

Season's Greetings 1991
442 SHIPLEY ROAD LINTHICUM, MD 21090

Friends:

Well, unlike last year, 1991 has not been so kind to us. In fact, it was a terrible year filled with tribulations, misery, and sorrow. In spite of it all, however, we have managed to keep up our spirits.

The bad news started in January with Renfield's terrible auto accident. Although none of the thirteen cars involved was damaged beyond a few cosmetic scrapes and bumps, poor Renfield was injured most grievously. He's still not fully over the shock and horror. Can you believe it, despite the best that medical science could do, it still took a full *three weeks* for that fingernail to grow back?!

February, always a month of disaster, lived up to its reputation with one of the most distressing crises to befall our humble household in years. We have read about such things in the papers, but we never dreamed it could happen to *us*. Nevertheless, it did: through a freak set of circumstances that we'll never fully understand, we missed taping an episode of *Star Trek*. Fortunately, the episode was re-run later in the year.

In march and April we suffered the unspeakable calamity of not one but *two* instances of burned toast. We actually had to throw it out for the birds!

Those of tender disposition and delicate stomach should skip this paragraph; what you're about to hear is not pretty. One morning in mid-May Thomas went out in the back yard only to find a *dead squirrel*. Needless to say, we immediately filed for Federal disaster relief.

June is birthday month for Thomas and Don, but the awful forces of fate do not respect birthdays. Disaster struck twice, bringing a complete end to all celebration. First, Thomas had a pen actually run out of ink (horrible, isn't it?) when he was using it; then, Don received a birthday card with (can you believe it?) *three* cents postage due. Well, that about killed the entire month -- who could possibly be happy after an experience like that?

The summer months were dreadful. We received word that our far-flung empire of shipping companies had suffered a decline in profits of over *two percent*. And no sooner had we recovered from this awful shock, then we found out that we'd taken a total *bath* in the stock market.

Now, we realize that the entire country is in a depressed economy, but don't you think it's a little ridiculous that the value of our stock portfolio has dropped to a mere seven figures? No *wonder* the economy is doing so badly!

In September we were the victims of a cruel, premeditated attack by one of the neighborhood ruffians. This contemptible urchin actually had the gall to park his car in front of the house next to ours, and *honk his horn* at least three times. Boy, were we fortunate that Renfield had his machine gun handy!

I suppose you've heard about what's going on in the Soviet Union? The various political shakeups there are causing *us* untold grief. Why, we've had to change the names on our world globe repeatedly, and there's still no sign of the turmoil settling down.

Finally, and we've saved the worst news for last, at the beginning of December we bid on a stunning collection of van Goghs at a private auction at Christie's -- you know how Don loves van Goghs -- and we were *outbid*. The disgrace has, of course, forced us to forego several stylish parties, and lately the Pope has stopped returning our phone calls. We're all crushed, simply crushed.

However, this *is* the holiday season, and as bad as things get we still try to keep smiles on our faces and bravely march on. It is, after all, our responsibility to set a good example for others. So in closing, let us leave you with a well-known saying that has given us great comfort these past miserable months:

I wept that I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet. So I said to him, "Hey, buddy, got any shoes you aren't using?"

Happy Holidays to All!

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