

7/9/73

Dear Pearl,

Don't be uneasy about us. We are o.k. You hadn't heard from me because there seemed to be nothing to say and I was ~~hurry~~ waiting to hear from you. Thought I'd answered your last letter.

I am Watergating, without any book deal but two in Europe not impossible. Should hear from one in week or so. Takes much time and work. Meanwhile, I've started to write.

As best I can, I've been keeping up with those male putos whose path crossed yours. Hinckle's Esquire piece is deliberately inaccurate, in ways that suggest more than soothing his own bruised ego may be the motivation.

The have the book but haven't cracked it and won't be able to for a while.

Your lawyer is crazy for telling you that you should sue Ramparts. The way you say it, Ramparts only. What good is a judgement against a bankrupt? The publisher, the movie-maker and the trio are the ones who damaged you. Perhaps for legal reasons Ramparts should be included, but not them alone.

The book seems to be a bomb.

What you say about the possibility that Joel told you what he perhaps should not have is consistent with what I am saying about Hinckle. But I don't know all of what Joel said.

Vidal, books we don't know enough yet. Also, I don't think you need a collaborator. I think all you need is time and self-confidence. The amateur shrink in me tells me this is the lingering effect of an unsuccessful marriage. Once you kick this, you can write this stuff. There is another angle I think I discussed with you when you were here: the Mexican whore/wife. There is a good story, one that needs the understanding of a woman who has lived male chauvenist piggery. But on the non-fiction, all I can now see, not having thought of it in a long time, is a book that ends with a big question. Or fiction, a good story treating the truth that way. A spook book. Or a spook/sex book. It could be both commercial and responsible, as I think of these things, socially useful. You are also loaded with other fine literary materials. So, knowing as an amateur shrink may think he can, that there are problems in getting down to work, I paraphrase Che and say the duty of the writer is to make the writing! If you now have no meaningful social life (and I hope this is not the case), you do have the time. That Cortez thing is crazily funny.

Executive Actions, I've been keeping up with it and the central characters. A tragedy from Trumbo, who I've since youth regarded as a great writer and a principled man. He is doing or has completed the shooting script. Lane is no better than ever. This book is worse than my forecast, the worst of Garrison plus Farewell America. I've almost finished with it, disgust competing with laughs. He has or they have woven together all of the useful of Garrison's wild imaginings, including the synthetic spook chatter, corrupted real evidence exaggerated and misused, boiled an unclean pot, and evolved a rather poor book of what could more easily have been a good one. The book will bomb. The movie...? Much of my stuff has been cribbed. The misuse is all that bothers me. Lane has always done this. And Garrison. But they are incompetent with it.

I'd be interested in anything you can add to "I hear Garrison is to be in Washington soon...", including source. He asked someone I know to go there. I suggested the response be to ask him to go to D.C. It may be this, but if so, I've not been told. And I lunched with that man the day before your letter.

Hastily,

10380 Wilshire Blvd.  
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July 6, 1973

Dear Harold,

It's been so long since I've heard from you, is anything wrong?

I saw a clipping to the effect a movie is being made of Pres. Kennedy's assassination and one of the three screen writers ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> Mark Lane. Too bad you couldn't have gotten in on the deal - or maybe it isn't too late. They claim much of the story will be documented. This all must make you feel like hell, as you've probably put more into it than anyone else. I also hear Garrison is to be in Washington soon as there must be a break in his case pending.

Just to eat I'm working as a secretary in a financial consulting office in Century City. I still send a story or so down to a Mexican magazine and I'm still waiting to see what my attorney is going to do re Kaplan. He thinks Ramparts is the one to be sued and hopes when they sold the files they retained an interest in the book and the picture. The book is out by the way and gives me about a page which seems to deliberately play up my "charm" and play down my ability - to the effect Joel says he made up the plot ~~is~~ story just to give me a good story because I had been so nice. Imagine! He must have told me a lot more than he intended. The book is a complete whitewash, answers no questions, and concentrates on the dramatic escape. I'm dying to do a follow up on what really happened to Vidal and wish you had time to consider this. If we could get a publisher to give us backing, what do you think?

I imagine you're up to your ears in Watergate, and I do think they should throw the whole rotten lot out of Washington as England would do in such a case, for example. At least it would restore a little dignity and perhaps give value to the constantly declining dollar which even the experts say they can't explain. Do you think a depression will result?

Wish you'd drop a line, Harold, it isn't like you not to for so long and it makes me feel uneasy.

Best to you and Lil.

