

Dear Tony,

5/24/89

Debbie Robert did phone me when she was supposed to, explained her circumstances, and I agreed for her to return the transcribing machine when it was less inconvenient for her. She phoned again the other day after^{ward} apparently, hearing from you, and is to return it this coming weekend when she does not have to work. As I'd told you when I loaned it to you, I don't use it very often. The problem was that when I did need it I did not have it, could not get it, and as a result could not use it when I annotated five books. The annotations as a result are on four of the books only and typing them, under my circumstances, of which you know, was quite uncomfortable and time-consuming with the fifth.

In all respects your letter of the fifth is self-serving and I do not accept what you say, with regard to this or to the agreement you did not live up to.

You say you could not have handled the return of the machine more expeditiously. If you had wanted to, if you had given a damn about anything except your own convenience and cheapness, this situation would not have ~~been~~ developed. You borrowed the machine only to learn whether or not it would be efficient in transcribing tapes of interviews. That was when[?] early 1988? When I heard you were about to return to Ireland I wrote you about returning it. Kathy had told us and written us that she was coming and in the first letter in which I told you that I wanted none of the King information used, which I've dug out because you claim you did not get it, when[?] then asked for the machine's return. 11/15/88. She was back. And phoned to let us know that you'd not allowed her enough time to come here. And that is when I was first asked to annotate the first of the books, when I was just out of the hospital after the eye surgery and writing was particularly difficult and awkward for me. If you'd really cared and was pressed for time you could have or could have had Kathy leave the machine with Jim. If you didn't trust UFS.

You speak for the first time of seeking a "collaborator" for me. We never discussed this, what we did discuss was the exact opposite, and I don't want and won't have one. The agreement was only for an assistant to do the searching and refiling and in return for arranging this I agreed that if I died before completing the book you would then have the right to use what you^{now} without performing, would use anyway. We did not even discuss how you would arrange for the assistance and it was some time before you got around to writing Lord. And I've no interest in having any mention of any of it in a book likely to get attention. If I thought such attention would be useful to me I'd not have turned Otneor productions down for that BBC program.

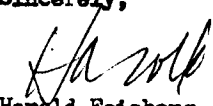
It has come to the point where I just don't believe you. You try to blame this bad behavior on the disaster of a woman who'd worked for you. I'm talking about when you and Kathy got the mail yourselves, some time before you ~~returned~~ returned to Ireland.

I have your word on the tapes that you would not use any of that material unless you arranged for the assistance I need and I expect you to live up to your word. I therefore ask that you return the tapes you made and any notes or transcriptions and to make no use whatsoever of any of it.

I sent Jim a copy of my 11/15/88 letter and I'm also sending him a copy of this.

I tried to help you in any way I could. In return you behaved badly and continue to. Obviously, I did not expect you to and I'm sorry you could.

Sincerely,


Harold Eiseberg

Mr. Tony Summers
P.O. Box 2540
Manassas, VA 22110

11/15/88

Dear Tony,

I'd rather not have any of the King information we discussed used now for a number of reasons. One is that there is other interest. As I presume you know, I never heard from Sterling Lord. I do intend to explore these other possibilities.

Thanks for your concern about the operation. The eye was never the concern, that being outpatient surgery now most times. It may vbe about two months before - have full use of the better eye, however.

Please tell Cathy when she returns that we do look forward to a visit by her and Paul and, if that will be winding up your work here, the return of Ed's transcribing machine.

No, we haven't really needed it while I've had limited use of my right eye.

I haven't tried to do that much.

I imagine that the Hoover writing will not be simple, there is that much and probably so much is intertwined.

Good luck with it!

Hand

PHONE
353 (Ireland)-24(Youghal)-96210

ANTHONY SUMMERS

STILL POINT,
DROMORE,
AGLISH,
CAPPOQUIN,
CO. WATERFORD,
IRELAND.

9.5.89

Mr. H. Weisberg,
7627 Old Receiver Road,
Frederick, MD21701.

Dear Harold,

I just got back from the very hectic trip to the States, and received your letter of April 30 - again letting me know that the machine had failed to arrive. I suspect that you must have had a call from Debbie Roberts almost as soon as you had mailed the letter to me - and that she let you know the machine was safely retrieved and on its way in her care. I do hope you have by now received it.

I can see you are still annoyed about this. I did the very best I could, operating initially from such a great distance, and then in the difficult circumstances of my visit. Perhaps I have not explained clearly enough what occurred. My previously super-efficient secretary of last year did not just fail to return your machine. She literally vanished for months, along with piles of documents vital to Kathy and myself, with my car, and a great deal of money, and of course, your machine. Kathy and I spent hours on the phone trying to contact her, and both did so again the very hour I heard your machine was still missing. Then, when I arrived in the States, I made sure the machine was retrieved - literally by having the errant secretary's house staked out. Finally, as I whirled off again - I covered several cities in ten days - I regularly checked with Debbie (who was our able runner last year) to see that she was dealing with the matter. She called to say she had spoken with you, and had made an appointment to return the machine by hand. And I fervently hope you now have it.

Harold, I do not know how I could have handled this more expeditiously, in the circumstances. Before Christmas, Kathy and I would have deemed it unthinkable that our secretary could behave so poorly. But behave badly she did. (For my part, I am still some \$5000 in the hole, and will be taking the woman to court in an effort to salvage something.) That said, I am - I say again - extremely sorry the delay occurred. I would ask you to reflect that it is not my general style to deal with you in cavalier fashion. I have always responded promptly to your letters, and I strove as best I could to help with the King book plan. My agent, Sterling Lord, did make an effort, and did believe at one stage he had found a suitable collaborator for the project. I raised this again with him when I saw him in New York last week (before getting your letter of April 30), and Sterling said he would think again. There are, of course, the usual "Buts". There have been recent successful books on King (though we know they're not anything like what yours would be), and the sort of collaboration you need is hard to pin down. Sterling should have written to you - but then sometimes he does not get letters to me on things, and that leaves me hopping mad too. He is, however, a good agent, and I suspect that he simply has not written until he has something useful to say.

over.....

You wrote me last November 23 that you had thought about nudging Sterling Lord, and decided not "because experience suggests there's little hope of progress without real interest." I think that was right, but all the same, I am today writing to Lord to get him to give you the courtesy of a letter at least.

Finally, as to the understanding we had about the King stuff we discussed I believe I am perhaps missing at least one letter from you, and once again my vanishing secretary is probably the culprit. Another of her undone tasks was to clear our Manassas mailbox and send mail on. Kathy and I are gradually discovering that she did pick up mail at first, but then failed to send it on. Frankly, it is a nightmare during such a huge research project. However, this is the way we left it, as I understood it from the last relevant correspondence I did get. You said in yours of December 6, just before I left for home, "I suggest that when you get around to that part you write me what you intend to use. I had in mind those things I mentioned and nothing else. If you would like to use more, tell me what it is and I'll respond promptly." So, on those lines, what I planned to do was simply to summarise the nub of your information rather along the lines of the outline we sent to Sterling Lord, with key names left out if you so wished. And with a firm credit to you, so that it might stimulate fresh interest in the case, through you. That, I think, is the reason for getting this into my Hoover book - to take the opportunity to air the matter in a serious publication likely to be covered by the press. I think it would be a pity to let the matter stay buried, and I do hope that - on further reflection now - you will agree to some such formula. At any rate, what I would like to do is to draft something - not more than a few paragraphs, and mail it to you for approval when I get to that point in the book.

As of today, I have not even started Chapter One, and delivery is early next year..... so I'd better get back to it.

Warmest regards to you and Lil. And, again, I am so sorry you were upset by the delay over the machine. Please God, the thing is back with you long before you get this letter.

Best,
Tang.