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2 Dec 72

Dear Sylvia,

I am, it should go without saying, upset at your indisposition, but damned relieved that you are functioning again.

As soon as I got your letter, I quick thumbed through 3 psychiatry, etc., texts I have been perusing in connection with a VA psychological disability claimant I'm advising (he's battier than Hell, but they say it wasn't their fault -- very poor and monumentally self-serving diagnosis by a military shrink). Anyway, it looks like the curability and cure rate of depressive reactions like yours is pretty impressive (to my great surprise, since I tend to look upon the expertise of shrinks with the same attitude I reserve for, say, the FBI). So in my capacity of shyster-cum-shrink, my advice is that optimism is in order. That will be fifty dollars.

Oh, if only I was getting those huge fees you mentioned! I have been taking all reasonable steps to sell out and get rich, but I keep getting thwarted. There ain't no justice (burn after reading). However, I have a couple of things on the hook that could turn out not only lucrative, but very interesting.

For instance: client of mine, Pat, in county jail. Other fella busted for several assault beefs -- built like Godzilla, ex-gung fu instructor, outlaw biker. Fella put in tank A-1, where he breaks a guy's jaw. Tut-tut, say jail types, naughty naughty, go to tank A-5. He does. Knocks out inmate's teeth. Oh, you bad boy! say jail types, here is tank C-5 (Pat's home away from home). Time passes. "You make me nervous," says King Kong to Pat, and proceeds to work him over. Another inmate stops the attack, thereby probably saving Pat's life. Monday I'm filing a claim against the county for negligently allowing Hostileman in the general jail population. We're asking about \$850,000. Oooo, will they be sorry! Proof positive that Fascism is not an efficient way to run things. Let's see . . . one-third of \$850,000 Heh-heh. The glory of the contingent fee is that one is inspired to do Great Things. Oh, I tell you, Sylvia, there is justice.

For 'nother instance: I'm setting up an export-import company for a guy to trade with China (the big China, not the little one). He is a computer man, of Chinese birth, and got invitations from 3 different Chinese government trading corporations to visit. He's there now. The Chinese aren't giving out many tourist visas (hardly any, in fact, & then almost exclusively to hot Maoists), so I gave my client an inscrutable grin & told him that, of course, on his second trip, for the heavy negotiations, he'd want his lawyer along. He gave me a scrutable grin and said sure, if I pay my own way. So I am saving my pennies. Also hoping. Wish me luck.

Instance three: I have become associated as co-counsel on a Right-wing lawsuit against the U of Wash student govt, over the issue of compulsory ~~xxxx~~ membership fees. I came up with the brilliant idea that, since the organization takes stands on issues and funds various causes, it is a political organization and, therefore, compulsory fees violate the First Amendment. My co-counsel is a Rightist, so all he was hitting was a narrow financial issue from the State constitution, but his little eyes just lit up and I'm handling the civil liberties end of it. Potential recovery of \$400,000. Cackle!

Now, I ask you, Sylvia, is it any wonder that my role-model is a combination of Clarence Darrow and Scrooge McDuck? Also maybe a whiff of both St. George and the dragon.

Hey, by the way, I know that being 3,000 miles away kind of complicates things, but if there is anything I can do to ease things (other than refraining from bombarding you with CD's for a while -- I promise), do let me know. I have, for example, a vast fund of bad-taste Polack jokes, dirty limericks and questionable quatrains. Should that be too insubstantial, I also can give a disquisition on the rule in Shelley's Case, or the Washington wait and see exception to the Rule Against Perpetuities, or the doctrine of worthier title. When's the last time you got an offer like that?

What I think I will do as soon as I finish this letter is go drink to your improved health -- good Scotch, of course, to keep up with the young-lawyer-on-the-make image. I advise you to do the same (that will be another fifty dollars). Maybe I'll have two, but I may stop there. Fourteen Scotches and I just don't know what I'm doing.

Comport yourself accordingly.

Here is a supplementary suggestion: sometime next year I'll probably be passing through NYC on my way to, and from, a vacation in London. When I'm in town, what say we get together and wrap ourselves around a good meal? Good food is what life's all about, by God.

Well, I must go and get my sister's divorce under way. If you ever met my brother-in-law, you would know why it is a labor of love.

Your depression is, and will remain, the sort of thing that reaches up and gigs me now and then, and I am not going to be amused if you do not take care. There are quite a few people around who vastly prefer having you in workable shape than not, so you better watch it or I'll get another default judgment against you.

As ever,

George

p.s. I was in LA a couple of weeks ago. Dad called + saw Fred + Markymon, who are quite concerned about you, but otherwise doing fine.