

*Lewis A. Alliger*

KATONAH · NEW YORK

January 23rd, 1943.

My dear Whit:

Last evening I had the pleasure of reading a letter written by your mother to her mother. In the first place, I wish to congratulate you upon having reached an age where you realize what this thing called life is all about. That you know what it is all about and are beginning to assert yourself. It is pretty tough on a young lad to be compelled to just sit or lie there and take whatever is handed to you. Of course, there will be more or less of this as you go through life. But now that you have gotten your teeth (may I say) into things some of this will not be necessary if you get up on your hind legs and tell people what's what. I'm glad you have made a beginning at this thing. Don't let them put anything over on you. If you don't care for something that is given you and you are told you must take it and like it. Yell, if you don't think you care for it. Some folks will try to take advantage of your youth. Don't stand for it. You've stood for it long enough.

There is another thing I'd like to mention. You are to be yanked to a photographer every whipstitch to have your picture taken. Of all the torments that a young chap is exposed to this is one of the worst. REBEL. Rebel like hell. I know what I'm talking about. The operation is tough enough but that is only part of it. When you grow to be a young man, and which will be very soon, your mother will dig up a photo of you taken some years before and all the gals hanging around will look at it and they'll say "Wasn't he cute". You'll hate that. One

day you will have a young lady of your own. She will be the delicious apple of your eye. Mark my word, sooner or later, out will come that darn picture of you. Your face will get as red as a beet and you will wish to goodness that you had refused to have had anything to do with it. See if I'm not right. I understand that you have been taken advantage of already. Don't let it happen again.

You are a mighty lucky young man. You have a wonderful father and mother. You have a fair set of grand-parents. That's all right. They are very fond of you and that's all right. They mean well because they think an awful lot of you. That's all right, too. BUT do not let them put anything over on you. You are a man in the making, do not let them make a sissy of you. If you feel that things are going too far you just up and tell them so and tell them in a manner that will be understood. Get me?

As time goes along just call on me if you need any help. I'll be glad to give it. So long as I'm far enough away so that I do not hear the racket that will be made (by certain people) when they hear that I've tipped you off, I'll keep right on sending you some of this tipping stuff. Believe me you will need it.

Once again let me congratulate you on your good beginning. You've stepped out in the right direction. Keep it up.

Most sincerely, and I mean sincerely, and with all good wishes, I beg to remain,

Your grand-pappy

Lew