

Dec. 3, 1982

Dear Harold,

I am sending you this letter because, although we've only met in person just one time, I consider you to be a GOOD friend of mine. I also greatly respect the prodigious work you have, and STILL are doing. I know that you are a man of integrity and HUMANITY. These are reasons why I'm going to tell you something in this letter that only Mae Brussell and Richard E. Sprague know about. Certainly, I would NEVER tell Lane, because he has NO humanity. It is this.... Let me begin by saying that what I'm about to write here really isn't my fault. It never is anyone's fault when it happens.

I'll start at the beginning. On Dec. 30, 1977, my birthday, my wife and I decided to celebrate a little so we went to a nice restaurant and ate there. As I said, EVERYTHING was fine. As soon as we finished eating, a very strange and VERY SCARY feeling began to come over me. It got suddenly so bad that I asked my wife to please get out of there as fast as possible. It was, I later found out, my first anxiety attack! I later learned from a psychiatrist that I had suddenly developed a condition called AGORAPHOBIA. It is a very common condition which usually hits WOMEN, in fact it is called "housewives disease." From that day to the present time, I have been an out-patient at a hospital, taking medication and being treated by therapists. These panic attacks strike mostly when I'm in crowded places, like subways, buses, restaurants, etc. They tell me there is no real cure for this condition, one must simply try to relax, and breath into a paper bag until the hyper-ventillating (fast breathing) stops. Also, valium and norpramene, which I've taken for 5 years now, helps a lot. One always has the feeling when these panic attacks strike, that one is "going crazy". That is a usual symptom of this condition, but it NEVER causes THAT! (fortunately)..

When I did the WBAB show that I sent a tape of to you today, I had to take 3 valiums (pills) so that I could relax during the show.

As I've mentioned, at first I was ashamed and afraid to tell ANYONE about this condition whic came on me through no fault of mine at all.

Dick and Mae understand perfectly, and, being the MAN i KNOW you are, that yo'll understand and not hold this against me. It's just another cross I have to carry and bear with, in addition to my very bad back. God knows, YOU have your problems also!! I hope, and KNOW that this fact will NOT cause any rift in our friendship, Harold, I think I know you too well for THAT to ever occur. Because I consider you a friend in every sense, I'm telling you about this, my, problem. As I have been oftentimes told, it is nothing to be ashamed of at all, since this could happen to ANYONE at any time, as it did to me. Anita has been just GREAT!! Her understanding and pure love have been a great comfort to me at these times. As a result of this anxiety condition, I have only been able to work 4 months (this year) since it happened 5 years ago this month. I am applying now for welfare and S.S.I.

Thanks for understanding, Harold, it is greatly appreciated indeed!!

Very best regards to you and yours  
Ted Gandolfo.

Dear Ted,

12/6/82

Ha ty thanks for your 12/3. I know about both conditions, in fact, had two frightening anxiety attacks years ago, the first mis-diagnosed as a heart attack, for which of all things I was given oxygen! But once I became aware, I was able to avoid any others and I never had to use the paper bag.

You should have no guilt feelings and I hope you have none. These things happen and their victims are innocent.

You are doing the right thing to take treatment and in time it may be even more helpful. That you can go out of the house at all is a very encouraging sign, from what I know or have heard.

I think that's why they call it the housewife's disease, because they cannot leave the house. Those are the only cases of which I've heard, of people who can't go out at all.

Thanks also for phoning to let me know that Anita was OK.

Best wishes,