

11 February 1967

My dear Rose,

I am sorry if after all you were offended by my failure to call you during my brief visit to L.A. The pace of life for anyone who is involved in this particular work is very hard to communicate to anyone who is not in the thick of it and I have no doubt that it seems incredible to you that I could not find a few minutes in which to phone. The fact is that I just didn't have those minutes. This was my first visit to a city in which I had formed at least four close friendships by mail and phone; and although I met all of my Los Angeles friends in person during the visit, I did not get to have any real conversation with two of them—including one woman with whom I especially wanted to spend time, because she was recently bereaved of her husband and very much needed moral support from her colleagues. In addition to my friends who live in L.A., a friend from Texas and a friend from New Jersey were also visiting at the very same time, and in those cases too I barely managed to spend a little while with them. Since I was a guest in one friend's home, I did not have very much freedom of action. However, I am sure that all these explanations make little difference—perhaps it would have been more tactful of me not even to mention the visit.

Again, it will be hard for you to understand, but I no longer maintain contacts with anyone I knew before 11/22/63, for sheer lack of time and energy and because our interests have diverged so sharply that there is little on which we can converse. In your case, I did not wish to allow a note from so old a friend to go unanswered; but I did try to explain in my initial reply that I am not in control of my own time and simply could not observe the usual social amenities.

Be assured that I am happy to know that you are well and happily married, and have only the best wishes to send you. Perhaps, as you say, when my time is freer, I will take advantage of the opportunities. Meanwhile, I can only hope that you understand that I intend no offense and no rebuff but that the work must come first. I have made time to write this much in the hope that you will not be affronted by what may seem to be coldness, in the recent visit or in the months to come, when I must concentrate first and foremost on the work that will precede the publication of my book.

All the best,