

2/22/73

Dear Diane,

Today I got two envelopes from you, containing three letters, dated the 17th, 18th and 19th. The postmarks were all of the 20th. Earlier I got letters from you dated the 2d, 13th and 16th. Or, two less than you say you sent. Prior to this I wrote you the 8th, 18th, 19th and 20th. I have written Scott three times but have had no response for there has not been time. And I have written the sheriff, copy enclosed.

If you are willing, I would like you to write biographical essays about some of the people in whom I have been interested. I would leave the form up to you, but I would want the information to be factual, what is not first-hand knowledge indicated as not. You know some of them in whom I'm interested if you should get an o.k. before I hear from the sheriff. Later, if it meets with the sheriff's approval, I would like you to sketch likenesses, as your mind recalls them. These perhaps you would be permitted to give to Scott so they can be mailed without folding. Most jails would want to be able to see anything like this to assure themselves that nothing is hidden in the drawing.

I remember your sketching well. You might enjoy being able to do it again and I would like to know how these people looked.

Most of this morning and afternoon were taken up with meetings with county officials in their offices and here, to straighten out a problem made by some road work. (The crazy contractor raised and widened the road at the end of my lane and made a dam so the water would not run off. We are on a mountainside, the lane drains a big chunk of it, the lane is 500 feet long, so you can imagine what kind of Pouchartrain they created!) So, I've little time and I felt I should write the sheriff first. I also felt he should know something about the potential hazard to you. Most prisoners would probably not admit it, but the few wardens I've met always treated me decently, I've never taken advantage of the trust of any, and those I've met have in every case discussed some aspects of the welfare of the prisoners in whom I was interested. In every case I was permitted to interview the prisoners in a private room and all were maximum-security jails. One, in Leavenworth, who wanted help of me, was even permitted a typewriter after I'd made the request and it was turned down. What I'm saying is that not all wardens but those I've had experience with have been decent human beings. I was at one bastille once when the guards were on strike and the prisoners made a sympathetic demonstration. Didn't see anyone but the warden that day, but he gave me an o.k. to return as soon as breakfast was over the next day.

So, I've read the three letters that came today, if not under the best circumstances, in between meetings with the county commissioners, etc. I'll try to go over them again tonight to see if there is anything that requires specific answer.

You refer again to hassles with your folks and what neighbors have told you. Aside from having a general understanding of what a hassle is, this means nothing to me. Can you send me the letters to read and return, or can you lay it on me (I know a little of the jive talk to which you referred). I'd like to understand what this is and what it involves. I have only a hunch on the origin, but I do have that and I believe it preceded your abandonment of their faith. You were confirmed. Cut picture.

Don't get any inflated notions about writing and its profitability. It is getting rougher all the time. Fewer big magazines, more small local ones. And first you have to practise, get some experience in putting your thoughts down in form attractive enough to appeal to others.

You present Scott as a real human being. He's probably as square as I am.

Odd coincidence: at this point I had a call from a lawyer for one of these prisoners. Some of his "friends" are "helping" him in unhelpful ways.

I remember one thing you did ask me about and I can't give you an authoritative answer, wet dreams. You also referred to them once from Braithwaite. I had never stopped to think that women had such a release. They are very common among men, the younger the more common. From the lectures they gave us in the Army in World War II I take it they are, in a way, healthy because they are a release, emotional probably less than physical. With men this physical release can eliminate extreme discomfort. If you are asking is

there something wrong with this or something to be concerned about, I'd have to say that I do not know but I would presume the answer in both cases is no, that it is probably a good thing. So, dream, maedl, dream pleasant dreams. Sorry I can't get Idl's opinion for you because she is at work and I'll be mailing this soon when I go to get her. If she doesn't have to bring too much work home tonight, she'll read your letters after supper. She is that busy she does have to bring returns home to work on, the more complicated ones. And is she a whis at it! Last night there was a couple who made me sorry for them and for Idl, who was tolerant and from it was abused. His was a man who should have known how to keep records. He is the cashier of a large insurance company. But he didn't. He just had an enormous stack of bills and checks. Wil is the manager of her branch. She works the day shift. They have men on the night shift, but it is dark by the time the men get there, so I make it a point to get there before dark. Wil hasn't tumbled to why yet, but it is just that I'll feel better if a man is there before dark. The office is in the back of a nice, large shopping center in a good location. So, I couldn't help notice the client she was working on when I got there at 5:45, a little later than usual. And his stacks. This poor guy had had major medical problems. Back. Idl ran two yards of adding-machine tape doing what he should have done before he came in. The part that I saw lasted 70 minutes, for which she made no charge and does not herself get paid. She was thus an hour and a half getting home and was more tired than usual. If it is like that again, she won't read them tonight for I won't give them to her.

Anyway, your asking this questions says your ma never laid it on you at the age she should have. Or, I'm a flop as a foster mother, not knowing the answer. However, I am confident in the assurance, that emotionally and physically it would be good, not bad.

If the jive phrase is spin the wheels, if I don't go now I'll have to spin them or I'll be late. Remember what I've asked about being responsive. Don't write at me, write me me and be responsive.

Good luck,