

Dear Sam & Estela,

I gather from your last letter that things are going well! I was certainly glad to hear from you although I admit I felt a pinge of guilt for having let so much time go by without writing. Sam, I missed your birthday, I thought about you but that is not exactly what I'd call a good present! Let me try and fill you in on the latest with me.

Overall and generally speaking I am doing incredibly well. I guess I am maintaining my youth to some degree because recently I went to a nightclub and they actually asked me how old I was! I stuttered and said "er, uh, thirty-uh, thirty-five!" I went completely blank on the question. And then of course I stopped for a moment and realized what I had just said and how little I had accomplished in the time I'd been alive and wished I were 18 again so I could start all over. I happened to be at a place called "Pleasure Island" in Orlando where a bunch of my friends and I went to dance the night away - and we did too! They had music playing all through the streets and we danced outside and inside. We saw Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash and damn near the entire Carter-Cash family. Not too impressive for an up-to-date and progressive country dancer (me). But overall it was entertaining I guess. There is no place here for me to really cut loose and do my fancy stuff and that is a pure drag but when I go to Dallas I try and make up for it. I guess Mom probably told you I went to see her over the holidays. She seemed to be doing really great considering what she has had to deal with lately. It was then that Dell had her spell and that shook her up pretty good as it did all of us but she still came through in one piece. Knock on wood while I write this next line but she has been sober for sometime now and that seems to be the best news of all. I told her how proud I was of her and that I knew if anyone had a reason to drink, she did and that it must be extra hard for her.

I am working along still with the same company and friends (five years now) and producing more sales than ever. I set myself some very stiff targets to meet this year and so far I'm meeting them.

I just realized I wanted to go back to the holidays for a second. I went with Mom and Eddie over to Lee's for their New Year's party. I really wasn't sure what to expect since it had been so long since I'd seen my cousins and I didn't know who all would be there but I felt like I should go anyway. It was such a treat! I know it has been at least 15 years since I've seen Kim and Kathy and it was just like yesterday. Kim and I squealed at each other when I first came up and just carried on like a couple of idiots (probably not far from the truth). She is so gorgeous I am jealous. I got to meet her husband who, in my opinion, is a hunk and I told her so. What a cute couple they are! I met Jack's wife who is also a little doll. It was such an event I wish you could have been there. There was a blind couple there who you may already know about but I thought their story was interesting. She went blind from neglect with Diabetes. He went blind trying to commit suicide! So they both led partial lives with sight and then went blind. Could you imagine! Then, to top it all off, they had a baby. This little girl is about as cute as they come and

BRIGHT! They pin a little bell on her to hear where she is. Now just picture that - blind as a bat and raising an infant! What talent, huh? So they came and he played the guitar and was very good. Steve demonstrated his tremendous energetic abilities. He is a real handsome kid and has some kind of energy - I just hope no one screws with it and tries to put him on drugs to "calm him down".

I get really aggravated at the whole bit about kids being hyperactive and having some sort of disorder. It sure makes a good income for the drug manufacturers and the psychiatrist. If parents were even told half the truth about what drugging a child could do to that child's future they would think twice. I've had personal friends who were put on ritalin as a child and then were so addicted that they continued on street drugs when they grew older because they could not cope without the drugs. I get equally as aggravated about the big supposed campaign about saying "no to drugs" and then see the psychs liberally prescribe mind-altering drugs like Prozac, which has proven in thousands of reports to have deadly side effects. Isn't it interesting that the FDA passes such a drug but then tries to control things like vitamins and actually get them off the shelves because they could be harmful? Go figure on that one. Drugs are a big business in the U.S. I'm sure other countries have their own share to deal with. Where was I? Oh yes, the party. I just enjoyed myself so much. Probably part of it was because every time I looked up Lee would rave about how BEAUTIFUL I was. I just love hearing that shit. Mother tried to tell me Lee says that to everybody (like she wasn't really sincere about me) and I told her to go jump in the lake, brain damage or not, I completely trust my aunt's perception about my beauty! Mother went on about Kim and how beautiful she was too. Kim and I went on about how "interesting" our mothers had turned out. So I stayed at the party longer than I had originally planned and had one of the best New Years I ever can recall having.

Work is going very well. I love my job and I am so glad to be in the group that I am, everyone I work with is my friend practically. The company is really growing in leaps and bounds. I still hold the #1 spot in sales and there is no one even close to catching up with me. I am good, what can I say?

I moved to a new place last October so be sure and make a note of my new address: 240 Windward Passage #302 Clearwater, FL 34630. This is a great town home and probably the neatest place I've ever lived. It's on an island and there is water very close to me. I have two bedrooms and three baths with a huge living area and storage area. It's perfect for me. I still need to put some things in it but I haven't had the time lately I've been so busy.

My love life just went overboard - AGAIN. I don't remember the last romance I was involved in the last time I wrote but this one has been the one that has lasted the longest in a few years. This weekend it fell apart. It was actually the correct thing though because at the rate we were going we would have killed each other eventually. I learned a lot this go-round though so I'll take it as a lesson for the next time. He is a good guy but we just had such different viewpoints about so many different things that

we spent too much time arguing and trying to patch things up. I usually will go about a week with that sort of thing but with him I hung in for 9 months so I feel I gave it an honest try. I learned things I can take with me so I have no regrets. I find the older I get the more picky I get and the less patient I am with things. If I were 20 and had a few years to experiment that is one thing but heck, I am at the age where I want someone I can ENJOY my life with who has the same goal in mind. I believe that if I will just take a bit more time during the beginning of the relationship to really get to know the person BEFORE I get seriously or sexually involved, I'll at least have some idea as to what I am getting into. Yes, I practice safe sex and have been tested regularly for aids. I am the kind of person who goes after what I want in life and I don't sit and wait for something to happen. This particular practice has not proven to be so successful in personal relationships though. I think the reason is that in the beginning of ANY relationship, I don't care how well you think you might know the person, there is a social pretense that we all put up which is perfect and is not necessarily how we are when we first get up in the morning. I usually just look at that and go "oh yes, you are perfect! This is exactly what I have been looking for!" then six months or so later the wonderfulness of it starts to wear off and I am holding a lemon and wondering how someone so perfect could end up so different. The conclusion I have reached is to find out a bit more about how the person really is by spending more than a weekend with them before making a commitment. I still have some work on exactly how I am going to change what I've been doing but I've been studying some things lately that are definitely helping me to sort it out. People are interesting.

Well that about says it all for me. I'm glad I finally wrote to you. Now, let's make it a practice, okay? At least once every two months or so. Write me back and fill me in on everything happening there.

I love you both very much even though I don't write often enough.

Love love love love,

Lisa

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