

28 June 1971

Dear Mary,

Your letter of the 23rd arrived in the same mail as a note from Arch, telling me of his complete return to normal, which was really very happy and reassuring news. I have just written to him.

To answer your questions: Yes, it is hard indeed to be without my Allegra, and I do not know what state I would be in today had I not had the life-preserving instinct to go immediately and get Mimi. I am enclosing two snapshots of her, one that shows the face, and the other that shows her curled up in the bathtub, both taken in a very rare moment of repose. She is perpetual motion for hour after hour, jumping breathtaking distances both vertically and horizontally, climbing like a little monkey, playing delightfully; and then falling into a long nap, like the baby she is (ten weeks old). She is very sweet-natured and not at all nervous, of people, noises, or things, and I expect that she will be a happy little traveler when we leave for the summer in just three more days. I do hope that you will meet her for yourself when we are out on Fire Island.

Allegra had been failing more and more in the last weeks before she died--eating well, but getting more and more emaciated, with her poor bones beginning to jut out. I could not do nothing so despite my horror at forcing her into her carrier I took her to a private animal diagnostic center, one that has a high reputation. Dr. Katz (what a name for a vet!) immediately located a large mass near her kidney, and recommended that I leave her for X-ray work and surgery. But before he could operate, Allegra succumbed, apparently too feeble to withstand the sedation which had to be administered in order for him to do the diagnostic work. Afterwards he did a biopsy and found that she had a malignancy (lymphosarcoma) and could not have lived more than another two months. This way, she was spared the pain and suffering, and he assures me (and I do want to believe him) that she did not know anything for the three days she was there before she died and could not have felt abandoned by me. I can only hope and pray that that is true.

I could kick myself, because I brought your letter to the office to answer from here but forgot to bring Tom Bethell's article to xerox for you. I will do so tomorrow and mail it separately. You will be interested to know that I had a letter from Tom the other day, the first one in at least a year, written mainly to ask if you are okay! Tom was worried, he said, because he had not heard from you. I wrote him at once and explained that it was probably because of your great worry about Arch and other preoccupations, although I did not mention Buck or that he was in hospital. (I am glad to hear that he called and is feeling so much better.)

After another extended silence from The Texas Observer, I called the editor last week, and she told me that she hopes that my article will appear in a July issue. Do not hold your breath. Past experience suggests August or September is more likely. I have ordered 50 copies so that I can send copies to you and the other critics, if and when.

The news that the "babushka lady" has been located is exciting and I will look forward to further developments. I can understand how you feel about Carol Anne and the children removing to Kansas City; I hope you will manage to see them often. By the way, I just received a copy of Paris Flammonde's book on UFO's, The Age of Flying Saucers, from Hawthorn, the publishers, and was dismayed to find that in this copy pages 161-192 are

missing in their entirety! The book was supposed to come out on April 1st but in spite of being late, is unforgivably defective! I have not heard from Paris on many months, I don't know why. Perhaps he is away, as he has not appeared on the Long John program where he is usually heard often. Excuse my using the margin, Much love,