ask him how much MITOX is.  
It's 3<sup>00</sup> for a little plastic bottle here and was wondering  
what the difference is. Potato salad - boy does that  
sound good. You should make sure Johnnie returns the  
hide-a-bed if he doesn't stay put 'cause that's a  
good bed and expensive to replace nowadays. Denny  
as mentioned before is doing swell. His feet are still  
pretty bad and he chews 'em a lot but his fur is  
almost all grown back and his nose isn't falling off  
anymore. There's a bathroom off the master bedroom  
where I put Denny when James and I play ball.  
Three nights ago I showed Denny the other doggie  
in the bathroom mirror and ever since then when I  
put him in there he checks the bathroom out for  
the other doggie first thing! He goes in with  
his tail between his legs and once he's certified  
that the coast is clear he comes out wagging!  
He is so sweet but not a very good house dog. With  
discipline he'd be a good house dog but I hate to  
scold him 'cause it really hurts his feelings. So  
he's outside mostly and happy as can be! I don't  
know what more I can do for his feet. Anyhow  
all the pets (all four of 'em) are fine or getting  
better. I spend a lotta time sweeping poop these  
days. There is a gorgeous dog at work. He's kinda  
medium length hair and white with rust colored



patches. His only noticeable ailment is that he has been hit by a car and limps slightly on his rear right leg. He's gorgeous and so good-natured. We gotta find a home for that dog folks. Every time I go to the vets I practice what I want and what it's for en español because the receptionist doesn't speak English and I'd rather not talk to the doctor about my other pets 'cause he may not approve of me diagnosing the illnesses. And 'cause when I took Dumpty in for his check up I passed out 'cause they were preparing a dog for an operation in front of me. It was in the next room but there was a big window in the wall and I saw 'em tie the puppy to the table (in a way they don't do in the States 'cause too many dogs jumped or fell off the table and hung themselves), give him the shot, saw the dog's tongue fall out like they do, saw them take blood out of the dog's arm, and then I passed out. It must happen often 'cause they had smelly stuff ready. The vet was very nice but I felt ridiculous anyway. Besides, I need to practice Spanish. I've progressed from a vocabulary of a 4 year old to a 6 year old. Neighborhood kids help me. They like me and bring flowers for me too! They don't speak English so in this way I'm learning pretty quickly but I still don't understand most of what they say. It is discouraging but it sure puts a fire under your tail to learn fast! Yours is the only home I'm getting letters from. Two others write periodically but not often enough to fill my box. I really like getting your letters - I don't feel completely disconnected from everything. That Kathy's a real turkey. The last letter I got from her was addressed to Oregon, 'cause I wasn't real good at writing to her when she was out of the hub of things so I probably deserve it. Anyhow, keep those cards & letters rolling in!

Love,  
Us

P.S. Here's a song for ya



H. ya! Rev. 9-21-76

Spouse it's time to get some letters written and these pictures returned. Why haven't you written, mom it's been two weeks. Are you mad at me? My friends, Rita & Pauline, left yesterday and the house just got back in order. They helped a lot around the house so it was mostly yardwork to catch up on. I didn't do anything except scoop poop for 3 weeks so it was a real jungle and I spent about 2 hours in it. My edge trimmer & rusty mower are a far cry from yer fine machine. But it's done and looks swell even though my hand is in a permanent cramped mode. My animals were healthy and happy when I returned. Found a home for Liza! A man named Andy Diddy from Coleta was here and he liked her and took her with him. They <sup>Andy's wife</sup> can't have a baby and since it takes time to get a kid from an adoption agency he figured Marilyn would need something to help fill the void in the meantime. Marilyn is really the domestic/housewifely/motherly type and I'm sure they'll be good to her. So I didn't feel so bad bringing coffee back. It was real nice having visitors! Rita & Pauline are such fun! I'm kinda tired out after two weeks of non-stop activities but I miss them more than the rest I lacked. We did a lot of things and they were glad they came.



Actually, the past 2 months have been very busy what with Patti, the Golela visit and the Molinas. It was good getting back there and the party was swell. I had a clogged toilet a few nights ago and I fixed it in a minute. I wish your drain problems were that easy. Fairly nice weather in the past couple weeks - two electrical storms but they were nice! How you had a good storm too! Heard 101 was closed. Glad it waited two weeks. Amie prospers, Marly is fine, and other than that there's not much to report. I wouldn't have visited Golela if I knew it meant no more letters. What's the good word?

Love,  
Al

P.S. How's ~~the~~ Alice doing? :



Thanksgiving Day +  
Day after Thanksgiving +  
November 30 (1)

~~Dear Dad y Mom,~~ Dear Dad y Mom,

What a lotta letters passing between us! Dad  
thank you for your letter. Yeah, I know what you mean  
about seeing shadows and things out of the corner of an  
eye. Sometimes I hear a dog that sounds like James. It's  
not that his memory will die but I never imagined there  
would be so MANY little things that would remind me 30  
times a day of him. He was a good friend and as Kathy  
said he wouldn't want us to hurt too much so im trying.  
It helps a lot when the loss is shared by many people.  
There's a thinner layer of pain when it's smeared over a  
wider area. Thanks again for your nice letter - it helped  
more than you know. The camera will take 6 weeks to get  
here if it wasn't sent special delivery. Marty's sister from  
San Fran sent a belt to him for his birthday. She  
sent it 3 weeks early 'cause they were moving and she  
wanted to be sure it didn't get lost in the shuffle.  
It arrived 3 weeks after his birthday. She was  
surprised too! Marty's usually prompt in his  
thank yous so she was worried that she hadn't heard  
from him. But at least the camera is on the way! I  
didn't relish the idea of buying another. I don't "feel  
strongly" that Bennett's having kept James for 3 days  
killed him, I know it. And he had the audacity  
to tell Marty 2 or 3 times a day that James was  
getting better. He HADN'T DIAGNOSED HIS PROBLEM.



He assumed it was a punctured larynx. Believe me, he deserves anything I'm able to do to him. You need not feel sorry for that man. Ludwig is so cute with his back yard jaunts. Such a big treat for the little man! Marty wants to know what kinda grades he got and how many units he's completed please. He thinks he did pretty horrible cause he was working full time and couldn't devote necessary study time so don't be surprised. Frank can retire in 2 years and clear \$1,800 per month off his real estate. He isn't concerned about losing his job. The brochure from sent on real estate would make Marty's duplex worth about \$75, or \$80, and Frank's paying him a poultry \$65. C'est la vie! Property value sure has gone up! North Abilene is sposed to be appreciating faster than most areas in the SB/L area according to Frank. That's you guys! I wrote to David and told him I would be delighted to see him & show him some of PR. It will be so nice to see him again. I love havin' visitors. A lady at work found a teeny Kitty in the middle of the road. The bottom lip was ripped so we took him to the vet and he stitched the lip in place. It's only the second time an operation of this sort took place and the vet had to go by the directions in an



article he had just read. The Kitty ("Feyo"-ugly) <sup>2</sup>  
will be stitched for 2 weeks and will eat baby food  
for that time. Another lady, Finochio, adopted Feyo.  
The Kitty will be okay. Took Flaky to the vet  
for shots & tests. She's fine except she has  
heartworms. They are in early stages so she'll be  
okay. Coffee had 'em 100 times worse than  
Flaky and he lived to tell about it. The  
mange parasites are all dead. They figure Flaky  
has 4 years and Dump is 5. Oldies huh?  
I tranquilized Flaky 'cause she is suspicious of  
other folks and I figured she'd cause all kinds of  
problems but she was very good. She didn't enjoy  
it but she did behave. There was a big round  
up of all the dogs at the plant last Wednesday.  
Three people said there is a farm in the  
country where they take the dogs to live. They  
said they don't kill the dogs there. I don't  
believe it though 'cause that place would have  
a zillion dogs by now since I'm sure they  
couldn't afford to neuter 'em. A lotta dogs that  
were taken were very nice. The round up is  
what I wanted 'cause as long as there are dogs  
on the streets they will produce more dogs. I  
just wish they would have taken them before  
I came to RR and met them. There are still dogs  
there but there are only 1/4 of what there used  
to be. Marty & I took food by today to feed



them 'cause they almost starve on a long  
week end and the dogs werent there. Another  
man was there and he said "they took  
em away!" No winnin' for loosin' hurb?  
Goffa go! That's all the new news.  
Maudy says "No!"

Looves

Maudy will be in SB sometime between 1st & 9th, so  
dont be surprised if he drops in. He wants to see  
Granny too. He may be rushed as I was there  
and may not be able to see you folks. I guess  
the reason I usually dont date letters is 'cause  
they are written rather piecemeal and can fill  
the whole top of the page with dates! Or  
had you noticed already??!! Will be good to  
get back to reliable utilities. Electricity has  
been on & off for the past week or so - mostly  
on of 'course, but off often enough to be a  
nuisance. Company gave away turkeys and Maudy  
was here for Thanksgiving. Cats had some turkey  
and turned out to be too rich for 'em so I  
spent the following 24 hours cleaning up  
thru up. That'll learn me! Guess that's  
'bout all. Hope your weather is better than  
here!



December 12 (1)

Hi Y'all!

Whatcha mean you wouldn't let me come home if ya knew I wouldn't write?! I have been negligent in my letters. Shame! Now that I'm thoroughly scolded I'll get on to the letter.

Actually, I haven't been writing 'cause most things that have happened sound pretty bad. I mean, it sounds like I'm complaining & miserable but that isn't the case - it's just a run of mal xente (bad luck). If you keep that in mind I'll write this letter otherwise throw it away now 'cause I'm not suffering and don't want ya to get that impression. The weather has been bad for 2 or 3 weeks. Lotta clouds, wind & rain.

Perfect conditions to make mosquitos prosper and multiply. I'm sort of under a state of siege at night 'cause if I step out they can drain me dry in a few minutes. I don't go out much at night anyways so that is really no problem. The 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> were perfect days so I was gonna do yardwork. I was scoopin' poop and saw a bee flopping around a pile.

First thought was "He's dieing anyway I should pick him up in the newspaper and squash him" but the bug lover said "He isn't dieing, he's just shaking the chill out of his wings 'cause it dipped to 75° last night!" The bug lover won so 15 minutes later when I was mowing in that area the little vermint stabbed me in the arch of my foot when



I stepped on him. I removed the stinger and went in the house and waited to kick the bucket. Since my stories have had sad endings lately I figured I'd have inherited dad's allergy. Half an hour later I was conscious and my foot looked like a foot so I went out and finished the yards. It was only painful when the stinger went in - otherwise it was just a nuisance. Then I caught a cold - here in the tropics?!! Then Flaky went into heat - just after she had been introduced to "the boys" and got to likin' having company to play with. Now none of the dogs are happy but im not gonna put em together at the present time - 6 puppies is not what I need. Mike Ruddy's girl friend, Liesel, moved down. She's been here 2 days and already has a puppy from the streets. Well, she doesn't have him - I do. Liesel is from Sweden and is a very meticulous housekeeper. I mean, she lets her animals on the sofa and stuff but "diseased" animals give her the willies. Little "Rusty" has mange & worms so im gonna doctor him for 2 or 3 weeks and when he's wonderful shell take him. If he looked a little less dirty and flea ridden when she met him she probably wouldn't have minded. Rusty had a flea bath and powder session first thing. His mange isn't bad - his ears and elbows are bad but other than that it's just small patches of mange.



He can't believe this paradise - a pillow to lay on, food and fresh water. He's a little shy - he kinda piddles when ya pick him up but already he likes people and doesn't piddle as frequently. He's about 8 weeks old, rust colored, and weighs about 11 lbs. He's so cute and im so glad Liesel thought so too. I had seen him yesterday at the plant and when Mike brought Liesel by today I casually mentioned this cute little pup. She wanted to go see him and 5 minutes later he was hers! She will be good to him - she loves dogs. Mike says her favorite thing is to window shop at the Nemane Society - it's just she can't touch a mangy dog. I s'pose lotta folks are that way - it's like Hillside House you can do it or ya can't. I'm so excited 'cause he is a gorgeous & sweet puppy. He'll be a small dog like about 30 lbs. I'm gonna take pictures of him tomorrow. Have 3 putty spiders on the clothes line. Remember the picture of the spider I took in Hawaii? Two of these look like him. They look like crabs with a bright yellow body and red spikes. I took color pictures - I hope they turn out. The other spider isn't as colorful but he has a neat body shape. I'm an incorrigible spider freak. I've been working more at ABC 'cause of the holiday comin' up. "Lady" is in heat and there are lotta dog fights. Remember "Lady" - she's the one in the picture where I was crouched down with my new short hair. Lady is Coffee's mom.



I think I told ya they hauled all the dogs at the plant away. I lied. I thought they had 'cause only lady of the old gang was there for about a week, slowly the other dogs have been reappearing and the whole gang is back. It isn't the same though 'cause lady's heat attracted a big red male and he's so mean. All the old gang has wounds from him. I was pettin' lady and he growled and snarled at me! He's afraid of people so he was bluffing but he is mean. Marty wants to kill him. We'll never do it but he'd like to. Used to be only lady, George, Smiley, Mangual and Sneaky by the plant and they are good friendly dogs. Mangual was run over in the parking lot and died - he was my favorite sato. So we only had 4 dogs with occasional strays that were also nice. Then ~~the~~ Big Red comes with 4 of 5 of his male followers. Big Red is the only mean one in the bunch, the others are shy, but he's completely changed the nice pattern of the old times. I can't explain the change but it's there. All my dogs are cowed. I don't wanna leave food 'cause B.R. would get it and don't wanna encourage him to stay. Maybe he'll disappear when lady is no longer in heat. I hope so! Dogs Dogs Dogs. I can't help it - I really like dogs though lotta times I wish I hated 'em so I wouldn't feel bad they were homeless, diseased & mutilated by cars or fights.



The camera came one month and 6 days after it was mailed. Swift service huh? I passed my guilt feelings about Olga. I can't feel guilty - she was in the hands of professionals and if that's the best they could do they shouldn't be allowed to practice! They wouldn't have listened to me anyway and would have answered questions to suit their "assumptions." I just feel bad still cause I knew all along they were doin' something wrong. Good health care huh? Christmas is a fun time of the year here. Little kids play & sing songs to raise holiday spirit and cash. Little neighbor kids came and sang a song called "Chevere". One kid played a bongo, one hollow sticks, one a ratchet sounding thing but my favorite was the kid who played the cheese grater with a spoon! Now cute!! In the tourist areas - Isla Verde, old San Juan & Santurce - if ya stop at a light or a sign kids go to your car and play hollow sticks. It can be a nuisance if it's your car but seein' 6 kids go up to 6 cars and singin' their hearts out is neat! Real cut trees have arrived. They are so dry and expensive that I'm gonna by pass a tree this year. There are no cranberries here anyway so would look pretty ugly! A tree for \$3 or \$4, there is \$10. or \$11. here. There are some Christmas lights up now. It surprised me to see any, really, on houses or outside trees 'cause of the expense but there are quite a few. It doesn't feel like Christmas. When the absolute coldest it



gets is 75° it's hard to imagine Santa & the North Pole  
etc. Mavis gonna be in SB sometime after the 1<sup>st</sup>  
of the year so he's bringin' you presents. ~~so~~ DON'T  
trust the mail especially this time of the year.  
Please excuse the delay but was the best idea I  
could come up with. Mom, did ya get hold of Ken  
& Dworken's folks? He used to work at AMC. Know  
it's awkward to say "I'm trying to get in touch  
with your son..." pero es muy importante.  
Granny this letter was for you too. Hope all's well  
and you're fine fine fine. I have received so many  
compliments on my ring. Thank you again!  
Dad, ya better have stopped your coughing by now.  
My pets are swell, Mavis swell, I'm swell  
and everything is wonderful! Mom you don't have  
to come here if you don't want. Have a nice  
holiday season!

Love,

Me & mine



January 8

Hi Ya!

Great day for mail! Gotta letter from mom, Kathy & Marty and a 3 lb. box of See's Candy from Manny. That's great I love it! Read you guys have had a lotta rain. Finally. Santa Barbara made it in the San Juan Star 'cause of your rain. Ojai got special mention 'cause they were the wettest. We haven't had much rain - afternoon clouds but no water. Past two days have been 90° but that doesn't help a tan when it's cloudy. Tans come and tans go so not much sense to sweat the load. Everyone is fine. Flaky spent 2 days in the hospital gettin' purged of heartworms. Heartworms are a pain - there should be some mosquito control goin' on. Dumpy had a tooth pulled and ears flushed. Everyone has ear mites so twice a week I gotta doctor their ears. The medicine is oil base so it looks like a "wet head is dead" commercial. They don't like havin' stuff put in their ears so it's a struggle and I hate Mondays & Fridays. Oscar doesn't have mange but he still needs some fur to cover his bald spots. It's such a quiet puppy. He doesn't like being held or cuddled. Coffee, Tot & Spook are fine. Has Ken dropped the pictures by yet? He hasn't written so I thought maybe he lost them or somethin'. Seems like James has been dead forever and it's only been 2 months. What a friend he was. So sorry to hear Ludwig's back was bad those days. Have you kept him slender? He needs all the help he can



get from his people. You should see this pen - Dumpy & Coffee has chewed it and it looks more like a paint brush than a pen, Dogs Dogs Dogs! Ford sure has rocked some boats by his New Year statement on makin' PR a state. Lotsa editorials and people on the street interviews. He was wrong but at least he took a stand. The statehood party amassed the most votes 45%. Independence got 43% and socialist/communist got 12%. That means 45% for 55% against statehood. He said as soon as a majority wanted to be a state it would be granted - 45% is not a majority. Thirty people were asked what they thought of Ford's decision. One person didn't know he had made a decision, one woman (an Argentine) was for statehood with much enthusiasm, one man mumbled it would be nice and 27 said, in essence, "Butt out - we'll make our own decision." The communist party leader has named Ford "The Enemy of the People." Placating Carter said a lot and come up with nothing. He has so many faces / lost count long ago. The man has chronic constipation when it comes to taking a stand. He's gonna be a 4 year turd. They like Carter "Aint he nice - he can't make up his friggin' mind." PR isn't worth all the discussion & struggles. A country that takes and complains it isn't more then turns around and slanders the benefactor aint worth a hot hoot in hades as far as I can see. I never was into politics before but it's so interesting and many sided here.



Plus when you're home you're home ~~ya~~ relax and let everyone else fight it out. You, 55% think my country is screwed up and it BUGS me. Things are bad here no doubt about it but ya can't blame the states 'cause unemployment is 22%, there's no welfare and a myriad of other things. Another editorial that really bugged me was some ass wrote and said there wasn't enough room for Santa & Three Kings Day. He said Santa was an American tradition brought to PR. HA! Santa was a nice man from Europe who became a saint 'cause he was nice and pulled off a few miracles for some lucky folks. Besides, it's adults that personify Santa for the benefit of their kids since the day was originally intended to mark the day Jesus was born. To glorify the Kings bringing gifts is more notable? It killed me to see a grown man implying that Santa was an American plot to do away with Puerto Ricanism. I have to stop reading the paper. Nah, keeps my mind active. I should get you a subscription to the Star - it's in English. Do you want or don't you care? These are formative years for PR and it's neat seeing the future taking shape. Maule says it's 30° in Oregon. Brrr! He loves the house! He writes nice letters - he should go away more often! This good to me - really good. Kathy said she told you how the boys have learned to potty in the cat box. Cute huh? I'll wring their necks!!! Flaky's out of heat so they've stopped pottying all over the house.



The last place Coffee pottied was on my BACK when I was hunkered over cleaning out the cat box. I couldn't yell at or swear him 'cause I went into hysterical laughter and thought "Why not? He's gone everywhere else." The last dog who did that to me was Hansie in the front yard at Sierra Vista. 'Course I wet my bed in those days and I must have reminded him of a hydrant. The difference in the lives of Hansie & Ludwig is incredible isn't it? Poor Hansie! Dry food, couch off limits, sleep outside on a blanket etc. Ludwig would never stand for that! Yeah, I think I kinda gave Coffee a complex when I laughed at him after he pottied on me 'cause he SURE wasn't expecting that so he's been real good. I should have laughed at him long ago. Must be more. Marly got his hair cut just before he left. Nice huh? Gracie moved out of the house and a couple & little boy moved in today. The woman seems quiet. I'll miss Gracie. We went and had Snoopy put to sleep today. Olga was the only person he liked all the time and she knew the signals (he was deaf) to make him behave. I wish I could have kept him - he was a gorgeous dalmation - but he was mean/unpredictable. I was nominated to go 'cause of the truck. Gracie didn't trust him in the car with her. No matter what the justification is it is so HARD to put an animal to sleep.



I hope Patches goes when Granny dies 'cause putting a healthy animal to sleep is not easy. I also hope that you'll have the strength to put Ludwig to sleep when his back gets unbearable. That will be so hard 'cause I didn't even like Snoopy very much (I was afraid of him) and I cried over him. She done more crying in the past ~~2~~ months than in the ~~20~~<sup>20</sup> years that preceded it. Anyways, it doesn't hurt to admit that Ludwig is getting old. Being prepared makes the way smoother than those sneak attacks. She so philosophical and intelligent tonight. Another Crummy, bummed-out sounding letter. It ain't ALL bad. I have a 3 lb. box of candy, lotta letters and I found a place that sells hot bread. A can a pop exploded on me, there were mealy bugs in my Chef Boy R Dee pizza crust mix and I bought a thing of rancid oil (can you imagine how long they would have to keep it to get rancid!) Yuck! The hot bread (pan caliente) voids all ~~the~~ 3 things though. Gotta Split.

Love  
US

January 11

Enclosed is a note for the nice lady at work who made those ~~dos~~ delicious cookies!



January 17

Hiello!

I just found the letter I wrote a week ago to thank you for the neat presents. Shame on me! I was gonna add it into the last letter but forgot. Everything was so nice. I can't name 'em all but you know what they were anyway - right? That cake in a box was excellent! We don't have that here yet so we've never seen it. A pan included too! The Roni-Parmesan was tasty too. Haven't seen that here either. The calendar arrived and filled in the blank '76 places. It was fun & interesting seein' all those new-fangled foods & items - thank you! Maudy enjoyed his ham & is enjoying his stringo. Did you see the book John & Mave gave to me? Hope you did 'cause it was be-you-tiful! I love it. They gave Maudy a folding umbrella that he's used about 14 times in the past 7 days. Ugly weather great umbrella! It was kinda fun waiting so late. Change of subject. I ran into my first overt anti-American people today. The statehood issue has rubbed some fur the wrong way. I was in old San Juan with two blonde very anglo looking ladies. Three boys (about 16 years old) passed saying in Spanish for American tourists to go home and stay home and don't change PR and stuff. I wanted to smack 'em in the mouth!



They are too young to ~~enjoy~~ have their own opinion and to emulate older folks is not always the best thing to do. Without tourists, particularly American tourists, 'cause they ARE NUMEROUS, this island would be so poor they couldn't afford food stamps!!! There have been numerous ANTI-STATEHOOD rallies and stuff. In the immortal words of Kathy "Who wants PR??" She wasn't what you could call horribly impressed with the island. It was the ol' "It's a nice place to visit but..." We had a nice few days together. The weather was awful of course. Before she came & after she left the afternoons would have intermittent clouds & rain but was tolerable. While she was here it was gray all day and pretty rainy. Bummer!! She wasn't impressed with coffee. She liked Dumpy. Flaky growled at her. Toto & Spooky loved her. She thought Oscar was adorable. She didn't like the house. The boat was gorgeous - pure luxury (she forgot her needlepoint). It was massive. Marty & I went to see them off and the boat had a buffet (free) for everyone. It was neat! There are 6 meals a day served so Kathy plans on gaining about 1,000 lbs. If the buffet was any indication of the quality of the food that weight gain isn't an exaggeration. It was funny 'cause the table was loaded with every kind of meat first, salads second and deserts last. Everyone's plates were loaded with



meat and mine had 4 olives. The man slicing the beef laughed at my olives!! Anyways, it's a classy classy boat and promises to be 10 days of pure pamper. Sounds like it's about time to replace your fence. That must be an awfully expensive job nowadays. Summer Johnnie's the only person I know who can keep a job where people say his not qualified enough. The man has charisma! Hope he finds another job soon. Does he not want to work at AMC? Mavis job goin' okay? Maybe Oregon will look real good to them come April. That would be nice having family close. Animals are fine. Jim fine. Mavis fine. Everything's fine. Not much else. Thanks again so much for all the neat presents. Mavis thanks you too.

Love,  
Us

DAY Later

I think I vaguely mentioned the new neighbors that moved into Gracie's house. They turned out to be roof raising barn storming Pentecosts. They've been here ten days and have ~~had~~ two meetings already equipped with 20 people, PA system, lotta speaking in tongues and generally giving the neighborhood one loud Hallelujah. Last night from 7:30 - 10:00 I was serenaded with electric guitar, organ, microphone feedback, and 20 people singing. Their house is about 10' away from this



one and it absolutely curdled my blood. Kathy was here for their speaking in tongues meeting. I can hear them flush their toilet with no trouble at all so can't imagine why they deemed they needed a PA system. If this is a sign of things to come for the next few months I may jolly well move. Remember: here it isn't a bad person that makes the noise - the bad person is the one who complains. They are very strict Pentecosts and only listen & watch religious things on radio & tv and only the man deals with non-Pentecosts. iA! Carumbal Olga was Pentecostal too only she wasn't very strict. Anyways, my new neighbors are what you could call a pain in the buttocks. What else? A low little Oscar - his such a quiet puppy but he is shy and peepes when approached. His gonna need braces. Still have Kathy's needlepoint. I can't find anyone who knows anything about the Island Princess. She'll kill me!!! Had visitors from Goleta - they were passing through on their way to Korea. They didn't stay here of course. That's all for now I think! Weather has been great - ever since Kathy left 'natch! Don't worry 'bout not writing letters 'cause couple more co-workers from Goleta are writing so I don't get so lonesome.

See ya  
US