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Waverly Hotel
Missouri

25-8-04.

My dearest Mamma,

I feel I must write & pour out all my latest woes to you, I never seem to do anything else do I? Well you ^{know} I had a nurse very tremendously recommended to me last year, & we had her for six months & thoroughly believed in her & trusted her implicitly, so much so that when Ralph wrote & said the rains had broken, I left her here in charge of Baby, & went back to



Dinapore, where I had been for just over seven weeks when I got a frantic letter from my great friend Mr. Blaygrave, telling me that several people in the Hotel had been to her & told her that they could not stand the way the nurse ill-treated Baby any more longer & that if she didn't write to me at once, they would!

This letter full of horrible details given by eye-witnesses reached me an hour after Ralph had been called away up the line, & just an hour before I was expecting 12 guests to dinner, in honor of Dickie's birthday, it being the 10th of August!

I singly nearly went off my head there was only Mr. Venables in the house, one of Ralph's young assistants & he sent over for Mr. Holmes to come & calm me down, but I was frightfully worked up by the time the guests arrived, & instead of all the gay speeches there should have been, there was stony silence as far as Dickie was concerned. We were all to have gone on to a large dance afterwards in Dinapore, but every body left very early, & only a few went, Ralph arrived home just in time to spend the two last departing guests & heard the sad news. He then sat up until 2.30 packing & I left at six minutes to five!

I dismissed nurse an hour after I arrived, & was horrified at the condition I found Dickie in! I couldn't have believed that a child's whole nature & disposition could have been so completely altered in two short months! Instead of the little loving, sweet-tempered, happy Baby I'd left, I found him, sulky, cross & absolutely defiant. If I tried to dress him or wash him, he lay on the ground tearing up the carpet, kicking & screaming, & simply yelling, so terribly that other ladies would come to my room to ask if they could do anything to help!!! Drove out a word of warning he would pick up a brick or stone to throw at me and then it fell in your face, & kicked & slapped every child that came near him!



It so upset me, that I used to simply sit & cry with worry, I thought he was ruined for life, & would grow up into a hateful man & be loathed by everybody. People used to tell me to beat him, that it was all sheer wantonness, but I couldn't do it, I felt it was all the best & shutting up in dark rooms all by himself, that nurse had indulged in had made him like this. And so I made up my mind that I would just let him run wild for a little bit, & just try what love would do first. I've been up here now nearly a fortnight, & he is



beginning to get so much more
loving & gentle that I'm hopes
of winning him round in time.

I must fly & post this now
as else it would go until next
week. Do try & get Ralph
into something at home, I can
never leave Baby again &
what ever will happen to Ralph
if I'm got to be away from
him for six or seven months
every year. Tenderest love to
all
ever your affectionate daughter
Margaret W. Stacey.