

All in the Family
The Case for
Writing Letters

By Sarah Child



I have just spent more miles than I care to count driving with first three, and then seven children.

It began with the Spring thaw and the continual observation, by me, that winter had really gone on forever, we all needed a change and why didn't we spend Easter with my sister and her husband who live about 15 miles outside of New York City.

The head of the house was not overjoyed at the prospect. But neither did he brandish his

arms, hide his head in his hands or run to the bathroom and lock himself in as some people have been known to do in this house when everything gets to be too much to handle.

I took his silence for acquiescence and thus it was on Holy Thursday night that we loaded ourselves including a 6-year-old, a 3-year-old, an infant of 15 months and three suitcases into the stationwagon.

The first night we would stay at a motel. The kids love it, Dad wouldn't have to drive

so far and we could arrive refreshed the following day.

It sounded good on paper. Things went pretty smoothly until we awoke the next morning, discovered all three kids had gone from slight colds to feverish foreheads and hacking coughs.

We had to eat so we stopped at a nearby empty restaurant, a situation which turned out to be propitious for various reasons. The most important being the fact that the baby screamed throughout the entire meal, stopping only when we allowed her to get down from the high chair. She immediately headed for the large swinging kitchen doors.

After this experience we decided that even if someone should require lunch—we would not stop until we had reached our destination. After all, it was only a couple of hours away, according to our map.

Our map, however, does not take into consideration that our

trips into New York are so infrequent that we never manage to make the journey without considerable sidestepping, backtracking or whatever else you care to call getting lost.

The day and a half visit went without incident if you can believe one roof can shelter seven children and four adults without some untoward experience. I do but then I don't count the birth of seven kittens, my catching the kids' bug, the refusal of a car to start or three kids falling in the brook as significant.

The trip back would have gone smoother only because our kids were exhausted and would have slept most of the way. But I had persuaded my sister and her four children to come back with us, visit for a few days and then I could drive them to my mother's in Pennsylvania.

The next several days were memorable but I remember very little other than that my children and hers got very tired of one another and began to fight

usually at the drop of a jelly bean.

I also remember getting clipped in the face with a yardstick as I was driving 55 miles an hour on a back road to Pennsylvania. I laughed, of course, because it wasn't really anyone's fault.

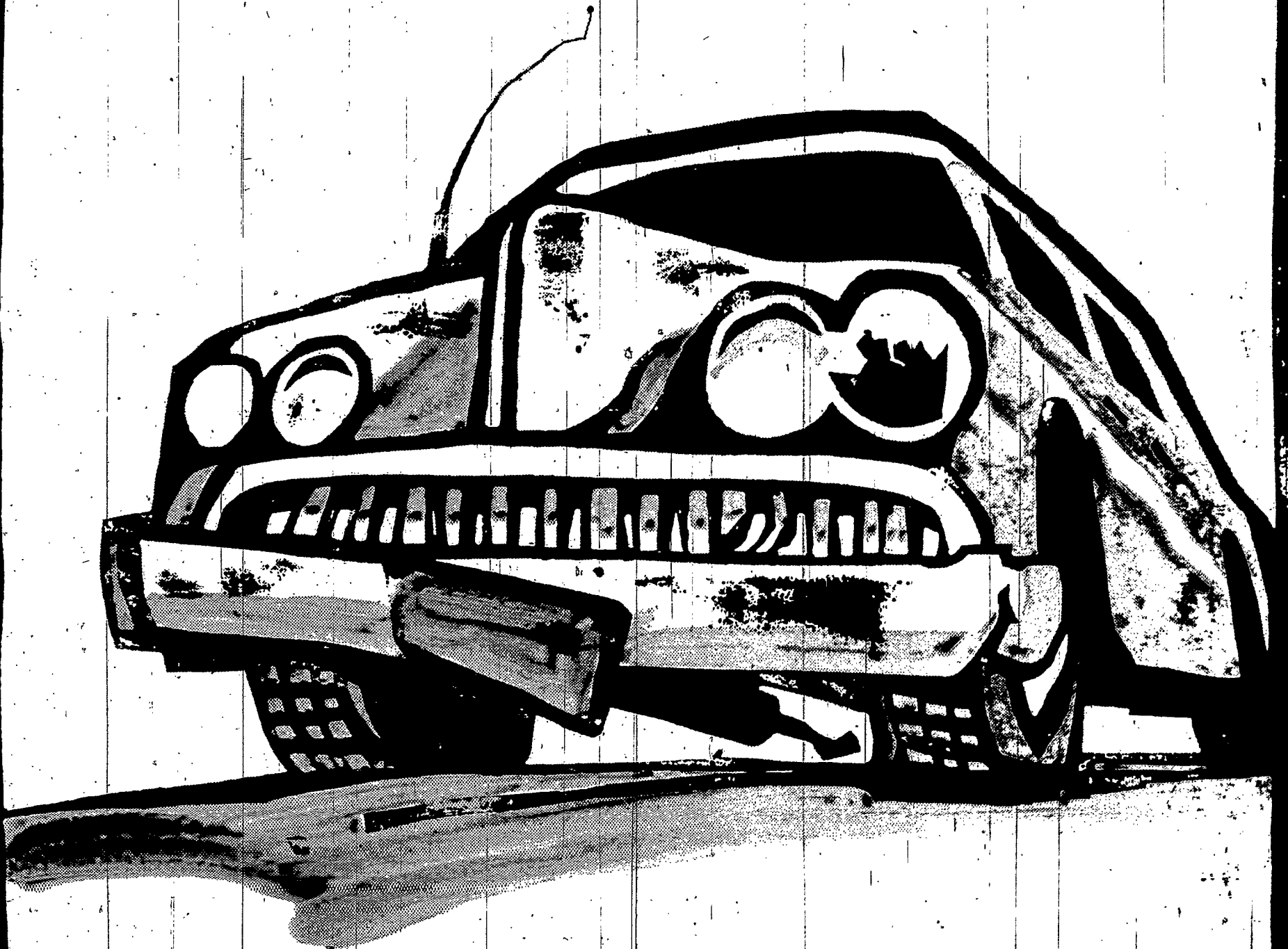
As I dropped my sister off (my mother drove up halfway to meet us) she told me to write more often. I think I shall.

Writing can be VERY satisfactory.

Mercy Alumnae
Plan Breakfast

The annual Communion Breakfast of the Mercy High School Alumnae Association will be held Sunday, April 25, in the high school cafeteria. Father Anthony J. Valente, school chaplain, will celebrate Mass at 10 a.m. in the Motherhouse chapel.

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