

Dear Dottie and Oskar,

When we got your pre-Christmas card, we'd hoped to hear from you again, for it led us to believe you were still travelling, the bliss juggling the stardust, while Oskar prepared his lectures on operatic voices of the 20s and 30s (which would have interested me, for in those days I was the opera buff Lil now is) and his commentary on recording techniques (how I wish I had services like his for some of the measures I've had to take!).

That card had no return address. However, I kept the note you gave me before you left, and I hope the address is the same or that mail is forwarded there better than it is here if you are still traipsing around, for I have a special need in writing you. Meanwhile, I report that things are unchanged with us, save that we feel the years and the weight of the recent years more. The book you knew as COUP D'ETAT was reduced to the part dealing with the King assassination only, published by a new small publisher (all the large ones feared and again my agent gave up) who has succeeded in the impossible, arranging no single promo of any kind and frustrating the obvious ones. Don't ask me to explain it, but on my previous trip to NYC I'd lined up five appearances for my return, each requiring a week or more notice. With a month in which to do it, he succeeded in not setting any one! He rejected any press conference on publication, when Percy Foreman fled a TV studio rather than confront me he refused to phone the papers (I had to stay and do the show and couldn't). I mean, with your long experience with the spontaneous and the deliberate methods by which a book can be killed without intending murder, you've never seen such stuff. Meanwhile, with a second printing required in the first month WITHOUT his arranging any promos (young friends and I did a few), I await the second part of my "advance" due more than 3 months ago. Does it sound familiar?

There is an immediate purpose in this letter. Having gotten to NYC again I was able to talk to the lawyer to whom I'd spoken about action against your old friends Dell and Meredith and the situation I assume you recall. With respect to the latter, where there is an open-and-shut breach of contract in the anthology for which I to this date have never been paid for what I agreed for them to use, there remains their use of what they didn't even ask for, and that in a way designed to defame me. Here what can be important is your recollection and your appraisal. I hope you remember that I did a sample taping for you for a projected talking record of the Epilogue of WWII. Once that anthology reprinted the entire thing without authorization, what chance there might have been ended. So, what the lawyer would like is a statement saying that you and I had, in fact, been discussing a talking record of this Epilogue, that to this end we had taped a sample of my reading it, that you were to see about the possibilities of getting it done, and any estimate you think you can honestly make of its potential.

Other things are unchanged. Our only regular income is the pittance Lil makes as a tax consultant for the first quarter. The little we have been able to get of the large sums of which we've been cheated have gone to our debt, which despite this is but slightly reduced because of the cost of carrying it, and there is generally the continuing problem of meeting each day's financial needs. There was a good prospect for this new book (FRAME-UP: The Martin Luther King/ James Earl Ray case), as reprint was probable if the sale was good. Now both appear negative. The media hangup is unchanged. Despite the oppressive of constant weariness, my work has continued, and I've what in any other era would be the most sensational official documents in my possession. I'm talking about what was withheld from the Warren Commission. I've sued and beaten DJ in federal court over some of the suppressions (naturally, not news-anywhere), have other pending and am about to file more. If you ask where I get the energy, the answer is I don't have it, I just make on I do. It is no longer like when I got up before daylight, drove to NYC, worked all day, met you at 11 to do an all-night show, drove you home and then drove 250 miles myself beginning at daylight. I don't even drive to NYC any more. And Long John has a long

F-U got a rave pre-pub review in PW, which no doubt accounts for the publisher's failure to place any add in it or any elsewhere for a month or so, when they put one in the NYTimes. By this time the stores were cooling. He has since placed on other ad, the same on in the New Republic. Meanwhile, I've been doing other impossibles, of which I never make any public mention, like getting Ray to ask my lawyer to be his (Bud), going to Memphis and acquitting the accused many new ways (if we can ever get him into even a corrupted court, meaning any in Tenn.) It was by far my easiest investigation. All I had to do was put out the word I wanted to speak to soandso and soandso came to my motel. That easy. Nobody down there (save the prosecutors, who only pretend it) believes the official mythology, and even the balcks are totally without bitterness about Ray, with whom they relate, assuming that there is no possibility of justice for any poor and that, as I say, he was framed. I have interviewed him, he volunteered a postscript for the book (before we ever met), he has given me some good leads, one of which checked out perfectly, the only one I've had time for, having no \$\$\$, and I hear from him about twice a week. Apparently the first thing he did after his recent attempted escape was to scrawl me a note from solitary. Contrary to what one might expect, he shows no concern for himself but does tell me not to do for him what is too much for me. And when I told him that I was and would keep my

two lives separate, he needn't worry about my commercializing him, his response was to give me full literary rights, no strings, free, and encourage me to use them. Wierd, huh? I don't intend to and, as you know, my work is always my own, aside from inbeddedness to Pod (Purloined Letter) and Carroll (Alice in Wonderland), which remain the basic doctrinal approaches. I now have two feelers out on two JFK books, different approaches. If they do not get accepted, I'll probably proceed on one on my own anyway. Hoping. And the more weary I get, the more I am dominated by the urge to get as much of the writing of what I've already researched done. On any other subject, either of these would be a bombshell. With a different concept, a changed approach, I would not, despite long, depressing experience, consider either impossible today... We still have a few minor joys, the animal who have come to trust us and live with us, rabbits and wild ducks coming to the house to be fed, quail and pheasant showing themselves for the same purposes, even the fish in the pond surfacing on hearing our voices. ... Hope your happiness is without end. Our best to you both, sincerely,