

10/27/71

Dear Pearl,

What a coincidence that when your letter came this a.m. my wife, who is not Jewish or European and has learned what Jewish cooking she knows on her own (we are both championship cooks from the dias past) was preparing stuffed cabbage for tonight. Wasn't up to her usual standard because the cabbage, although young, was also tough, and she ran out of lemon juice. She does it better, by the way, with grape leaves. Not only to my taste but to that of our infrequent guests, including real Yiddische cooks. Matter of fact, most years we lay down some young grape leaves in some kind of brine solution, in a large crock in the cellar, for the times of the year it is frozen here and before the bugs hit the leaves. We got 'em coming up enormous and wild all over the place.

I had a hunch when you mentioned stuffing cabbage that \* might soon be calling you Schwester, or perhaps as I near 60, taughter.

and by another and somewhat less than remarkable coincidence, I also am the first member of my family born outside Russia or what today is called Russia. My mother was 9 when she left Bessarabia and my father about 20 when he left the Ukraine. All - know about their points of origin is that where my mother lived was closer enough to the gubernia for her uncle to get across it one night in kind of a rush, he and his Yeshiva bucher broken have killed seven of the Cossacks who ambushed them. They never talked about it. An older cousin, now dead, born over there, once told me that in 1906 my father went to Zhitomir to await the revolution (in my day he was a "Republican, although he also belonged to the Arbeiter Jung), that on trips on horseback for his father, who was some kind of small merchant, he got to either Kiev or Odessa, where he bought books. The village from which they came is one of probably thousands called Saronovka. So, we are not quite Lenseleiter.

Do your own thing, Pearl, but if you think you can write a novel, you know enough to make it the best, they always sell better than non-fiction, and there is always the possibility of subsidiary rights, like a movie. A good novel, especially if handled with a light touch (I don't often have it) and even better, humorously, might find a flick spot. It is time for a good spoof of the spooks, and with a character like Mizer, wow! What a caricature you could do if you have a clear picture of the real thing.

It is somewhat of an exaggeration to refer to CB as "my man", if you are using the current U.S. slang. We have never met. We had some agreeable correspondence. I know him by his (first-rate, esp. movie) writing and as co-founder and editor-in-exile of the National Guardian, which has changed hands and policies several times. He did me favors, or rather tried to, and his beautiful daughter also tried. I think that although he is out of the movies for some time, he might be able to advise you on this point. You know, the whole reality lends itself to and is a natural spoof. All you have to do is not bite your tongue while it is pressed firmly against your cheek.

The books will go by slower and cheaper mail. My the way, my rural route is 8, not 7. They renumbered right after we had the envelopes and stamps printed. I usually remember by hand, for we are so broke we have to pinch other peoples' pennies. It slows it down a bit. And this paper is out-of-date Ozalid paper, some kind of copier. I have been given an entire case of it, which results in that much of an economy.

In a fiction treatment, you don't have to worry about whether there is a connection between the two cases, do you? And can you say as much? "ook, if a cat like Capote can do it, why can't a Fishbine/Gonzalez pearl?

Best,

Oct. 25, 1971

Dear Hal,

Glad the ice is broken. I'm not good at socializing for long! The stuffed cabbage is a dish I learned to cook from my mother who was born in Odessa. My father was born in Russia, too, but they both emigrated to WI, (by mother from London,) where they met, where my father changed her name to Hildine and where I was born. Can you imagine a by-line like Hildine Compton? The editor of THE JOURNAL NEW YORK used to think it would make more headlines than headlines.

Thanks for clipping. I'll make a reason and return it as soon as possible. Your idea about a fiction book is good one but uncertain why I think too many people are working on it. I still think my angle is valuable in that I know so many people involved. I'm almost finished of writing a laudatory essay, because every time I thought there was something concrete, something happened to make me think otherwise. Your advice is very much appreciated and I intend going to Geneva soon soon on some other matters and will look up your man there.

Do you think it odd that nothing has appeared on a <sup>7</sup> farm follow-up to Knap's escape? Or is it too soon.

Yes, I would <sup>love</sup> some of your books, damaged or otherwise. The more I go over and over my files, the more I think (without facts to back it up) there is a tie between the two cases. The setting is the same, the mood, the time approximately, the politics, the CIA - well, when I can give you a few facts, I'll do more than "blat" about this. No time to get Cor King or Oswald, but I haven't forgotten.

Best,

~~James Earl Ray~~

Paul

+ Book length.

James Earl Ray