

Dear Jim,

3/17/80

Dave's phone call of two days ago reminded me that we have not heard from each other in a while. So, in the few minutes before I leave for the weekly blood-test, this update: we are as we have been, ~~lil~~ with her usual tax-season fatigue and a bit more trouble from her arthritis.

Winter is about over and by and large we made it well. It got to 63 yesterday, the forecast is for the 70s and perhaps a thunderstorm today, but we still have snow on the ground. Crazy! We did not run out of wood, used only 98 gals. of fuel oil, and that only on days I was away, and I've begun to accumulate next winter's supply.

I asked Dave if he'd heard from you and he told me about the phone conversation over Elizabeth's writing you about her use of your violing and refusing to show them her letter. She's growing up. Cute.

Dave also reported overhearing a serious conversation between her and David, who told her that some day she would find another King Tut's tomb. (She has developed archeological interests.) Kids are wonderful.

The crocuses have been in bloom, through the snow, for a week. Tulips and up, jonquils and bluebells, too, and in one place a day-lily has worked its way through the black-tip paving.

Thursday Lil showed signs of cabin fever so I contrived a few errands and got her out of the house. Last stop was a garden shop of a large hardware chain. She found seed packets on sale for 8¢ each! She got 14 and immediately planted some in a small electric and plastic hothouse I got her last year. Incredible as it seems some had germinated and were up an inch in less than 48 hours.

Me, I got grass seed, for the spots that would not grow grass because of shade and this year will get sun.

Tomorrow I'm before the court of appeals in one JEK case and a week from tomorrow I'm before the same fink district court judge in another one.

Saturday I got the first 6,500 entries of the 40foot Dallas index. Dave flipped out when I told him it had finally begun to come and that I would require still more file cabinets. (Not for those, for which I'd estimated and have space - for other, King records he did not know I'd get, the FBI's abstracts of all its MURKIN or King assassination file records. This also excited him.)

I lose some and I don't lose some. I'd lose fewer if Lesar were less timid. I've won administratively, where I could do it myself, a battle to get cross-references between the FBIHQ and Dallas JFK files. With this I will mail an inquiry, "So where are those of New Orleans?"

I've made somewhat of a start on the accumulation I must clean up before I get back to writing. Always interruptions, but gradually I'm getting out from under.

Last two days a visit from a pleasant young Hartford Courant reporter, here on personal interest, not assignment. It was good to hear that he turned down a radio offer that would have doubled his salary because he wants to stay in print reporting. He might not have been free to make this decision if his wife were not working, but it nonetheless was good to know that some of the younger ones have concerns for more and other than income.

Some time ago, when you wrote of the projects you have going, you mentioned a widow who was having a hard time of it along with another or others. While you should get considerable gratification from these fine endeavors for which you manage to find time, I've thought often of this woman as I've thought of my mother and how hard it was on her, after a prolonged period of difficult nursing of my stepfather while he lingered for months in sometime violent senility. My mother was not alone. My two sisters and their considerate husbands were close and present, as were the loved grandchildren. But she did lack what I think you offer. Perhaps it is some kind of male chauvenism, but I think that being of help to such a woman ought give you even more of the personal satisfaction I imagine is the great reward you get from the really fine thing you do. ... Time to go. Hope you are well, happy, and prepared for the healthful chores of the new growing year that is soon on us.

