29-VI-75

June 28th

Dear Nela,

Sincere, grateful thank yous for sending Jason to camp this summer. He starts this coming Monday and is looking forward to it enormously. I sent him for three weeks to his new school, Allen-Stevenson, to what they called their June Program. It consisted of two teachers from the school, both very nice people, and some gym instructors who took the children to the park for sports and various events like ball games, etc. Jason adored it. And the teachers told me he "adjusted absolutely perfectly" to the new boys, all of whom were Allen-Stevenson boys year-round; I thought it was a good idea to get him acclimated to the school and to know some of the people involved.

So we wait and hope for a fruitful year in the fall. I feel comfortable with the school change, have very good feelings about what the school appears to offer, and although I suspect the beginning change of attitude to a traditional school will be an adjustment, Jason will come through just fine.

I nearly signed a lease on a new apartment and then the landlord insisted I make all the repairs myself, calculating them to be way beyond my abilities, so am staying here for the time being. I did search for several months to no avail; the rents have become unbelievable in this city. There are two advantages here, one being that the school is only four blocks away and Jason has started to walk alone to school which gives him great pride; the second is that I have a sublet clause, which is rarely given these days, so I can move at any time. I am giving myself about six months to find a full time good paying solid job; if nothing at all happens I might be forced to leave the city, which is not my preference, but it is reality. Meanwhile Jason will be settled nicely in a better school environment for him with school friends in the vicinity. I've just finished painting his furniture and his room, am freshening everything up abit (amazing what a paint coat can do for the spirits).

What you write about Paul not being appreciative is true and I can only repeat that it is beyond my understanding. It seems to me that in the past months Paul has grown further away from Jason emotionally; he spends less and less time with him, never asks for full weekends, said he was "too busy" to take him at spring holiday, and now Jason goes on a Saturday, where Paul sends him up the street to a church play group most of the day. So he in essence spends only 2-3 hours a week with him. My concern is that he doesn't ever telephone the child and my urging is to no avail. Jason clearly and deeply misses a strong father figure. I had hoped at one point to go through Joy Rubinstein, thinking that she would have good influence and help Paul feel sensitive to Jason's needs. But I have rather given up on that end; she frankly appears to have different views than I do about child raising, her own daughter "models dresses" at the age of eleven, she is sending her to a school in an office building where there is a three to one teacher-child relationship so the little girl can model in her free time and still make grades. It is not a way I would raise a child and I see our values are different and I see that Joy makes no insistences that Paul see Jason more, so I have rather given up on thinking that there will ever be great sensitivity to the boy.

I am always concerned and certainly do what I can in my own life. That's really the best I can do. I try to build up Jason's confidence, help him with his studying and include him in all activities in our little family group here, and pray that one day my life will include a man who will take on the responsibility and be genuinely loving in the true sense, someone who understands children and gives them time and love and patience. It is hard for me to tell Paul he isn't paying enough attention to his son because the man just does not comprehend; there is great lip service to fatherhood but as I see little genuine effort to recognize how difficult Jason's life has been and an effort to compensate. This is either innate in people who have a feeling for humanity and concern for others around them or it is prompted by a great feeling of responsibility. It cannot be taught or learned; it is part of us.

I have promised Jason the musical instrument of his choice and he said a trumpet, so this week we go off to midtown to find a used one. Allen-Stevenson has great music program and has every boy play an instrument and join the band; Jason is enthused about this. Yet this morning when Jason cheerfully told Paul he was getting a trumpet all Paul said was, "You are crazy, what a dumb think to do." Why he persists in hurting the child in this way is again beyond my comprehension. It happens so often in so many ways. Not long ago he told Jason that if he had a dog he would throw it out the window and told Jason all the diseases that dogs supposedly give. Here this little boy loves his dog like a child. I find it so cruel. Yet what can one do? Nothing really. A father in this way is still better than no father at all and I recognize this, so I continually telling Jason how wonderful his father is and try to bring them closer in Jason's mind so he will feel more secure that he is indeed loved by this man. Jason knows nothing of the financial irresponsibility nor will he ever from me; that is entirely a separate matter. What I end up feeling is a big great sadness for Jason and a hope that these little hurts on a continual basis will be swallowed with maturity.

Meanwhile we have our summer coming up. I have let go my housekeeper out of necessity, so it is just Jason and me, bicycling and having picnics. We have been invited to weekends in the country and will go. And perhaps we will visit my parents in California later this summer for a short time. Paul minds not at all, for he gives the impression that he wants his weekends to himself largely. I have great positive feelings that everything will be better and better for Jason ; he has his camp, thanks to you, and the little boy across the street goes also, his best friend who is always around here. In general he is happy and active and very sports oriented. He does well in them. Now he plays downstairs with many children on the street; his energy level is still very, very high and it is the sports and biking he enjoys most.

I send you my wishes for a good summer and hope your little operation goes well in August. We will keep in touch and I'm sure Jason will write; I have told him camp is your "treat" and he is pleased. We look forward to seeing you when you come to New York.

Best,

Leslie

Mrs. Leslie Kallmann
129 East 82nd Street
New York 10028 USA

NEW YORK, N.Y.
1 PM
29 JUN
1975

AERÉAC

Mrs. Artur Rubinstein
No. 80 Avenue Foch
22 Square de l'Avenue Foch
Paris 16
FRANCE