

Dear Diane,

Your letter of the 21st came this morning, along with many others requiring immediate response. I answer yours first because I know you must be lonely and troubled and getting any kind of word that doesn't begin "hitoh" may cheer you a little.

I'm also more tired than usual. There has been a break in the weather. It has been dry and not as cold, so I spent what it now turns out was too much time yesterday and Saturday in what I intend as a joke, liberating trees I want to save from the repressive influences of honeysuckle, climbing poison, greenbriers (good 50 feet long!), wild grapes (as long as the greenbrier and with stems so thick I've been burning them in the fireplace), and an assortment of trash trees. I ache and I'm weary. Your tale about your father's pecan tree makes me think of my regret at having to take down a large and crooked sassafras tree. The sap was rising. It was so aromatic I save the larger chips and took them to the house for Lil's enjoyment. We like the aroma. However, this particular tree was a jeopardy to a number of spruce I prefer, including some small ones I'll transplant, so it had to go, despite my liking for the s. trees. In this there is also a moral and a bit of philosophy. So, I've been running the fireplace full time, not just nights, easier in this cold clime when Lil has to set up a separate office for her tax work in the living room, near the fireplace. The rest of the house can be colder. The kitchen isn't because there is almost no wall between it and the living room.

I'd expected to liberate the cleared ground from assorted brambled today, but neither my fatigue nor the mail will permit that. We want to use this cleared ground for a garden, and now is the time. The tulips are up two inches or more, the robins made their first appearance yesterday, so spring is near.

Today's letter was marked 10. No 9 and none of the others that didn't come have.

It is not easy to counsel you because there is too much I don't know. I remind you again of my oft-repeated requests for responsiveness. You are talking about things I do not really understand. Perhaps you can send me the letters in question. And this reminds me of something else I'd like you to keep in mind, the old saying that the past is prologue. Several times I've tried to get you to sort things out for me or put me in a position to, the last at the last steak dinner. Before that when I was at Matt's. When I am in ignorance or in doubt, I am limited. I don't like to do what I'm not reasonably certain about and you've assured uncertainties. Please make some effort to give me an independent understanding, not just your representation, interpretation or paraphrase.

By the way, I'll not have time to correct my typos.

There is a warmth in your reflections of your girlhood and some of your experiences. The turtle story does not surprise me. The fact is you also have an affinity for reptiles. I remember that you got real uptight on the trip we took to Carville when a turtle ran to a levee and I hit or almost hit it, not being able to avoid it. And I remember one morning when we were breakfasting at a drive-in on Metairie Road how you enjoyed a small lizard running across the top of a board fence.

If Scott did not get my first letter at least before he saw you Wednesday, the mail was delayed. With the 18th a Sunday and the 19th a holiday, that is not impossible. He could not have gotten the one I wrote him the 20th, but all should have reached him by now. I hope I hear from him.

As long as he is your attorney, he has to know everything there is to know about you or he is crippled in defending you. This also means everything that can be alleged against you. If your parents really intend what you say, then he has to know that in detail, too. On the other hand, he is bound by confidentiality. That is, he can't make any misuse of anything he gets.

Taking your quote of Scott at face value, two of the more obvious possibilities are that the charges against you are other than you have represented to me ~~and~~ and he is persuaded they are valid or that you have turned him off, offended him. However, before you fire him, you should have a replacement. If you want advice from me on this point, I must have what you have not given me, including the full charges against you and what they are based on. And truthfully. No interpretations. I can make my own and I do not begin prejudiced against you. You can fire him as late as when you get into court. If you do it now you'll have one appointed and that may be the fryinpan, which is hotter

Got that backwards: fire, which is hotter than the fryingpan.

You have a right to ask him what he has done for you, including motions he has filed, discovery moves in which he has engaged, what they disclose, etc. I can't easily help you with another lawyer in Houston because the only one who knows me there considers me worse than cholera. You can always ask the ACLU to talk to you. They take cases with certain principles only involved. I've mentioned the public defender, but I know nothing about the system there.

You sued a different expression, but how is someone going to make money giving you the works? This is another area where I am without a basis for understanding.

I've reread what you say about the possibility of being dragged off to your parents' home and how that will be worse. Again, I can't understand it. I have some understanding, as you know from what I've told you, but not enough. Without a sufficient basis, I think you are wrong, that that could be better, but I don't now want to go into detail.

You have made repeated references to an undescribed psychiatric situation. My own view is that if, in today's world, there is a person without an emotional problem of some kind, that person has to be sick in the head. I am aware of some of yours. In my own way, if perhaps subtly, more subtly than you realized, I've tried to address them. You may not realize it, but in this letter you disclose two more as you had not earlier. They are, I think, normal, not abnormal reactions. I remember Maddenville, Bourne, Rees, the guy with the disappearing Mercedes radiator caps and a few others, so the fact is not new to me, the significance is missing. If I think I am aware of some of your problems, I have never seen anything criminal or dangerous in them, have no reason to believe any exist, don't think that in the eyes of the law the you I knew was irresponsible, meaning not responsible, and I have a record of which I remind you, for you should feel able to trust me. Remember the letter you gave me to give to a gynecologist and my refusal to do it in your interest, or to let anyone else know about it?

Yet much of the time, despite this and other things of which I could remind you, you did not impart full trust in me. I think you now should and, if you are to be helped, you really have no choice. Unless there is someone else to whom you can turn. There you will face the same situation, which means that you still have no choice.

There is also the possibility that any psychiatric condition could be helpful at this juncture, not hurtful. If I don't know of any such condition, I do know that it can have exculpatory legal significance.

In the lingo with which you are familiar, I'm saying lay it on me the way it is, not like Holden, and I am familiar with Salinger. Until this happens we are not communicating. You are talking at me, not to me.

Incidentally, the statute doesn't run on the charge after the charge is made. Long delay means other things, not that. Or, you are a girl turtle-lover, not a lawyer.

You reflect more than a change in your attitude toward Scott: you are saying that his attitude toward you has changed, as you see it. You do not even indicate why, and if he did not make it explicit, I think you are sharp enough to have detected the basis.

If I am willing to try to be helpful, you must do as I've asked, fully and honestly. If you do not, I'll be no more than a sympathetic ear. We have our own generous supply of serious problems. They require much time of me. So, if you continue avoiding what I address, I'll be having to ask myself why and each time I take time out to write you I'll be having to ask myself if I can take the time just to be sympathetic to someone who so clearly will not trust me. And if you won't trust me or give me a reason I can accept for not doing it, with all the cause you have for being willing to impart this trust, ask yourself how you would feel and would react if our situations were reversed. Some of this just isn't rational. Example: your folks are going to all the trouble you allege to lose the key on you. That can't be secret from anyone but me, so why no details? Or, you can get one who has the knowledge to impart it.

Let's not be at cross-purposes. Let's not you do anything rash. I'd find it hard to be patient in your position, but you must find patience and not do anything hasty that could complicate things. Next time you are in a mood to go back to your girlhood, tell me about that fetching

picture of the sweet little girl, all decked out in frills and bows. That should be less unpleasant. But it is also not a substitute for the info I need.

This is not a hassle but a statement of fact: it is past time for a little unselfishness. It is both time and past time for fear. So, please serve both our interests with a long-delayed levelling.

In this letter you say nothing about your medical condition. If I wanted to hassle, I could say that in this regard it is not consistent with what you have said in the past about it. It is one of the things I raised immediately with Scott. I'd like to know the scoop.

Remember Bobby's attitude toward his dad? If there is no parallel here, I'd like to see something meaningful by way of a different attitude from you.

Of course I'm sorry about the present lawyer situation. I presume you 'll keep me posted. I'd like to understand it as I now can't.

I've taken more time than I'd planned or really have. Go though and do likewise. If you read those passages from the Bible to which I referred you, it may be easier. Keep your spirits and your chins up! Try not to depress mine with further avoidances. And let us hope that the situation is one about which something can be done.

Oh, yes, you raised the question of bond, yet you appear to have done nothing further about it when you were with Scott. If you get to post it, what will you then do, beginning with where you will stay, what kind of surroundings they will be etc.,

Shalom!

Harold Weisberg