

Dear Jim,

3/3/81

Meant to send you the enclosed WxPost story on Anna Chenault and the new new China several days ago but forgot.

Little new here. We had an early Spring for a week and now winter has returned again. Hope it doesn't freeze hard enough to damage the trees, which have been budding. Our earliest crocuses were out very early last week, along with a species of ~~small~~ dwarf tulip and the narcissi and jonquils are six inches high. Our drought is more or less broken by a good rain but the water level remains low. Can't remember ever being able to use a cart on the lawn in February without making ruts when the surface wasn't frozen. Now none of the earth is frozen, and fairly firm.

Most days I'm walking a bit better but not much farther. More often and more exercising. In time I hope it helps.

It is a bit frustrating to have trees down and not being able to trim the ~~branches~~ branches and tops out. I've about two cords of poplar of this sort I want to save. I sold the logs on the stump, trees that needed culling anyway, and to a man who can fix our small dam when he comes for the logs. He'll have the backhoe here for loading them and I won't have to pay him for. Part if not most of the repair on the dam will be covered by the logs. I expected someone to trim the branches today but he has not come. Dat after tomorrow, report for rain. . . . This is year after next's wood I'm working on. Poplar is not an idea firewood but it burns and gives off heat and I can use it days while saving the hardwood for nights. This guy will be taking down some locusts for me, so that will give me hardwood and I have about a cord that will be left over this year. Next year's wood is what I'd intended for this year and was not able to get to the house.

I'm expecting an offer of undescribed help from an old friend, on getting the new King book out. While I don't feel the zest of the past, I feel the need to do it and will be getting to it, I hope soon. When I have to stop and move around so often concentration won't be easy. I'd made a hint to this friend, didn't hear from him, so I spoke to another, Howard Bray, of the Fund for Investigative Reporting. We lunched last week and he was willing to consider possibilities.

I've gone over my rather large King writing file and put it more in order than it was. Now I'll go over it again to rearrange it so that I can have space in the top drawer, the no bending drawer, for drafts, notes, exhibits, etc.

Lil is OK, a little wearied by some of her tax work, meaning the clients, those who made messes in the past that she has to cope with yearly. It is a source of satisfaction to us both that most come back to her year after year and some won't consider going to anyone else. Especially the older ones, particularly widows, and including some who've had bad experience with CPAs. We'll have an early dinner tonight because a preacher and his daughter, he retired, she in business, are coming from West Virginia. She'll be over that in six weeks and if I'm lucky and plucky maybe I'll have some King drafts ready for her to retype.

I hear that Dave Lifton's heavily-promoted indecency is 11th on the non-fiction best seller list. The only parts that are Lifton's are poor fiction. But the TV attention has been heavy, with all those talk shows needing guests. The book by the former chief counsel and editor of the House assassins committee is due soon. Been in galley for a long time, meaning the galleys were out long ago.

Hope all is well with you and the earthquake reported on the radio did no damage.

Best,

