

THE MIDLOTHIAN MIRROR

TRUE REFLECTION OF LOCAL EVENTS

PUBLISHERS • COMMERCIAL PRINTERS • JOB FOLDING • LITHOGRAPHING

DIAL GR 5-3322

P. O. BOX 70

MIDLOTHIAN, TEXAS

ZIP CODE 76065

PENN JONES, JR., EDITOR

September 13, 1966

Dear Sylvia,

It was my honest intention to write you the moment we got home, but we seem to still be on the old fast schedule.

As I told you from the airport, the only fun I had on this particular trip was being with you. Penn and I have sat down at the "conference table", and it has been agreed that I can't run a 26 hour day. It takes two to tango, and I'm going to attempt to speed up. In return, he is going to slow down.

Too bad our thing in Pennsylvania fizzled out. We were pretty hopeful on this one. So far as being an expensive trip - not especially - but it was a real puddle-jumper. Flights, buses, taxis, and we are always running..actually running...to catch some form of transportation. But it needed checking out, and it was checked out.

Did you know that you are becoming extremely well-known? I don't mean Mark, Epstein, Weisburg, Penn, I mean just Plain People. God knows how many times I've been asked, "What is Sylvia Meagher really like?"

And I say, "That's a pretty hard one to answer. In appearance she is good-looking. She is also extremely kind. She thinks like a very good lawyer. She thinks and writes like a man, and considerably better than most lawyers and most men."

So far as the authors are concerned, they all seem to want you to like them and respect them. They never let me finish anything I am saying, but you can watch them nod their heads as if to say, "I'm real high in Sylvia's opinion." As to Penn, he has thought from the first you were great, but he never seems to need this approval, or whatever you call it. He likes you, but it has probably never occurred to him that it was necessary - or imperative - that he be given this liking ~~re~~ in return. He apparently assumes that because he has such a high regard for you, that you are a friend of his.

I did tell this, but don't think it hurt anything. I related that you and I were both pooped, and to add to the evening, relatives of an acquaintance of yours harangued you all evening that this dame might be contemplating suicide.... I have no idea who these people were, and wouldn't have told their names had I known them.

How about my trying to sell "An Evening With Sylvia Meagher?"..I'm teasing, of course. But somebody COULD write something like this!

MEAGHER

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Several nights ago, we met Mark, Anna Lisa and Dick Stark, their cameraman in their Dallas hotel. Mark & wife have left, but Dick is staying here with us for a week. Today, he and Penn worked out a heliocopter thing for Dick around various spots in Dallas.

He is a sweet intelligent kid (24), and I am realizing now that he has been good for us. After all, our sons left in the same week, and there had always been so many boys in and out of here, that Dick's being here seems like Old Home Week.

Mark is always nice to us, and they both seem very thrilled about the baby which will arrive in February. So far as his being discourteous to Anna Lisa, I have never caught what Shirley meant. She gets about the same, "Will you please be quiet? Will you please shut up?" that I do. She doesn't seem to pay any more attention to it than I do. It is invariably when we make a comment on a witness and get all fouled up. I mean we're popping off about something and get things wrong.

Day before yesterday a fellow called from Houston - Bill O'Connell - is that right? He's an actor - TV's "Petticoat Junction", does commercials, recently finished as a character actor in that wonderfully marvelous role as the nephew in "How To Succeed, etc." Worked in this good-paying place in Houston; theatre in the round.

He came here to meet Penn, and we liked him very much. He knows Harold. Don't remember if he knows you, but he DAMN SURE knows who you are. Has read the testimony - and about everything else - with a great deal of interest.

For an actor, he seems modest. Better still, he seems to have sense.

Before I forget it, if you think you got awakened at 4:30 when Harold and Penn returned your books, how about when they hit our room at 5:2 and yacked away until maybe 7:30? But I was concerned about your books, and am glad you got them safely home..I like Harold a lot. But too, I like everyone who has worked so hard on this very difficult cause...It is true that Harold thinks other authors are stealing from him. But he works the same way in reverse...He was asked on WHITTEWASH II to do a thing on the strange deaths. According to him, (and I think he is telling the truth), he said, "You're going to have to get Jones for that department. I'm no authority."

Penn reacted somewhat the same way on the TV panel. As I get it, Harold and Mark really flew into Cohen. Mark held his anger. Harold said, "Cohen, you're nothing but a damn liar." I asked

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Penn, "How come you didn't get into that wrangle? It's the first time you ever laid off."

And he said, "Because I didn't have enough knowledge about their argument. They had researched that particular field much more than I had. On my book, I'm slightly local yokel."

Thinking back on your and my conversations..Thank God, Penn finally left. I am considering One Hour each day when we don't talk about the assassination.. we can call it the Chapel Hour, and everyone has fun. Any ideas from you on the title?

*

Probably (or should I say alledgely) I talked more frankly with you, and at more length, than I ever have with anyone.. I am thinking back now to your question, "Did he marry you for your money?"..The question was not out of line. I think I said, in effect, that if Penn had a chance to marry a gal with \$45,000,000 it would have to be love with him. And it would certainly have to be love on my part.....I forgot to say that when we married I had about 45¢... You bet, as a court reporter I made a good salary. Considerably more than his 2nd Lt. wage.

allegedly

But I had been reared in a comfortable home where money was not very important. We didn't have enough to be rich, nor did we have so little as to be poor...Penn grew up as the son of a tenant farmer. And, bless his heart, he has never made any bones about it, and he has tried always to help underpriviledged kids.

Don't be distressed because I said I was slightly homely. I think about it no more than I think about being so short. When I buy clothes - always the thought of trying to look a little taller. If we are going out in the evening - and I didn't bother about this in New York because I was so hot, so soggy, so sweaty - it takes me an hour to put on my face. I emerge looking reasonably decent. Simply a matter of using light and dark make-up. A photographer taught me this a long time ago.

We don't refer to Penn as Big Daddy anymore. We call ~~Hi~~ him Famous Author. That really bugs him....Thanks for everything - keep the letter I wrote you some time ago - AND COME TO SEE US.

With friendship,

R. A.

We have a completely free week after our Christmas edition. We reprint - for New Year's - a copy of our paper, dating sometimes to the 1800's/

This "allegedly" business is a family joke. When I proff Penn's stuff - stuff he knows is true but cannot prove - I am real great with that particular word.