

3/27/67

Hello, L.A., love,

And thanks for yours of the 23rd. So M.I.H. is alive and well! Every cloud has a you-know-what, and at least this will take her friend Glad-ass off my aching phone. Penn was a doll to go there personally—that's devotion over and above the call of duty.

Look: I don't want to take your last copy of the Index. If Penn has not yet mailed it, tell him to hold fast, at least until there is a quite RKAL emergency. The publishers offered to revert the copyright to me, but plates, NO. There are no plates, I guess, it was a photo-offset type process. Anyway, I'd want to rework the Index before any second edition is published—there is plenty of room for improvement. I'd have to incorporate the "errata" I've been sending around periodically by mail; and refine the references to New Orleans and recently-prominent areas of the evidences. It would need a solid month of work to make the necessary improvements, and I don't have a solid day of free time for the rest of the year, so far as I can see.

Just covered a three-week session of the UN Commission for Social Development and have to write a 100-page report on their nonsense; concurrently was reading the crashing bore Manchester's crashing bore of a book, which TMO has asked me to review. Just sent in my 8-page review, which isn't very inspired, between you and me, (i.e., its lousy) I am staggering under a horrible upper respiratory infection with asthma counterpunchal wheezes, which has erected a barrier between me and what I am doing for the last week.

I'm flattered that you wanted to kidnap my manuscript. That would have been okay, but what do you think about THIS little incident I just experienced: A perfect stranger phones me a week ago, a Swedish artist and playwright (authentic; he sent me his catalogues, recent one-man show of paintings at one of the best galleries, a play produced in some avant-gard festival, etc.). He has become fascinated by the case and wants to do a three-act play on it in Sweden, where he is due to go tomorrow for six months.

Do you know that this absolute stranger had the audacity to ask me, like I might ask someone what time it is, to give him my 300-page ms. to take with him??? My blood-pressure shot up to 1000 and I still haven't cooled off. Swedes, yet! Your buddy Tom Bethell dropped in yesterday, relaxed over a few shots of booze, cast a tentative eye over my beautiful niece (dutifully visiting sick aunt) and departed after considerable prodding. My niece agrees with you, he is (physically) dirty. I'm too near-sighted to notice, and the headcold has killed my sense of smell.

I can't hide my book on flying saucers—it's got the Code for contacting the Martians (the Venusians are backward in communications technology). I have to stay in touch, because if Garrison fails us, we'll have to ask the Martians to solve the case for us—a humiliating prospect, they are already so smugly superior toward us earthlings. Seems their first contact with our species happened to be eavesdropping on a social evening between Jim Liebler, Larry Sch Lewis, and Eddie Epstein. Naturally they came away with the impression that earthlings are a dirty, disgusting, contemptible species. Incidentally—what were you doing in New Orleans THREE TIMES? Can it be that you find the Jolly Green Giant irresistible? (I do!) All my love to you and Penn-Famous Author-Big Daddy-Too Busy to Write-Ever.

29 April 1967

Dear Penn,

I am RWED. You wrote. No, I didn't really think you would! Thanks, love, I appreciate it. You may not know it, but I treasure all your letters...By the way, don't feel bad about telling me that Shirley was getting a divorce...I received a letter from her the very next day, in which she told me the unhappy news. I only hope that she will be happy, and that her children will be able to adjust...It is always so hard on children.

Harold has told me about Mrs. Kopelman...No, thanks, DON'T tell her about me. The M in History no longer calls, thank the lord, and a number of ex-dialers no longer call, by my request. So don't sic Mrs. K. on me. Tell you what—give her Schiller's number...or Liebelor's? Keep Hizer and Charles Roberts in reserve. We must fight fire with telephone numbers.

It was wonderful to talk to you, and I'm looking forward to seeing you and L.A. again, one of these days. I love you both, or haven't you noticed?

P.S. Thanks for sending the stuff to Billman Chester. I'm sure he will pass it around to those who may (or may not) appreciate it.