

Hotel Union Square
114 Powell Street
San Francisco, California 94102
415 434-4360

Feb. 26, 1983

Dearest Patty,

It is raining here in San Francisco, huge winds toil against the sea as if the skies themselves are mourning Tennessee's death. I have never felt such grief, nor been at such a loss. How I miss him! But there's no help for it. I think of his small figure, in those little boy jockey shorts, lying on a bed. I think of the nights I was with him where I'd hold his hand until he slept because he was fearful of dying alone. "Death only comes, baby, when you're alone!" It seems he was right in that. Poor baby. And now Dakin is blackening his memory, saying he was a drug addict, crazy, all in an attempt to set the grounds to break the will. It is disgusting; worse, it is deliberate cruelty.

The world stinks.

I'm off to do a TV show on the runaways. I leave today for San Diego, from there to Mexico.

I miss you.

I can't stop thinking about Tenn: in my sleep he comes to me and I awake forgetting he is dead and then, suddenly, I remember and want to cry. Too much already.

I am writing, sweet Patty, to thank you for letting me be with you in Boston for your brother's birthday. I feel like part of the family — forgive the presumption. I am enormously proud of knowing you, of being your friend. You are like no one else, better, kinder, lovelier, as I have told you before. Believe it.

God willing, I'll be home on the 9th.

Love,

Dorson

HOTEL UNION SQUARE

Letter to Pat Lawford from
Dorson on Tenn's death

1/83

Correspondence: Dorson to Lawford, 1983

Aug. 2, 1971

Sunday A.M.

Dear Dotson:

Not only will you be welcome on the Coast but indispensable man. I am glad that you believe as I do in friendship as ~~the~~ last nobility of the human spirit. Wouldn't you know I'd put it in that rhetorical way? But you know it means no less than if I put it in your way of the new generation to which I do not belong except in spirit.

I say you will be indispensable to me on the Coast because I have been screwed in Chicago, I am the quite, quite ravaged. But I've got this resilient thing going for me and I am too ornery an old mother to let go.

I am going to try to get one of those cottages on the Beverly Hills (hotel) grounds so that we can put you up if you have no pad out there. Then I want to meet your underground friends. Would they take me seriously or just say, Oh, that old fart! And put me on?

It will not be easy for you to make your friends believe in me as, for so many years, I have passed as an establishment writer because they preferred to see me that way, never bothering to get the message at all.

Last night at about two A.M. I phoned the director and told him to fuck off. He has been telling me for weeks that he is "a great director". He never sees me without saying "I am a great director". I told him if he was even a half ass director for stock he would ~~be~~ would not start directing that old Broadway cornball "Look Homeward, Angel" while "Out Cry" still needs almost daily direction.

Baby, we are flying ^{midy} out of here Monday afternoon and I still haven't gotten that photostat of the material about my youth which I gave you here. Is it in the mail? I NEED it!

Write me at Beverly Hills Hotel.

Your devoted pen-pal,

Johns
Tenn.

I will probably be on the Coast only a week before we fly to the Orient - so get cracking if you want to join us. *I mean on the Coast.*

No word from Lynn, and I need immediate representation very badly.

440 West End Avenue
New York City 10024

August 7, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

I hope this reaches you in Tahiti before you leave for Japan. I do not know what the fuck is with the U S Mails, but God knows the stuff has not been reaching you in California. The Memoirs ms. was sent to you in Chicago, as was the Esquire article, in plenty of time to arrive before you left for the Coast. I believe the real problem is the Hotel Ambassador.

On Monday morning I will call Fred Jordan and have him send his copy of the Memoirs airmail to Tahiti. So, for God's sake Tennessee, MAKE SURE THE HOTEL TAHARA HAS YOUR CORRECT FORWARDING ADDRESS AND EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS THAT YOUR MAIL IS TO BE FORWARDED TO YOU IMMEDIATELY!

I regret that you left Los Angeles so quickly, although personally I feel it is better that you are out of the States and ~~anywhere~~ somewhere where you can get some rest and quiet. I thought you were going to be in California for several more weeks and I had planned on coming out to see you. I had also asked Eric Mann and Abbie Hoffman to contact you when they hit the Coast. What the hell, you can see them when you return to the States. They'll be around making the Revolution. I wish so often that I had their singlemindedness and toughness; they keep working at their politics when the rest of us drop from fatigue and discouragement.

Ruth Ford, who is a close friend of mine, comes back to New York from Crete in a week. I will be delighted to see her. She is going to be in the road company of Miss Reardon Drinks A Little. She needs the work. And by Labor Day most of my other friends will be back in town and it won't be so lonely here. God, what an empty summer this has been. I was saved by having you in town and seeing you in Chicago. You filled a lot of hollowness in my life. But now you are gone too, so I got somebody else I love to miss -- tough, beautiful, mindbending motherfucking Tennessee! Wow!

I am working on my novel. I just finished the fourth issue of DEFIANCE, and completed an article for Bazaar. Got two book reviews to write next week, an article for Evergreen to complete, and one due for the New York Journalism Review. And then, God willing, I am going to steal a few weeks and ~~go~~ give them over to my novel. Aint it shit having to write articles and reviews to make enough bread to write what you love, the novel. No, I guess it aint so bad.

Give my regards to Vic. Send me postcards. Get plenty of sleep, don't drink too much, eat regular, get exercise, and think about me once in awhile. I will see you when you come home to America.

P.S.

Lynn said she tried calling you three times in Chicago, and twice on the Coast. Couldn't connect. So it goes. You can have her as agent if you want her. So don't worry about it, okay?

from Tennessee
Williams

8/11/71

Dear Dotson:

To paraphrase what an old friend said about a place he hated, Papeete, Tahiti, is where they'd insert the enema tube if they gave the earth a high colonic. It's hot and humid, the natives have been corrupted and turned bitchy, you can't get Harvey's Bristol Cream Sherry, you order cafe au lait for breakfast and get liquefied mud and a pot of hot water with it. We've got to get out of here, and quick, but Vic cannot make any sense out of what they tell him at the air-port. The last I heard over the phone from him this morning was that we were going to Honolulu by way of Pago-Pago and it was a nine hour flight and I've still got cardiac arrhythmia from the last one.

I wrote this poem for you: submit it to Evergreen if you think it's good.

It makes me suspect that people may be right when they say I pity myself. However I have never in all my life met anyone who didn't pity himself some mornings, and some all day and all night, so I would say that self-pity is a thing more honestly admitted than denied. Not a thing, a question, that you should appeal for the Fifth Amendment against.

I should be back in the States in a few days anyhow. I am definitely not in a mood for island hopping. We are going to book into the Hollywood-Roosevelt Hotel on Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, for a few days to buy the Press Press, After Dark, Esquire, and watch television, the newscasts. Write me there and say "Hold for Arrival."

"This Place no good". Those four words comprised the last letter written by D.H. Lawrence from a place called Beau Soleil in the Alpes Maritimes.

You see how full I am of literary archaeology!

In what kind of atmospheric conditions will we three meet again?

With love

10.

P.S. It's all straightened out now, we are booked onto a morning plane to Pago-Pago, with a one-hour stop over there to catch my breath, and then to Honolulu where we'll take the sun for a week on Waikiki beach, which is still a lovely beach with clear water. Vic is a child of love, he is something God thought of for me. - I'll mail this from there.

West
440 ~~West~~ End Avenue
New York City 10024

Dear Tennessee,

It is early morning. I have been up working on my novel, and trying to complete an article on the Feminization Of The Male for Harper's Bazaar. I have a lot of work here: a review for the Times and one for Rolling Stone, an article for Defiance (if we do a fifth issue, I will want something from you for it, something political, if you are willing), and one for Evergreen. I am up to my pretty ass in work. And despite the work (I love writing, Tennessee) I would much rather be with you. I miss you, baby. I have only been back about a day and I am already lonely for you. I think we dig each other, man. I think we love each other, too. I think we got a hell of a lot of deep respect for each other as men and writers and revolutionaries. And I believe that if either of us got into the shits, into the heavy troubles, I believe we would come to each other fast. Aint it great that we found each other. Hell, yes!

You are right about Miss Woods. You should go with Lynn. She'll take you on. And you are right about your play. It is being screwed by lousy direction and a role miscast and crappy staging. But that can be fixed. But what you wrote is tough, heavy-hung, true, so goddamn true, it is beautiful. That is what I know. And I do not lie to a writer about his writing. I do not lie to you, Tennessee. We are friends, and friends do not lie. I got nothing I want from you, man. I do not want bread or anything else. I just want you as my friend. I think I got that.

I speak to Dave Dellinger tomorrow about the possible rally in October. I know you will be together by then because you will be needed by your friends, your friends protesting in the streets and fighting underground against this fucking war and this evil, death-polluted, decaying System. You and me, we are the beautiful, clean, native savages hustling to overthrow an Empire. We are the first Christians before they went to seed. We are Spartacus and we are John Brown and we are Rosa Luxemburg and Joe Hill and we are Che and we are Ted Gold and we are the kids at Kent State. We are life struggling, Tenn, fighting our way through that old bastard death to justice. We are life and the future and we are going to win!

Do see Eric Mann on the Coast. It would be good for both of you. And give my love to handsome Vic. He loves you very much, Tennessee. As do I.

~~Power to you!~~

September 1, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

Tried calling you all yesterday but never connected. I really wanted to see you and Victor before ypu took off for Key West. Man, don't we have the good times when we give it out together!

You missed some dinner at Kris Erickson's. The boy had gone to considerable lengths in his new \$60. a month apartment to give us a class A cake-eaters dinner. It was really sad because he had candles burning and had spent the afternoon making a stew and had bought bad wine which cost too much and three different kinds of fresh fruit and too much cheese and had his real linen napkins in little napkin holders and the borrowed chairs around the kitchen table; and he was dressed in blue knit, tight, pajamas which showed about everything and brushed against your face, the basket that is, as he served the food. In addition to me, he had another guest, a hustler. Really nice kid. And after dinner the three of us sat on the bed drinking wine and talking about the hustler life and the losers crossing the line silently one day between buyer and seller, and about the risks and the wierdos and the bad times (about the guy he knows who has him blow up balloons while the john masturbates watching his chest rise and fall with his blowing); and he turned on the color television and his friend took off on some kind of high (exploding plastic inevitable comes to mind.ZAP!) and we listened to records and it all began to fade into place, that night, Kris and the gentle easy talk of you, the deep fondness there, what was shared there we had together in the existence of Tennessee in the life, and no passes were made, no plans, ~~no~~ hassle, no bad shit, no tough poise, just a kind of ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ tender passage of time ~~in~~ in the room cluttered with his junk and his future hopes. It was lovely, Tennessee, I wish you had been there to make it even better. At midnight I took him and his friend up to Third Avenue so they could go to work and I made them pay the taxi fare (that was a kind of laying down of rules, sharing the fare) and Kris' friend slipped me a ~~up~~ on his way out of the cab and said Thanks to me. For what? Kris gave me a picture of himself to send to you. I have enclosed it. He likes you, man.

The deal with the kid in Berkeley is unresolved. Contact was never made. It may yet be.

And we still haven't gotten a hall for the Nov.1 rally. Still trying.

I miss you, Crocodile. And I miss old Vic. Tell Vic that I have in my days and nights gone down on studs unmeanly. I don't know why he wonders.

Sent Fred the poem. Write me sometime.

Oh, I ran into Don Madden at the West End Bar. Told him you were in town. He said you should keep Audrey Woods. I told him he was full of cow shit. And so is she.

LOVE,

9/27/71

Dear Little (?) Brother:

Here's the corrected piece with a page added - on hotel stationery - to end it with.

Now I want you to think very seriously about the publication of this piece. You admit there will be a good deal of flak. I'll be the target of it. How does that help the movement? Would it help the movement for me to be forced out of the country which is a consequence that is possible and must be considered, not just by me but by you, too, if you are truly my friend as I trust and believe you to be?

I would have no reservations if I thought the writing was at all distinguished.

I've had practically everything now, but the final axe, and I feel like I've paid my dues and don't want to run for Christ on an unopposed ticket like President Thieu. The Christ idea is elitist. I feel much more at home washing his feet with my hair.

I met an important Bulgarian actor in Paul Scofield's dressing-room and he told me that "Streetcar" was being done in Sophia, Bulgaria, and I said I'd heard that Blanche doesn't go mad back of the curtain and he said she does in Bulgaria but not in Moscow and I said those Moscow cats must have a lot on the ball to keep Blanche in her right mind.

Maria, her older daughter and I are flying to Paris Thursday for the French premiere of "Sweet Bird". We'll be at a hotel called The Terrasse with Francois Sagon who translated the play. Afterwards, if I can find an attractive traveling-companion, I think I'll fly down to Tunis or Marrakesh for a rest as I am very tired, nervous and lonely. I think I paid a lot of dues in Chicago.

Love,

10.

440 West End Avenue
New York City 10024

September 28, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

Eric Mann called today, thinking you were still in New York, and wanted to know if he could come down and see you just to get acquainted. I told him you'd be back in about three weeks. He is sending you articles he has just published on George Jackson (Eric was one of the organizers on the Coast of the protests against the murder of Jackson). I told him to send them to you in care of IFA since I didn't know when the hell you would be back in Key West. Ken Kelly has also been around. He has the sweetest disposition. He thinks very highly of you and kisses you, as we all do. By the way, I do not think he was planning to hit you for money. He said he wanted to ask you if you would be interested in writing for his new magazine next year. I said he should feel you out when you return. Also he didn't like Cris coming by the City Squire since I think he wanted to go to bed with you himself. But what could you do with somebody that skinny? None of these kids eat right.

Mark Kluz is still with me. I really love him a lot. We went to a bunch of parties together, one was Mailer's movie thing at the Whitney. It was fun. Anyway, from what we have learned from Dellinger and Jerry Rubin, it looks like Mark is getting an ungreased shaft on the coast at his trial. His lawyer aint too good, the man has made no attempts at getting a dismissal of the charges or a postponement of the trial. It is rather frightening considering the fact that in California they have indeterminant sentences and you can spend a lifetime behind bars (like George Jackson) for a petty "crime." Jackson was in for years, as you know, for stealing \$70. Poor, beautiful Mark, how I pray he does not have to go inside for there he will be everybody's punk, no angel survives, not with that face and body. He will be punk.

I miss you very much, Tenn. The town seems so empty and dead with you gone.

A reminder: We need the Harper's piece immediately. The editor calls me everyday to find out if the rewrite has come from London. Please get it off to me right away.

I love you, crocodile king!

VICTOR CAMPBELL

1431
DUNCAN ST.
KEY WEST, FL.

Oct. '71

Dear Dotson:

This is Vic's new stationary: I thought you'd like it. He's also got us a movie camera and a projector and screen. Last night we saw Mae West and W.C. Fields in silent shorts and his buddies were there and he cooked a good dinner and he has even written poems, three of which are good enough to be published, I think.

It's wonderful to be sixty and live with a child, those young eyes, young skin, and uncorrupted young heart. What the French call "Un donne", and at the most appropriate time in my life.

His parents - mother and grandfather and his sister, his twin - have written him about the "Esquire" and they were wonderful about it. They said that he was living with a man who could teach him things and whom he could give happiness to. It's made all the difference in him since it's the first time they'd admitted they knew about him and he had felt estranged and guilty.

From my mother I got several communications, too. They were here waiting for me. She has gone crazy again and enclosed a Christmas card, saying: "Every day is Christmas in my life." Her hand was very shaky and she didn't seem to know whether she was in her suburban house or in 'The Retirement Home'. - I think I'd better stop off to see her on my way North again. I do wish you and your buddy would come down here for a while, you need a rest in the sun. You could come with Ruth or Tommy or anybody you wanted.

Enclosed is the piece. Now don't change it and don't type it yourself. Due to your alcoholism, I presume, you're inclined to awful typos and this thing has got to go out exactly as I wrote it, that's the deal.

I miss you badly. But I need this rest here now. Love to Ruth and Tommy.

Love
V.C.



October 18, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

This is going to be a long letter. There is much on my mind.

The less said about Victor's stationary the better. There is a certain appropriateness to its design in that I cannot figure out what the fuck it means -- IBM FBI PAD, CIA, etc. Ah, the workings of the telephonic mind! I am glad he is writing poetry. I would like to see it. And I envy you having the projector and the screen and the rest of it. In Xanadu the mighty Kubla Kahn a pleasure dome decreed... Pools and breaking surf and cameras trained, while lolling passive on the beach, like a sunstruck flower bending in the sun, your young uncorrupted heart. And you invite me down, knowing I would fly there so fast tonight if I could leave this town for just a few days. But I cannot. The benefit concert still is nowhere near being organized. I am broke and being sued by creditors (but that has always been the case with me. Fuck the pigs!). My novel aches unfinished while I go about smiling and trying to raise bread to end a war. It is absurd, Tenny. I am ~~about the least~~ ^{than} ~~less~~ fitted to be a radical organizer as anyone around, and that is what I have temporarily become by default.

You were right ~~of~~ to be angry with me for knowing, having as a friend, Peter Glenville. But he has never done me dirt, Tennessee, never broken a confidence, has given aid whenever aid was asked. But you were right, not because I was giving away movement secrets to the enemy, to Peter, who would pass them on over lunch to Bill Buckley, but because of what I think you sensed and resented: that is, that I am comfortable around Peter and others like him. I feel unthreatened by them. Maybe that comfortability arises from naivete, or from an anti-democratic, patrician elitism (The Nation once called me "The Patrician Radical"), or worse, a real insensitivity to the actual motives of men.

I do not think Peter has any pernicious reasons for liking me. I think I am a nice enough sort to be liked for myself, without ulterior motive. I do not even think of Peter as a political person, not because he is English, but rather because to be "political" requires a necessary degree of compassion, an ability to identify with victims you cannot see and still ~~be~~ be able to identify and feel their pain and distress as keenly as your own. That is a quality of sensibility which allows you to go beyond the point of no return in the name of an abstraction (the Victims), knowing your journey to the other side is probably both foolish and futile, and yet you must go in the name of uncounted victims of the very class to which you belong. Peter hasn't

that quality. He cannot identify or act for people he cannot see. And yet he feels for them. Do not take that from him. Still in the end it is the act which counts. That is how we judge a man, not by his friends, not by his feelings but by his acts. And if you are a writer how you act is writing. It is that by which you are judged.

I think you mistakenly felt that I was acting in bad faith with you in liking Peter, in having him as a friend. Well, I have many friends, and so do you. Few as close to me as you, Tennessee, and still, in a wide sense, I have many friends and I cannot be charged with the weight of all their crimes and friendships. I am responsible only for my relationship with them, nothing else.

You said, do you remember, up in the room late at night when I came barging in all hurt and confused, fearing I had lost you, hurt to no purpose; do you remember when I came barging in disturbing you and young Tony, and you said, "You let him (Peter) touch you!" There was the clut-stump of disloyalty. As you understood it. And I did not have a cent on me, late that morning, I had left Ruth off at her place and called you from a booth and thinking you had hung up on me, spent my last thirty cents to get to the hotel, and my pride was such that leaving you at the hotel with Tony I would not ask you for thirty cents to get home. I walked all the way. My pride was wounded that bad. I would not ask you for carfare.

"You let him touch you." What can I say, Tennessee. Everyone touches me, and no one does. I haven't had sex with Peter, or Tommy or anyone else you know. Not with my friends. For I am shy that way, or overabused to the point of deathly fatigue, to the point of physical boredom. Do you know how exhausted I am, Tennessee? Yet I think maybe in that sentence you were saying that I did not love you enough or fairly or at all. That is what hurt, how you could be so obtuse, so unseeing. Let me put it now in words: I love you more than I should, Tenny, more than anyone. I love you to the degree of opening all my life to you, all my friends. I number you inside the blessed circle (that is what my father used to call the friends of the Lord, the blessed circle. I mean it more modestly). I trust you with my life. I would put my hand in the fire for you, Tennessee. I shouldn't have to prove that anymore. I have played it straight with you, honest. I have not pretended to be what I am not.

What I am is a writer. And little else. My politics, like yours, arise fundamentally from a belief in the pathos of life, from the desire to make justice in a world gone mad with oppression and death. That is an artist's impulse, the desire to make right, to correctly order the world, to cope, to bring the scales into balance. So I put off writing for a time to organize (I hate that kind of work, organization!) or I do not write a short story but a political piece instead because it is more of the moment. And it is hard

to do for there are stories and tales and plays inside me crying to be spoken. (I am getting melodramatic, and bathetic.) And I keep telling myself that someday, when things are better and we have achieved a world of modest justice sufficient to know that my friends are safe in it, I tell myself that in my awkward, clumsy, ego-tripping way I am doing all I can to side against those who oppress and murder my friends. I know I am not as good as most, but I do what I can do. Don't be hard on me, Tennessee. Don't be suspicious because I get ~~xxxx~~ carried away at a party, or because I get tired and make bad judgments. Have a little patience. I drink and I get lonely and I want my friends around me and I do not want to have to look too closely at their political weaknesses because at that moment, when I am with them feeling high and giddy and happy because under the booze I am so fucking down, at that moment I need them too much to sit in judgment on their friendships or their petty vices.

Now I have made many mistakes. I have made enemies of people I loved, in and out of the movement. But I think I have always tried to be a decent man, to give the edge to tolerance, to defend those I love as I was able, even to make a stab ~~xx~~ in the defense of people thousands of miles from me, unseen and dying unlamented in forests we have poisoned. I do not want to be a "good German" and keep silently plowing my fields while the smoke rises inexorably above Treblinka. I have broken silence. I know that because I love fun and attention and happy people and parties and handsome bodies and booze too much that people, who do not know me well, say, like Gore Vidal, "He is not to be trusted." Well, I have never met your Gore Vidal and he doesn't know me, regardless of what he tells you in Rome; what I know is that he is wrong about me. I, like you, have paid the dues, not enough but it is not over tonight, the final chit ~~ix~~ has yet to be counted, I will pay more, as will you. But I have threaded out my life a little for my friends. I have gone to jail and been beaten down rather than betray my friends, friends whose names I did not know. That says something for a man. It says this at least, that he would not give away in party chatter to Peter Glenville what he would not give away to the pigs. I am going on too long.

I am going to ask you to send a check for three hundred dollars to Mark Kluz, the blond boy who faces trial next week. I am flat broke and unable to raise the money. Mark is the kid who brought the article to you that afternoon at the City Squire and kissed you with Charles there. Do you remember? Well, I know you do not have a lot of money, but if you can afford the three hundred send it to him right away. He has to pay his lawyer. If not, let me know immediately and I will try to raise it elsewhere.

His address; Mark Kluz
 % Nedd Takahashi
 1938-B Channing Way
 Berkeley, California

I am touchy about hitting anyone for money because I do not like them to think I'm ripping them off. But this is not for me, this is for someone on his way to jail for opposing the war. He is your friend, too. He acts in your name, too.

I'm sorry that your mother is ill. She reminds me of my aunt Blanche who used to wire flowers to herself and charge them to my father's church. They would come on Sunday afternoons during prayer meeting and their cards would be signed, To Dear Blanche From...the name of a movie star. She would smile shyly when they came, acting totally surprised that Cary Grant thought her beautiful. I was young ~~xxxx~~, but even then she was a little crazy. I remember when I was very small my father held a memorial service for Blanche's husband. ~~xx~~ She had spent three married days with him and then he had gone off and been blown to pieces over the Pacific. In the fifties the Government finally sent her a flag and his dog tags and what was left. There were only about thirty people in this huge church and Blanche was given the flag and later she used it as a blanket on her bed, which my patriotic Grandfather thought was ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ outrageous. That aint much to salvage from a lover, a flag.

I sent your piece over to Harper's as written. I loved it. I am so proud of you, Tennessee.

Tommy sends his love, as does Ruth and Gerard and Billy and my Jack. Charles Ford is back in town. And I am in bed with a cold and feeling depressed. That is unlike me, yes, to be down?

I am sorry this goddamn letter is so long. But I miss you very much so I go on and on talking to you. I will try not to write this long again. It is a pain in the ass to read (you have read this far?) I want to come down in December and stay with you and rest, too. We both need it.

I am seeing Billy for lunch Wednesday. I will give you a report. If I am well enough I will be going to the protests in Washington this weekend.

October 20, 1971

Dear Tenny-penny,

Had a nice lunch with Billyboo this afternoon at some Swiss restaurant where I had me a beef patty smothered in cheese goo in a big hot oven platter like the kind you put on the floor for the dog to lap. Silky Billy ordered bits and pieces of stuff and nibbled, ending up, like some elegant lady on a diet at the Running Footman and eating pounds an once at a time, gobbling more food than me. He drinks red wine, Two glasses for lunch. I thought agents only drank martinis in iced glasses. I had me a gimlet, only one, because I didn't want him telling you I was drinking a lot with you gone, drinking away ~~my~~ lonesome sorrows, so you'd feel compelled to fly back to Dotson to ~~keep~~ keep him from boozing away his youth, just another bar fly aching in the heart like old piano players in gay bars for youth gone gone, in the heart for the Crocodile. No, I'm keeping my lush-life very secretlike. Otherwise you'll force me to join the Y to put the body in shape to live too long. For what?

But you aint interested in that right now, you want to know what he discussed. Well, we talked about the anti-war benefit on the 6th (Billy wants to help) and about the coming demonstrations. Billy, he don't know much about politics, a lot about movies he knows, but on politics he's a real clinker. Like he doesn't know Huey Newton from Fig Newton. Dum-da-dum-dum. (You want to know what my two favorite names are? Huh? ~~XXXXX~~ Willy. And Tommy. Been in love with both the boys when I was a kid. Willy and Tommy. Makes me think of ^{the fragrance of} autumn leaves wet on the grass.)

We talked about you. He has some very strong leads on an off-B production this year, and a Broadway production next year. I don't know what it is all about exactly because names do not mean much to me, but I know he thinks Schlesinger will do TWO CHARACTERS in a year (don't mention that to Billy. Don't know if I was to mention it.) And he has a director interested in doing a play of your this season off-Broadway. Now that's exciting. All in all, I think we got ourselves a splendid young agent in Billy. He does you proud! He's plugging hard for you, Tenny.

I said I would write you a short letter. So I better stop here. How I run at the mouth when I'm rapping with you!

Love,

P.S.

You know, baby, I miss you terribly. And being down there on that island, thinking of you by the ocean, well, I miss the ocean too. I find it astonishing, the ocean.

CAMPBELL

1 4 3 1
DUNCAN ST.
KEY WEST, FL.

$$10 \mid 21 \mid 71$$

A single exposure to Miss Mary's new stationary is not enough. I mean like this sort of fantasy has to be seen twice to be credited even slightly. About Miss Mary, it has to be constantly remembered that she did not finish out her last term at that Tampa institution called "Mary, Help a Christian" but took to her heels like Cinderella at midnight, leaving a glass slipper on my future path. I recall your looking at her and at me and then saying "Bananas!" And I didn't know what you meant! Well, now I know and I wish that I didn't. Among her recent acquisitions is a professional camera so big that she can hardly carry it, a movie camera with projector and screen and films, mostly cartoons, a stereo set with two big speakers for the small upstairs bedroom. Last night I lost patience with her when she started exhibiting her new equipment and I said, 'Don't you realize people are hungry in this world, that there are starving Americans in this world now?' She looked at me with those great blue cow eyes and she said - not let them eat cake but 'I have fun with this stuff.' I could have kicked her dumb ass. I had to drop two nembies to get to sleep. And I think how she took my cat to Miami and lost it and I wish that the cat had taken her to Miami and lost her instead.

Last night we had a big poker game here and the bitch won, although she pretended she didn't know how to play. I thought with ignorance like that who needs luck - this TV Commercial writer come over with five degenerates and they dealt the cards too fast for me to see them. One of these degenerates was taller than you and with a voice like a moose-horn and called himself a queen. I said 'For Chrissake what do you mean a queen at your size with that voice?' And he said that he 'came from a broken home'. He and Miss Mary won almost every pot and they were stil l at it when I went out to swim in the rain.

Sometimes I wonder if I am a serious person, my life is such a continual farce.

I enjoyed your letter. Baby, I understand your friendship with Glenville. After all, you need some light people in your life, your friends in the movement are naturally heavy. My problem is opposite. I need some friends who are heavy in my life since I have spent my life since Frank's death with people who can't get their shit together - except for Maria. In New York you and your friends in the movement have given me new air to breathe. That's the truth. I was suffocating for this.

I don't want to embarrass you but I feel that you are a very serious person with heavy problems and I want you start taking better care of yourself before you crack up. I am enclosing a cheque for five hundred and I want you to use the

IBM
CIA/FBI
RUCS
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PAD
WAR RESISTANT

extra two hundred to get yourself a membership at the West Side Y and to start swimming or working out ~~two~~ or three times a week at least. You need this as therapy to counter-act the heavy drinking you do. Otherwise you will lose your resilience and your effectiveness in the movement. This is a serious warning and it is given in time. So send the necessary amount to Mark and invest the remainder in saving your physical self - otherwise your life in New York is going to tear you down.

I got a call from Billy Barnes last night: he is definitely planning an off-Broadway production for me now which will give me something to live for besides Miss Mary's electrical equipment which should include a chair for her execution. Man, I am annoyed with that girl today!

I was so annoyed that I came out here and wrote a long poem in memory of Frankie.

Keep in touch, baby.

Love,

10.

October 29, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

I read the most beautiful play last week. It has haunted me ever since. CONFSSIONAL by T. Williams. A powerful, wonderful play. How I envied you the genius to be able to give the world such language.

I just got back from Washington and the antiwar demonstrations. I was jailed, along with Dave Dellinger, Rennie Davis, Father Groppi and about three hundred others. The kids are so young in jail, 18 and 19, fresh and filled with hope and moist, silvery outrage. You have to love life madly, in a kind of sensual rage, to hate death and war so passionately. Tenny, I am so proud of having been allowed to spend a night in a cell with the beautiful, lanky, tough, scruffy movement children. I tell you, I felt old inside, dreaming of a double martini and of taking all five of the boys, my cellmates, into my arms. They do this racist, this evil country honor it does not deserve.

I am up.

Thanks for the bread. I sent the three hundred off to Mark. Part of my YMCA money went for bail. But I'll still join a health club. Jack says the Paris swim club is perfect for me. It is straight. I do not want to go to a gym with a lot of gays.

I miss you, as does Ruth and Tommy and everyone else. When will you be back? Ruth is very nervous about her play. God, please let it be a hit for Ruth.

I love you, big crocodile man!

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

← gift from Mary, this paper.

1 4 3 1
DUNCAN ST.
KEY WEST, FL.

10/3/77
Night before last she went to look for her driver's license and ID card and I saw this letter with a military stamp on it. I asked her what it was and she said "Oh, this is just a letter that shows I'm exempt from service." She was a bit reluctant to let me read it, and no wonder, since the "psychologist" stated that she had "failed mental tests". She said she gave a wrong answer to a question. The psychologist had asked her would she be able to kill in self-defense if she had a weapon. Her answer, she said, was "no".

Dear Dotson:

The year is shaping up good. We've got to stay with it because it's worth staying with. For you, belonging to, being a part of the movement has become a bit too familiar and I am sure you must have periods of "black ass", but for me it is quite fresh and exhilarating as mountain air. The thing to remember is the thing, the one thing that gives true stature and dignity to a human life is to transcend personal concerns in a passion for, a deep love for the whole human lot, the people. This can be like a religion, a true faith in God. It is not easy. So many of the people come on like lunks and slugs. I was watching TV this afternoon and a bunch of merchants and small-time politicians were being interviewed on the subject of the Florida State ~~income~~ ^{Corporate} tax issue - and they came on so stupid and petty with self-interest, the merchants warning the people that prices would be raised if business was taxed and you knew that they would raise prices anyway just out of the cheapness and cupidity of their natures: their faces looked piggish and sly and corrupt. The difficult thing is to keep in mind that their corruption is imposed on them by the System's. Worse than all the physical killing is the mass-murder of spirit. And these people have to be redeemed and liberated from themselves and the program is dismayingly huge and difficult. It becomes very easy, thinking of it, to abandon hope: but that hope is all that we've got: to give meaning to our lives.

The bright side is the strength of our moral leadership: the blacks ("We're willing to do the dying."). The unwavering resolution of Dave Dellinger and the brilliance of his mind, tempered by humanity. That quality in Abbie Hoffman that made me feel in the presence of a holy man. And all of our true caring for each other. It really is, for me, a religious conversion, my first one that is ^{humanly} socially meaningful.

We must be constantly on guard against finks and ego-trippers and opportunists. There are questions we mustn't even ask, information we must not have, such as: do we have an arsenal? Are we armed at all, in case it comes to fighting for our lives?

I am not yet ready to know Weathermen or share their secrets, not because I can't be trusted but because it is mortal danger to trust almost anybody - the blacks are right about that.

So ends the serious bit.

A few jokes now. Miss Mary is on the road in a rental car with Gigi: called me from up-state to say she had taken a wrong turn and strayed into an army camp. Was now in a "rest-area" - probably having been fucked by the whole camp. "How is Gigi?" "Right here in the rest area."

Night before last she opened her wallet to look for her driver's license and ID card and I saw this letter with a military stamp on it. I asked her what it was and she said "Oh, this is just a letter that shows I'm exempt from service." She was a bit reluctant to let me read it, and no wonder, since the "psychologist" stated that she had "failed mental tests". She said she gave a wrong answer to a crucial question. The psychologist had asked her would she be able to kill in self-defense if she had a weapon. Her answer, she said, was "Who?" - because she did not understand the question. She said they immediately wrote up this letter and escorted her out without violence.

To me the incredible thing is that Miss Mary got as far as a psychological test.

I am flying out of here this afternoon and hope to rendezvous with Gigi and Miss Mary this evening in New Orleans. For the first few days our address will be Hotel Maison de Ville on Toulouse Street....

Power and love

cases for Ruth and Tommy.
More later about Professional
outlook which seems promising.

We must be constantly on guard against links and ego-trippers and opportunists. There are questions we mustn't even ask, information we must not have, such as: do we have an arsenal? Are we armed at all, in case it comes to fighting for our lives?

I am not yet ready to know Weathermen or share their secrets, not because I can't be trusted but because it is mortal danger to trust almost anybody - the blacks are right about that.

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440 West End Avenue
New York City 10024

November 2, 1971

Dear Tenn,

Again I am indebted to you. But we're friends, right, and I'd do the same for you. It is too bad that Sara was hysterical on the phone -- you're not the only one she called to get me out of the can -- and I don't know where she got your number but I don't suppose it's all that hard to get. The only way I can explain Sara's urgency in calling you (for it doesn't seem all that much a big deal to spend time in the clink, at least not on this occasion) was that when ever people are arrested, radicals, heads, kids, whatever, there is always those long hours before any news comes out of the jail about how they are being treated, and if their friends don't immediately start putting pressure on the pigs for their release, if the pigs think no one knows or cares, it can be very grim inside. That's why when people get popped by the pigs everybody tries to marshall support immediately, to apply what clout we have.

I just want to remind you of something: when you are hit for ~~by~~ money or whatever by anybody, whether you know them or not, claiming to need it for some movement cause I think it would be a good idea to clear it with me. Just to protect yourself. There are so goddamn many demands made on all of us for so many reasons that we have to give according to some priority in need. None of us have much money or time so it is important that it go where it's most needed. For example, I don't think SUNDANCE, that magazine Ken Kelly and Craig wanted you to contribute to is of first rank importance. The money could be better used elsewhere. And, too, I think you are doing your share at the moment on the benefit on December 6. Maybe more than your share. And that success of that benefit will have a significant impact on the entire movement. Okay? (The only exception: if I am ever in the pigpen again -- I hope never again! -- and somebody calls for a little bread to spring me, don't say, "Well, I got to check it with Dotson first!" Ha! Ha! I'd never make it to a phone!)

I am going to Ruth's opening tonight of The Grass Harp. I'll tell you how it goes. She is very nervous about it. I pray, for her sake, that it's a hit.

Tommy went to another orgy and came down with the clap. Had to get a shot to clear it up. Serves him right. He's turning into a sex fiend!

I sent Mark Kluz the money. His trial has been postponed until January 3. It doesn't look too good for him. He faces two years to life. Poor, tough, beautiful man.

Billy said he wants you to come to town on November 22 for the week to work out details on the play production. Great! You might as well stay here until the benefit then. Anyway, unless it's impossible, we want to schedule you on the Cavett Show and the Frost Show during that week (the week of the

22nd). You and I will go on together and talk about the benefit and the war and the role of dissent in the United States. Nothing heavy or too radical because that scares away people. I asked Billy first if he thought it would be good for you~~x~~ to appear on the television that week to talk about the benefit and he said that it was a great idea, that it would give you some different, and very serious exposure and would help with the play and stuff. Well, it certainly would help the benefit and the movement.

I miss you, Tenn. Did you get my letters? I sent them a week ago to Key West. Tom and me, we want to come down to where ever you are like a day or two after the benefit. We need rest really badly, and we both can relax with you and have fun and good times and things.

Once again, if you get hit for bread let me know before you shell it out. I just want to protect you on that.

Abbie and Anita, and Dave Dellinger and Betty, and Ruth, and Eric and Tommy, and Jack, and Mark, and the Big Dot send their love.

Love and power to you,

P.S.

Give my best to Victor.

Mason Dotson
Seven twenty-seven rue Toulouse • New Orleans, Louisiana

11/12/71

Dear Dotson:

Of course I am not at all "mad" at you about anything! You are my closest and best friend in the States.

I don't know, and never will know, if my work is deserving of the precedence which I give it over everything else in my life. I guess it is just my life. And I have to protect it, even now, when I suspect that it is nearly finished.

As I wired you this evening, a talk show could be a disaster for all concerned unless it is approached with total seriousness and determination to keep it cool. I don't mean being neatly-mouthed and avoiding strong statement. What I mean is to do it with dignity and style. On a show of this kind, you must win over the sympathy of the audience which is a very large one and which is still inclined to regard us as subversives. We have to convince them that ours is the only true patriotism.

That is a very big order: it would have to be planned very carefully.

I will call you Tuesday when I have a phone.

Meanwhile, the heart of the crocodile is yours....

10.

I am entertaining a P.H.D.
from U. of Minnesota who is
preparing a thesis on my
work in the Sixties! Miss Mary
was unable to cope with
instant mashed potatoes for
dinner. Really bananas! Slantard
Fruit!


western union

Telegram

AHA059 (04)NSA008

NS LLN011 WP MIN NL PDF NEW ORLEANS LA 16

DOTSON RADER DLR DO NOT FONE

440 WESTEND AVE NYK

DEAR DOTSON, PHONE FINALLY INSTALLED WILL CALL YOU NOON TOMORROW

RIGHT ON LOVE

TENNESSEE.

509 Dauphine St.
(no telephone yet)

November 12, '71

Dear Big Dot:

We are finally more or less settled in the French Quarter here and it's great to be back in my old bailiwick. We are in a little house, pink, on a raffish street. When we open the front shutters in the morning there is usually a wine sprawled on the front steps with an empty bottle of white port beside him. This house is temporary: we are moving into a larger one next door with two bedrooms and a kitchen suitable to my culinary art. I am swimming daily at an athletic club and walking the streets in the wonderful weather and making attractive new friends of the new youth: bothered by nothing but insomnia. It is now six A.M. and I haven't slept.

Today we saw a wonderful new film, Joe Hill, about one of the original "wobblies", executed ~~for~~ a bum rap in 1915.

We don't have a telephone yet: Billy Barnes wired me to call him and I did from a friend's house and I am happy about the way the off-Broadway show is shaping up. We now have producers, one of which co-produced "Hair": they want to open here in New Orleans for two weeks in January, then take it to New York. I have written a coda to the play that I think will give it an up-beat curtain: it involves two long-hairs, peddling a new paper called "The Light Underground: barefoot and radiant.

Sugar, I must push my work through the media before I push the movement. It serves both commitments much better. There is a matter of strategy, exploited by the opposition, which we have to counter with a neater strategy of our own. I must be rehabilitated as a playwright before I can offer much power to the movement. I think I know the proper approach to TV. I must come on the talk-shows as a writer with intense dedication to honest writing before I can come on with an aggressive political push. Baby, I am wise as a shit-house rat and know what I'm doing. You will hear and see. I've got politics in my blood and you know that I can use it to both advantages if I do it my way.

I can't get to New York till the end of November since I've got to get in condition for the cathedral bit.

After that gig, you and Tommy and Ruth and I ^{should} come South, probably to Key West, for restoration. There has to be a retreat to gather new force. And fun and games.

Stock market dropped 23 points in two days: phase two has phased itself out: - they're cracking, love!

Crr-ackkk! Love -

Jimmie

Write me quick! How did Ruth's show go? I wished it well despite my allergy to Expat.

PLEASE CHANGE YOUR MIND. I KNOW WE HAVE ASKED SO MUCH & OF
YOU ALREADY. BABY ALL OF US ARE ASKED SO MUCH

for the shows.

PLEASE CHANGE YOUR MIND. BILLY AND I WERE SURE YOU WOULD
COME UP. I KNOW YOU HAVE DONE ~~SO~~ MUCH FOR THE MOVEMENT. ~~AL~~
~~READY~~. WE ARE ALL ASKED TO DO SO MUCH. BUT IF WE DO NOT
ACT TO END ~~THE~~ WAR AND RACISM THEN ~~SO~~ HOW WILL IT EVER
END. ~~PLEASE CHANGE YOUR MIND. XXXXX~~ THE FROST SHOW ~~AND?~~
ON THE 24 AND THE CAVETT SHOW ON THE 26 ARE ESSENTIAL.
~~THE MOVEMENT IS UNDER ATTACK.~~ WE CANNOT GET AIR TIME WITHOUT
YOU. WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU. YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO TALK POLITICS
ON TELEVISION? IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO. I OR DAVE WILL DO
THAT. DAVE AND RUTH AND TOMMY AND I HAVE GIVEN OUR WORD KNOW_
ING YOU WOULD NOT LET US DOWN. WHAT CAN I SAY TO MAKE
YOU CHNAGE YOUR MIND. THE TRUTH IS WE NEED YOU HERE. THOSE
WHO SCHEDULED YOU ON THE SHOWS ~~IN THE NAME OF PEOPLES~~
~~COALITION~~ IN THE NAME OF THE MOVEMENT WILL LOOK LIKE LIARS
AND FOOLS IF ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~WE~~ ~~TO SAY THE~~ CANNOT GET YOU
TO THE SHOWS WHEN ~~WE~~ GAVE ~~OUR~~ WORD YOU WOULD BE THERE.
AND THE MEDIA BLACKOUT ON THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT WILL BECOME
WORSE. PLEASE PLEASE CALL ME. PLEASE PLEASE CHANGE YOUR
MIND. SO MUCH RESTS ON YOUR BEING HERE. WE ARE ALL TIRED
BABY. AND WE ARE A LITTLE FRIGHTENED TOO. IF YOU ARE ANGRY
WITH ME FOR SOME REASON PLEASE DO NOT LET IT KEEP YOU
FROM COMING TO NEW YORK. I KNOW YOU WILL NOT LET US DOWN.
I LOVE YOU

C
Otto Reminger
Billy Barnes



A-10
Mike Kaplan
477-7907
12 noon

Nov 21 -
Sun. 8PM
Quercus
Wed. Dec 1st 8PM
Review 7PM
17th Ave



Telegram

JGA008 (04)PA037

NC NS LLC063 AC NL PDF NEWORLEANS LA 13

DOTSON REDER

DLR DO NOT FONE 440 WEST END AVE NYK

DEAR DOTSON DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR TELEGRAM IM SURE YOU MUST
KNOW TALK SHOWS ARE POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS CONSEQUENTLY MUST
BE APPROACHED WITH UTMOST CAUTION WILL CALL YOU WHEN FNE IS
INSTALLED TUESDAY WRITING LETTER AT ONCE LOVE
TENNESSEE.

1971 NOV 14 AM 11 56

440 West End Avenue
New York City 10024

November 15, 1971

Dear Crocodile,

This will be short because it has to get to you fast. We (the Benefit Committee) has scheduled you on the Midday Show (a local New York show) on November 20. On the David Frost Show November 24. And on the Cavett Show, November 26. What will you do on those shows and what will you talk about and with whom will you appear? On the Midday Show (the local television show) you will appear with Dave Dellinger and me. You will talk about yourself, your work, your new play, and, if you wish, about the benefit concert on the 6th. You will not have to talk politics. That Dave and I will do, but we will do it quietly, subtly, for we are trying to reach a largely uncommitted audience. So we will talk about how the war continues, and how peace is to be made. That is all we will talk about, peace.

On Frost, you will appear with Ruth or me. You again will talk about your work, your new play, your life, whatever. You might mention the Benefit. Then Ruth or I will come on and discuss the benefit and why we are doing it, because we want the American people to remember the war. It is convenient for some people to make us think the war is nearly over. We will be there to remind our countrymen that the war continues, that 160,000 Vietnamese civilians will die from American bombs this year whether there are American combat troops or not. Again, we want to keep it subtle and understated. People are tired of war. They want to forget it exists. They must be reminded gently.

The same on Cavett, where you will appear probably with me. (I didn't choose the people you would go on with. We gave the shows a list and they chose who they wanted).

Now why are these shows important? They are necessary to us because they will help to make the benefit (and thus the program of the movement) news again. Secondly, because they will provide us access to the media. There is a television blackout on the movement. Abbie and Dave and Rennie cannot get on television. The only way we can get a show to bring up the war for discussion, however briefly, is by saying, if you want Tennessee Williams to appear (and they all do) then you must also have Dotson or Dave or Rennie to talk about the movement and its plans for this election year, and about the war. So they agree.

Now we have gone ahead and booked you on the shows knowing (I hope correctly) that you would make yourself available in this way. So we have given our word to the shows that you would be there. We did not say you would rail against the war or talk about the movement. You are not expected to. But you are the key that opens the door in the media to the movement. And if you now say, Leave me alone, I don't want to be connected publicly with you people, I won't go on...well, then we will have to call the shows back and say we're lying or mistaken and they will think we are fools or worse. They will never let us on again.

I have to hear from you at once. Please call me, baby. If you refuse to do the shows (and I can't believe you would do that) then I have to get off my ass and tell them it was all a fuckup. And if you are coming for the shows (and I assume you are) then you have to be here the evening of the 21, and that is very soon.

Once again, you don't have to talk politics or movement shit. But you should talk about your play. I discussed this with Billy, the idea of your doing shows for the benefit committee, and he thought it was great, that it would be very helpful in terms of building your work, that it would make evident to the country that you were vital and active and deeply involved in life, with the young and the future, and that you cared deeply enough about the death of young American boys and younger Vietnamese children to speak out in public against their murder. And that is what you will be saying, if you like, on the talk shows, That on the 6th you will speak out against murder of the defenseless and the innocent. Please do not let us down, baby. It is very important that you do the shows, that you give us access to the media. We are in a bad way, discourage and tired and isolated, and it is important that the energy levels in the movement are hyped up. That the kids feel strong and masterful and handsome again. And your appearance on the shows will help to raise those energy levels. For by your appearance then, strengthened by your talk at the Cathedral, will tell the kids something it is necessary for them to know: that they are not alone. That, yes, Tennessee Williams and a number of other almost mythic adults care enough about the war and about their struggle to end it, care enough to say so in public. And that is all it takes from you on the television. Somewhere in your talk about your work (and that is most important) you indicate that you too dissent from the war and are doing what you can to end war and racism. That is all. Just a word coming from you.

Okay. I will expect you here. I love you, Tenny. I don't often understand you -- well I guess I most often do -- but my love for you is deep and growing.

I met Gore Vidal last week at a party for Screw magazine. He called me a "cunt." I will write you more about it.

Ruth Ford's play closed the Saturday after opening. She was really depressed by its closing. I feel so sorry for her now. She needed the money and the work very badly.

PLEASE CALL ME IMMEDIATELY. STAND WITH US THIS ONCE, BABY, ON THIS TELEVISION SHIT AND WE (I) WON'T DO IT AGAIN TO YOU. It can't hurt you in anyway. It can only help you. Billy agrees.

western union

Telegram

1971 NOV 26 AM 8 30

JGA001 (32)SYB034 NSA212
NS LLC079 MH PD NEW ORLEANS LA 25 130P CST
DOTSON RADER

440 WEST END DLR DO NOT PHONE NYK 10024
DEAR DOTSON. A REAL NERVOUS CRISIS LAST NIGHT DOCTOR SAYS TRIP
IMPOSSIBLE PLEASE INFORM CAVETT. YOU COULD NOT FEEL WORSE ABOUT
THIS THAN I DO IF THAT'S ANY CONSOLATION GOD HELP US ALL. LOVE
TENNESSEE.

(649)

BF-1201 (R5-69)

western union

Telegram

AHA051 (19)(NSA487
NS LLD006 PL PDF NEW ORLEANS LA 26 1140P CST
DOTSON RADER, DELIVER DONT FONE

440 WEST END AVE NYK
DEAR DOTSON IF I **SURVIVE** NEW MEDICATION WILL DEFINITELY ARRIVE
BEFORE BENEFIT LOVE
DISTRESSED KCROCODILE.

(1216)

BF-1201 (R5-69)

BRING RUTH STAMPS

Dec 71

Pick up Ruth at 10:30 AM

PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

DURING THE GREAT BLIZZARD OF 1947, JUST AFTER THE
OPENING OF "STREETCAR," THE P.R. MAN FOR THAT VEHICLE
REQUESTED OF ME A "WRITE-UP" ON THE SUBJECT OF MYSELF
FOR RELEASE TO THE MEDIA.

THIS P.R. MAN SAID THAT THE MEDIA WERE ESPECIALLY
CURIOUS ABOUT MY NAME, TENNESSEE, HOW I GOT THAT NAME
AND WHY AND FOR WHAT HONEST PURPOSE, IF ANY. IT WAS AS
IF THEY SUSPECTED ME OF "HOLDING" -- OR OF HARBORING
A PENTAGON CODE-BOOK OR A BLUE-PRINT OF ITS SEWERS, AND
THE TRUTH WAS SO INNOCENT AND SO AGREEABLE TO RECORD,
THAT MY PATERNAL FOREBEARS, THE WILLIAMS AND SEVIERS
OF EAST TENNESSEE, HAD BEEN AND STILL ARE THE FIERCELY
BESEIGED DEFENDERS OF STOCKADES, SAVAGES CHARGING THEM
FROM ALL SIDES STILL.

I SAID THEN THAT IF SOMEONE SHOULD ASK ME WHAT MY
POLITICS ARE I WOULD ANSWER THAT I AM A HUMANITARIAN.

HOWEVER, NOW, I AM NO LONGER CERTAIN THAT IT IS
ENOUGH TO BE HUMANITARIAN AT HEART, EVEN THOUGH I KNOW

TO BE HUMANITARIAN AT HEART MAKES A MAN QUITE SUBVERSIVE TO THE
PENTAGON'S ICED EYES.

WHAT I FEEL, NOW, IS THAT AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL IS SICK
WITH KILLING...

WE ARE ALL DISSENTERS NOW, AND THE HEAT IS ON.

~~THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE TO BE
HEARD IN OUR LAND, AND THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR THE VOICE OF
THE CUCKOO TO BE HEARD IN OUR LAND.~~

I MEAN THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR SUCH VOICES. IT IS THE
TIME FOR THE VOICES OF DISSENT TO BE HEARD IN ALL LANDS.

THESE VOICES MUST SWELL IN NUMBER AND IN VOLUME AND NOT
BE REPRESSED BY TERROR OF "PATRIOTIC" REPRISAL.

~~BUT THAT WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR, SINCE WE WILL GET IT.
AGAIN, IT IS NOT ENOUGH SIMPLY TO BE HUMANITARIAN ANYMORE,
FOR HUMANITARIANS MAY BE PASSIVE AND THIS IS NO LONGER A
TIME FOR PASSIVITY.~~

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPELL AMERICA WITH A "K" TO KNOW WHAT
CONDITION IT IS IN. IT IS DISEASED WITH INTOLERABLE INEQUITIES,
RACISM AND INJUSTICE, DISEASED WITH THE CUPIDITY OF THE PRO-
FITEER-IMPERIALISTS.

THINGS HAVE GONE TERRIBLY WRONG WITH THE "AMERICAN WAY."

WHERE I AM AT TODAY IS WHERE ALL OF US ARE: IT IS JULY 14,
BASTILLE DAY IN OUR LIVES, OR THE DAY JUST BEFORE THAT. WE ARE
GATHERED AT THE GATES OF SUCH BASTIONS OF PIG-DOM AS ATTICA
AND SAN QUENTIN AND PRACTICALLY ALL OTHER "CORRECTIONAL IN-
STITUTIONS" IN THAT COUNTRY, ONCE SHINING WITH HIGH PURPOSE,

WHICH HAS BEEN SEDUCED AND CORRUPTED BY WHAT WE KNOW AS THE
SYSTEM ~~TO THE POINT WHERE ITS NAME IS OFTEN SPELLED WITH A~~
"K" AS KAFKA SPELLED IT.

THAT'S WHERE WE'RE AT AND WE ARE FACING THE STATE-TROOPERS,
~~THOSE CREATURES FROM DARKER SPACE WHOSE FACES ARE APPROPRIATELY~~
~~MASKED TO GIVE THEM THE LOOK OF VICIOUS INSECTS.~~

MORE THAN ~~ONE~~ SIDE CAN CRY "CHARGE!" AND SURELY THE SIDE
WITH LOVE FOR AND FAITH IN HUMANITY WILL FINALLY PREVAIL OVER
THOSE WHOSE FAITH IS ONLY IN DEATH AND WHOSE LOVE IS A LUST
FOR BLOOD.

AND THAT FAITH AND LOVE OF THE ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT FOR HUMANITY,
THAT LOVE IS WHAT BRINGS ME NEXT MONDAY NIGHT TO THE CATHEDRAL
OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE. I WILL BE THERE TO ~~SPEAK~~ AGAINST THIS
IMMORAL, IMPERIALIST WAR IN INDOCHINA, AND AGAINST THE PRESI-
DENT AND THE GENERALS, AGAINST THE BUSINESSMEN AND ~~IMPERIALISTS~~ *politicians*
WHO WAGE IT. I WILL BE THERE TO STAND WITH MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
IN THE MOVEMENT AGAINST RACISM, WAR AND OPPRESSION. THERE IN THE
CATHEDRAL WE WILL MAKE A NEW BEGINNING IN THE STRUGGLE TO END
THIS WAR.

MR. NIXON WANTS US TO BELIEVE THAT IF HE WITHDRAWSE~~N~~OUGH
COMBAT TROOPS, JUST ENOUGH TO CHANGE THE COLOR OF THE CORPSES,
~~THEN~~ THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL SUPPORT THIS WAR. THEN HE WILL
BE ABLE TO BOMB AND MURDER DEFENSELESS VIETNAMESE, LAOTIANS
AND CAMBODIANS WITH IMPUNITY. MR. NIXON IS WRONG. WHAT WE ARE
SAYING NOW, AND ~~WHAT~~ WE WILL SAY ON DECEMBER 6, AND WHAT WE

KY

WILL SAY THIS COMING YEAR IS THIS: RICHARD NIXON, YOU HAVE
ONLY TWO CHOICES -- YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY END THE WAR OR THE
WAR WILL END YOU.

440 West End Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10024

December 28, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

I tried calling you Christmas from Cleveland to wish you my love and the rest. Ruth was with me and we were both lonely for you. Victor said your mother had fallen and broken something and you had gone to St. Louis to see her. I am terribly sorry it happened, and I hope she is better. (When I got back home I saw a note saying you had called Christmas Eve. Thank you, baby).

Ruth and I went to Cleveland to spend the holiday with Burt Shekelove, who was there for the opening of No, No, Nanette. Even Newark is more interesting than Cleveland. Ruth and I went crackers in that town. To begin with the hotel nearly burned to the ground Christmas Eve and the management called everyone to evacuate the hotel. Everyone but Ruth, whom they apparently misplaced. She slept through it. The lobby newstand was gutted, and when it went it took with it out-contact with the outside world, our reading matter, cigarettes, candy, etc. Now the candy was important because there was hardly a restaurant open in town, at least none which would clear the New York Board of Health, and the hotel's room "service" closed at 8 PM, the bars at 9 PM, the television was nothing but Christmas carolers, and you had to taxi to the suburbs to see a movie. God, was it grim! Ruth brought along a bottle of vodka, which we consumed, and Jules had some grass, which we burned, and then we spent the three days telling the same old stories to the same old people over and over again. Christmas Eve there was a cast party, more like a wake, where Ruth and I sat and watched as two-dollar presents were given to each and every member of the cast and crew, along with a ~~XXXXXXXX~~ response from the recipient -- things like, "Ohhhh, I've always wanted marble paper weight!" June Allyson was there with her kids. Jesus, is she short! The chorus boys were homely, swishy, and arrogant. And everyone was told to stay out of the streets because you got knifed in them. Only thing memorable that happened was that Burt had his luggage and a book stolen from his room, along with some of his money. And, of course, the lobby burned. What was good about the trip was being with Ruth -- we had a grand time laughing and telling stories and plotting with Burt -- and I got to know Burt better and to like him immensely.

That's all I'm going to tell you for now. I'll write you after the first. Anyway, you owe me a letter, handsome. / I'm working on my novel.....I've enclosed a letter sent to you in August and just returned via Papeete. I can't remember what's in it.....I miss you, Tenn. I think of you every day. May the earth be given peace.

What spoiled Christmas was the bombing of the North. I wanted to cry at the news. Is there no end to Nixon's criminality?

440 West End Avenue
New York City 10024

December 14, 1971

Dear Tennessee,

I am so glad it is over. It hit me about two nights ago, down in Pennsylvania with Jack in the house of his aged aunt watching her memory and strength fade like winter sunlight, it hit me that the work was over and only exhaustion remained. I am proud of what we did at the benefit. I agree with Dave Dellinger that it was perhaps the most significant movement event of the year for it announced to the world, more importantly confirmed within ourselves, that we were not cowed and worn through, spent of courage, but the energy remained and was building and that we would be in the streets again come spring. "We?" I don't know. I think I may take my cue from you, Crocodile, and do my future marching on paper. Now there are bodies younger and harder, God knows, and quicker than mine, and prettier by far and tense with courage untested aching to be stretched like some ~~xxx~~ silken tree cat's in the heat of San Diego before the Pig; so many. Maybe the talent in me is still worth the effort and attention and the freedom from ~~hmm~~ ... I was going to say booze, but that edges on the bathetic, yes? maybe what is worth it at this time is for me to make the room and apply the discipline. I don't know.

I got this book in me. Fucking A! This book about a boy come home from the war from which no heroes return. And this surviving boy left behind him, dead in some paddy field like luggage mislaid, his best friend. And the memory of it, ~~xxx~~ his friend dead before his face hit the mud, you know, in a flash, the memory of that stuck to his mind like burrs on a trouser cuff. He comes home to a country without the energy, without the morality, without the gift of imagination ~~to~~ sufficient to raise a revolution against the men who murder its sons; a country washed out, straddling ambiguity. Back to this Southern town (I am treading on your territory, Tennessee), a resort town in middle Florida outside history, and there he transfers his unspeakable affections ~~from~~ the dead boy to ~~the~~ the dead boy's sister, and joins battle with her father over who bears the guilt. Who bears the guilt? That question will be with us snapping away from the next hundred years. Well, Tennessee, it aint the dead who bear the guilt of their dying, especially not the young dead, ~~there~~ they are not weighted with their murder. It is they who stood inattentive and hesitant as they passed.

I am filled with images of young boys dying, of bodies twisted and wet and awkward, bent, yet sexually provocative in death. Dying without a shout. I am filled with it.

Yet this much I know about writing. Only this. That I have to avoid the mawkish and the bathetic (it must be the Irish or the Baptist in me, What do you think, huh?). For me that aint easy to do. What I have to do is create a tight, hard story on which to hang the sight of that murder without ever stating it. By indirection. I'm going to try now. Got to get a grip on myself. I wish you were here. You once said we could work together never speaking at a table like you and Carson. It will never happen, but, God, wouldn't it be good to do! We're both depressives, and both insecure, and both swamped with love through which we wade unbelieving. I don't know, but I suspect we both hunt around for the same waco thing; someone to lash to ourselves who is worth abiding the end with. "Abiding" Nice, Biblical word. Love that word, that and "comely." A comely boy. It's crazy, but I am happy around you, baby, my face gripped by smiles. You make me happy. I saw your picture in Newsweek and the Spectator this week, and I just started laughing outloud with delight. On the crosstown bus. Laughing, remembering Tennessee and what we had pulled off together; joy at the thought of you and me.

I mentioned Dave Dellinger earlier. You should send him that piece on Martha Mitchell that you let him read at Joe Allen's bar after the benefit. He spoke to me about it again, and I said I would remind you. So you are reminded. He wants to run it in LIBERATION, that's his magazine. I gave you some copies of it. You belong in it. It is a very significant movement periodical.

By the way, I did not edit nor add to ~~of~~ nor in any way change your Harper's Bazaar piece. It is being run as you wrote it. As to the press statement. I added two paragraphs to two paragraphs taken from your Bazaar piece. That is what Ruth read at the conference. Billy went over it and approved it first. I did that because I could not get you on the phone. Nor could Billy. And Billy did not want to announce that you were sick since that might hurt the negotiations on your play. So we had to have a statement to read to make it appear as if you had never planned to appear in person, but rather had only intended to have your statement read. We thought that was in your interest.

I was in Pennsylvania, Hanover, a little Pennsylvania Dutch town filled with old people waiting to check out. Jack's aunt Margaret is there, going senile, she raised him and she is his only family so he is very depressed by her condition. I walked around the town a lot alone, the place stamped by the memory of my first year with Jack. Things were different then. I don't know.

I better cut this letter off.

Tommy went to an orgy in New Jersey the other night. 150 people, naked and crazy with sex. Yum. Yum. He was made to wear a mask, the rest of him naked, and go outside

in the cold and when he came in the house again people tickled his ass with a feather and sucked him off and licked him all over while he was blindfolded. It is a long, perverse, fascinating story. Tommy has the wierdest sexual responses of anybody I ever met. Sexually I think there is a hollowness in his core. I love him, howlowness and all.

Ruth in back from Hollywood. The leading lady suffered a brain hemorage in the middle of a scene. Ruth has to go back in January and film around the brain hemorage. For ϕ some reason that strikes me funny.

When I dig up some bread I want to go down to Key West alone and write my book in your house, and when enough of it is finish -- maybe a week or so -- I want to come to New Orleans and see you and Victor. Never been there. Tommy wants to go down and see you. He really needs to get away, although he won't admit it.

Mark Kluz called from California. He goes to trial on January 3. Doesn't look too good. He wants a letter from you confirming his good character. He will call me about it again. He is lonely and I think he is on drugs again. Fucking kids got no sense.

The town is empty without you. I miss you, baby. I told you my love so often. I think you know. God knows you've heard it enough. I think we are good for each other, true friends, buddies in the State of Maine, the rest of it. I don't know about the others, baby, but you can count on me. Amen.

Greet Victor for me. Tell me I think orange hair is sexy.

J. Williams
1431 Duncan St.
Key West, Fla.



Dotson Rader,
440 West End Ave.,
New York, N. Y. (10024)

Key West

1/8/72

Dotson love:

There's been a staggering silence since the Harper's Bazaar piece came out. No phone-calls and practically no mail about anything from anywhere at all. Is this what you meant when you wanted me that I would catch "a lot of flak"?

It really was a very bad piece. I should only have included the analysis of the system, not all the rest of that fancy-nancy shit.

Why don't you take better care of your poor old mother in her dotage?

I read over that beautiful end to your "Govt. Inspected Meat", about your old man and Mable Balls in the trailer camp and the fantastic scene with the gay preacher and the old man's death and then the apocalyptic end with the brawl in the Frisco bar.

I thought a lot about you: this was last night.

I thought, Oh, God, I wish I could still write like that. This kid's got it all, he's got a heart that still feels the right things without sentiment, he's got a great narrative sense, he's got a terrific ear, sense of character, he's got enough sense of structure and he's got balls not pronounced Ba-haals....

I think you've got it made, made really big, as a writer, and you'll live to practise the art in a much more decent, at least more honest world.

Now about me. To begin with I have just instructed my accountant to dismiss my lawyer because she (Florida) is charging me \$680 some dollars a month and for WHAT? Jesus! And my royalties suddenly dropping through the floor if there is any floor...

I am either recovering my senses or completely losing my senses or can you do both at once?

Poor Billy gets on the phone about ~~EME~~ a week ago and tells me how wonderful everything is, how I hit Leonard Lyons column and Cavett is gasping for my TV appearance and the Bazaar piece is so beautiful and that five theatres are bidding for the off-Broadway play and God is black and gay and liberated and beautiful and so on and so forth and then there's this silence beneath the lowest decibel of sound.

I know Billy cares. What I wish is that someone would level with me now. I still have a passport and plane fare to London and Moscow and Bangkok but I have to be advised, the real shit has to get through. And I mean to ME. Because I'm still living and anything that's still living matters in my concept of the world.

Why don't you fly right down here? I am booked out of here today but I think I'll cancel the bookings. The weather turned cold and grey for a couple of days but had been in the high seventies and low eighties and radiant: pool fine for swimming: Poppins cooking improved: a new black kitten named Sabbath with gold eyes and a white triangle on its chest like a medieval shield in miniature.

Love - 10.

Black

They're cancelled - sunset bright.

440 West End Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10024

January 15, 1972

Dear Tenn,

I sure as hell wish you'd write me or something because I get lonesome not hearing from you and I have had a hard time writing my new novel. I've started two different ones since December, got about a hundred pages into each and then discarded them. Now I am on a third, about murder and drugs and gay love and incest and, well, in a word, it's about Florida.

Ruth got back from the Coast, took eleven and a half hours to get here because one of the plane's engines was lost inflight. Now she's trying to get some television commercial work. God, I love sweet Ruth. Wouldn't be able to survive without her.

Burt Shevelove and I went to see this big gay movie, THE BOYS IN THE SAND, which is doing enormous box office here. It is terrible, boring; several really stunning but dumb gay beauties fucking and sucking and rimming like crazy. Nothing but cocks and balls. After twenty minutes you were so thankful when you saw a face. After Burt and I talked about why it was so boring. Burt quoted E.M. Forster: "The only thing that cuts the ice is affection or the promise of affection." I guess that's it.

I been to a lot of parties and dinners and shit like that. Haven't been sleeping well, but my drinking is way down. I am anxious about my writing, you know? I just got to get a contract.

Mark Kluz' trial has been postponed until February. He fired his lawyer. I want to go to the Coast for the trial since I don't think he should go it alone. I think, yes, I know he is going to be railroaded and end his blond life the rutted punk of some California pen. The revolution, like a stoned mother, ignores her sons. (poetic that.)

What is happening on the play? When are you coming back to New York? How long will you be in Key West? How is Victor? And Gigi? I miss you, crocodile. I wish we were together. Sometimes I get so ~~xxx~~ to hell with it. It's 5AM. I can't sleep. Ran into Allen Ginsberg. He wanted to know if I was gay. I smiled and said nothing, nasty bitch.

Write me, okay?

440 West End Avenue
New York, New York 10024

January 23, 1972

Dear Tenn,

I talked with Billy today -- he's very excited about the play and the rewrite -- and he said that you would not be coming into New York until February 9 or so because of a delay in beginning rehearsals. Well, I am disappointed, baby, because I looked forward to seeing you, and Tom Hedley, the guy who made that documentary for the CBC-BBC of the benefit will be in town next week and is going to set up a screening of it and we'd have such a goddamn fucking beautiful good time watching the lousy thing, you and me, and laughing at ourselves, you know. But maybe he can have it set up for you when you get into town.

Now the other night I went to a party for Yevtusenko, the Ruski poet, at Drue Heinz. Warren Beatty was there, really handsome although I don't credit him with more than a normal amount of smarts, but I was the All-American Hickville nothin-burger movie fan on seeing him. Warhol kept saying, oh wow, and staring at him, and I said to Andy, "I want to meet him, so why don't you take a picture of Beatty and me together?" Andy had his Polaroid with him. "Why?" Andy said. "What do you mean why? Because I want to meet him!" Andy can be so dumb sometimes. "But he doesn't like boys," Andy said, wistfully I might add. So this debate commenced on whether the subject was gay or not, and since you're about the only one in a position to know, and none of us had the guts to ask the actor to his face, I thought you might tell me.

Anyway, why I bring up the party is that Drue asked me and Ruth to come down to her pad in Nassau for a week on February 6. Aint going to cost us a penny since the Heinz pickle company owns a plane to take us there. Nice. I'm thinking, Well, Dotson, since you'll be right near Tennessee why not go to Key West and see him around the 15th. I would love to do that. But Billy says you'll be here. Well, if you're going to be in New York than I'll come to New York for I'd rather be with you here than without you in Key West. (That sounds like a song title: I'd rather be...)

Ruth and I saw the ~~max~~ workshop of Martin Duberman's three one act plays last night. Lovely, beautiful plays. The directing was superb, the writing marvelous, literate, moving, at times terribly funny, and the acting, My God, Tenn, you should have seen these young actors. The kid in the last play was born for the stage. And the kid -- 17 years old he is -- in the first was absolutely first rate. God, I wish you could have seen these plays, and the performance. I had drinks with Marty and the director after. The director is young, highly gifted. ~~K&K~~ Schucks, gee whiz, fuck, you got to see his work. He would be perfect for you. (And the cast, what marvelous cast). In a word, it was very exciting.

Now I am feeling up, high, got the giggles, although my liver hurts, and the novel, well, baby, the novel is coming to me just fine. I think your Wonderbread boy is over the hump. The bumper's end

440 West End Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10024

January 31, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

The novel I am writing (oh, the optimism in that line!) is going too slowly. Painfully. I am putting it aside until I return from Nassua. Maybe down there I'll be able to think about it freshly, with some detachment. It has become too important. I am nervous in the writing of it. Do you know what I mean? I have to pull it together and hype it up and tighten my grip on it, maybe drop some black beauties when I sit down to write again so I am high for it, up you see, so I do not drift like a child in a crowd into passages of such sadness, nagging loss. It makes me lonely to write. I wish you were here, Tenn.

If I'm not being bitchy -- I sent the Sunday Times a real bitch of a letter about that goddamn "Lee Barton" and his goddamn wretched play, "Nightride"; remember that piece of shit about the breakdown playwright and the rock star? Jesus H! -- what I write gets so goddamn sorrowful it is embarrassing. It is like my mind is possessed by someone I love who has gone off and I cannot get her out of me, like she pulls the writing, like iron pulled by a magnet, into being about her -- but, of course, there is no one loved and gone off. Odd. I spend hours figeting over a paragraph -- something I never did before, ever -- changing tenses and voices and opening lines. And what is there to show for it? About five pages good, and fifty thrown out. Much more than fifty. I cannot figure it out. Well, I am determined to stick with this novel, to keep my lousy nose out of politics until it is finished. What I do is spend the days trying to work, and at night I go drinking or to parties or movies, often with Ruth or Tommy. And I think a lot. But the fucking trouble with thinking alone is that it makes you scared. Anyway, I don't give a shit what people think of me anymore. Goddamn. I am tired of being introduced as a radical. I am tired of argument.

Ruth and I leave on Sunday for Nassau. It's a freebie, thank God. The sun will be good. We'll be staying with Drue Heinz, which means fat cats playing bridge and I will be left alone.

I had dinner with Julian and Judith Beck last night. They have returned from their speaking tour on the Coast. I learned something I did not know: that you spent part of a summer with them, I think on the Gape, and Paul Goodman was there too. You were writing Menagerie then. Julian said you were very beautiful, didn't have a mustache or beard. Well, apparently the Becks couldn't get as many speaking engagements as they needed, although they had three agents trying to line up work. And when they spoke at a college they refused to perform. They tried to turn every appearance into a group discussion on revolution. They have decided not to go back to South America for the time being, at least

for two years. Judith has her Diary coming out in the spring. They want to get a house in the Bronx or Brooklyn as a center for the Living Theatre, and branch out from there with several companies. Did you know that Paradise was supposed to be based on a careful study of the dialectics of revolution, the revolutionary process? Never occurred to me as that. Julian said that the period of "revolutionary agitation and activism" was over in America. That a period of revolutionary "reflection and revelation" had begun. He said kids are reexamining everything, even, God helps us, Marxism and socialism. Well, I do not know. That doesn't seem encouraging to me. What I take the present state of consciousness to mean is that the kids are apathetic or bored or frightened or worn of idealism. They are tired of the struggle. Maybe the Presidential elections will stir things up. I doubt it. It is logical. The bloom is off, the easy highs are over. Too much blood and death and a war waged too long.

Dave Dellinger is in the hospital in Boston. He had an emergency appendectomy. What a string of bad luck. His father died. And then his ~~z~~ beloved grandson. And now this.

I will see you in New York about the 15th. Call Tommy when you get in. He is anxious to see you again. ~~XXXXX~~ You never replied to his letter. I think that hurt his feelings. I think about you often, Tennessee. I worry about you. But I trust you. Remember, crocodile, that Dotson loves you. Even if you aint a country-western television singer.

P.S.

Ruth and I saw Sylvia Miles in Rosebloom. One of the worst plays I ever saw. But Sylvia was pretty good. She played herself. By the way, she was quoted in Earl Wilson as saying that she had taken her boyfriend away from Monique Van Voren. The boyfriend is Rudolf. Monique replied that it was quite untrue. "I never lost a boyfriend to another woman, only lost the boys to other men."

One other piece of gossip. And I think it's outrageous. The night before the beginnings of the Berrigan trial, the Russian poet Yevtushenko had drinks with Kissinger. You once asked me where I would draw the line on knowing people. That is where I would draw the line.

Ken wrote
23,
1772

Tulu, asked is Tab is fag, "I ~~don't~~ wouldn't know, Darling. He hasn't sucked mt cock."

Cat is my masterwork, and it was ruined by the direction. Kazan is a great director. I paid him back. I kept in the third act and wrote the preface on directing.

Boom is my statement on death. It is my revolutionary work. It is about America, this old lady owning this island with her personal flag, her imperial ways. The Burtons were miscast. It should have been played by an old actress and a young, stunning leading man. The lines make no sense with the Burton's, when she talks about her world famous figure. You know? It's supposed to be funny.

I first thought of Streetcar by thinking of Blanche sitting by an open window.

I never plot anything. It just comes out. You can't force it. It comes or it doesn't. I was shocked to learn that Fitzgerald made these elaborate diagrams for his short stories. What kind of writing is that.

Hemingway's greatest book is Islands. It took him a lifetime to amass the courage to write it. It is truly an epic work. And at the end he says to a man that he loves him. One sentence. It took a lifetime to write it. He was homosexual, you know. Underneath. It was really men he loved. I loved him. We got along beautifully. None of his women characters, except for lady Brett, are convincing. He didn't know how to write women well. My best characters, what I write best are women.

Joke about but good. I am here. Waiting. Unafraid.

"My mother is a fantastic bitch.
But I love her."

We are drinking. It is 2 A.M.

"Carson and I used to write
together at the same table
across from each other. She
was in love with a lady
psychiatrist once..." I had
just come in from the kitchen
and put a full quart of vodka
on the table to drink, "and
she did that. In the afternoon
she would bring a bottle of
bombon and sit on the step watch-
ing the street waiting for the
lady psychiatrist who of course
never came. She would drink
the entire bottle sitting there
gumming and moaning about
her lady psychiatrist."

My West, Feb. 24, 1972

"You shouldn't go on television, Fern."

"But why? I think I'm good
on television. Oh the mail I get.
That means something, doesn't it?
The mail."

"But you cackle and giggle..."

"That's bad, the cackling."

"Well, you should be serious
about what cost you so much
suffering."

"What's that?"

"Your work."

"No, baby, not my work.
My life."

→ "What would you have gone
into if you hadn't been a
writer?"

"Isn't it good, my work?
What would I have done
without it?"

"Religion."

March 31, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

I considered writing you a long letter of explanation and apology too. But why? I think you understand the matter about the Times ad and how the mistake occurred. I think you know it was not done intentionally by me. It was not done to rip you off.

You know I love you, Crocodile. Goddamn, you must know it after all the time together, the talk, the closeness, the honesty and laughter and openness between us, the faith and, always there, the loyalty. So I do not want to write you a long letter. You are hours before an opening (and from what Tommy and Jack said after seeing the play, I think you have a hit on your hands) and you do not need an unburdening from me. These last several weeks have been very unhappy ones for me. A central, necessary portion of the fabric of my life has unraveled, split, splintered like cheap, sunburnt cloth and I do not understand what has happened -- is happening -- nor why. And if you were not hours before an opening and not in need of support yourself I would come to you, as I have before, for assurance and advice and safety. But there ~~is~~ ~~was~~ no time for the rites and duties of friendship now. It will wait until after Easter, until Key West or later. Nothing has changed between us. Not as I see it. Love survives most everything except bad faith. No, even that it survives.

I will see you Sunday night.

Like a sentimental backslider I lit three candles at St. Pat's. For you and Miss Rose and the play.

I miss you, Tenn. I feeling down so low. And I am deeply sorry for misunderstandings and anxieties caused, for time wasted, for cheap emotions, for self-damage, for misplaced indulgence and undeserved tolerances, for weakness and hysteria and drunkenness and insensitivity and sorrow displayed which should have remained hidden. I miss you, Tenn. I still believe in my gut that I am your true friend; that I have, when the others have left, that I have stood the long nights and the anguish not even sleep can hush. I have stood by you.

I will be there again.

June 7, 1972

Dear Tenn,

It is nearly 3 in the morning. I am at work, having come in from seeing Small & Craft with you as Doc, and I am still marveling at how beautifully you pulled it off, the acting, and thinking still how much stronger the play is for the additions you have made to the text. I was, as usual, proud of you tonight, the acting and the play, the courage shown in both. And I was moved, startled even, by your toast to Angela Davis. That showed courage too.

It is probably ill advised to write letters of complaint at 3 in the morning, even when those complaints are addressed to a friend one deeply loves. But I spoke with Christopher on the phone a few minutes ago and I am distressed by his humiliation.

This is what occurred, and on the face of it it seems petty. Yet it is important to me because he is, like you, my friend. He is not famous and has no clout nor money. Therefore he is easy to hurt. Monday at Joe Allen's you told Christopher he could come to your play. Scott was supposed to have arranged for the tickets. Knowing you would be preoccupied with learning your part, I reminded Scott several times to make the ticket arrangements. You, after all, had invited Christopher. He assured me it would be done.

This afternoon, Tuesday, Christopher called and said there were no tickets for him. I called the box office and was told there were no tickets for him, although there were still unsold seats for the evening performance.

I called Marsha at Billy's office. She was, as always, very sweet and cooperative. She said she would call and arrange the tickets. I called Christopher and told him. He was happy and eager to see you.

Sometime after six o'clock Scott called Christopher and told him he couldn't come to the play. There were no tickets for him. There was no room. "Why?" Christopher asked. Scott replied that you did not want him to have tickets because you felt you were being "ripped off" by Christopher. Scott also said you were angered about some remark I had made to you and implied that in some way you were punishing Christopher for my smartass remark (a remark I regret having made).

It is incredibly trivial. But you are wrong if you think Christopher is "ripping you off"...that he is a cheat or thief or whatever Scott meant by that term. It is brutally insensitive to have him called by someone he barely knows hardly an hour before curtain and told that, in effect, he is not welcome because you do not trust him. What was he to tell his friends as they arrived to go uptown? That Tennessee felt he wasn't good enough or important enough or trustworthy enough to occupy a seat at his play?

I do not know why Christopher was treated this way. Nor who is responsible. But he is owed an explanation and an apology. He is a human being. And he feels rejection and humiliation as deeply as you and I. And it does not matter that he is unfamous or poor or too young. His feelings too are of worth and deserve to be respected. I tell you this because I will not tolerate the humiliation of my friends. I would protest as strongly if you had been humiliated.

I love you, Tenn. That is why I write you now.

The Big Dot.

June 7, 1972

Dear Tenn,

It is nearly 3 in the morning. I am at work, having come in from seeing SMALL CRAFT with you as Doc and still marveling at how beautifully you pulled it off, the acting, and thinking still how much stronger the play is for the additions you have made in the script. I was, as usual, proud of you tonight, the acting and the play, the courage shown in both. And I was moved, startled even, by your toast to Angela Davis. That showed courage too.

It is probably ill advised to write letters of complaint at 3 in the morning, even when those complaints are directed at someone you love. But I spoke with Christopher on the phone a few minutes ago, and I am upset by his humiliation and deeply hurt by his distress. He feels offended and done-under by what occurred today. And since I believe you are fond of Christopher -- for you were good to each other not long ago -- I want to convey his feelings to you so that you can act upon them.

Christopher is not famous. He has no clout nor money. So he is easy to hurt. But his feelings are precious to me, Tennessee. I trust they are still precious to you, precious to the degree that when they are offended or abused it is necessary that we act to restore them. He is my friend. When he is hurt I feel it too.

This is what occurred, and on the face of it it seems petty. Yet it is important to me because it is important to my friend, to Christopher. I will not stand by and see him humiliated and say nothing about it.

Monday night, at Joe Allen's, you told Christopher he could come to your play the following night. Scott was supposed to have arranged that the tickets be left for him at the box office. I was happy that you wanted Christopher there, and again I was appreciative of your generosity to your friends. However, knowing that you would be preoccupied with learning your lines, I reminded Scott at Joe Allen's, and again later at your hotel suite when I made ~~by~~ my unannounced visit (perhaps inopportune also, but then I felt depressed that night because I had been earlier with Jack and stunned by his sadness -- his aunt is dying of cancer, and she is all the family he has known -- and my inability to relieve it. I wanted to be with you.), I reminded him to make sure the tickets for Christopher were arranged.

This afternoon, Tuesday, Christopher called me and said there were no tickets at the theatre in his name, although my tickets were at the boxoffice. I said, "There's some fuck up. Tenn wants you to see the play. Scott may've forgotten to arrange it."

I then called the box office. I was told that indeed there were no tickets for him although there were still unsold seats available for the evening performance.

Then I tried calling you, to no avail. Finally I called Billy's

office, which I hate to do because he has more important things to worry about than your friends. I spoke with Marsha, his secretary. She was very pleasant and kind. It was no problem at all, she said, there would be three tickets for Christopher at the box office in his name. I called Christopher back and told him. He was very happy.

Christopher then called Tom Ligon (the blond actor you met) and another friend and asked them to go to the play with him. He was excited and ~~was~~ proud to be included by you. As you know, Tenn, he is sensitive to exclusion. He has felt it too often. The idea of having the tickets made him feel ~~was~~ important and, yes, wanted.

Sometime after six o'clock (little more than an hour before the performance) Scott called Christopher and told him that he couldn't come to the play. There were no tickets for him. There was no room for him. "Why?" Christopher asked. Scott replied that you did not want him to have tickets because you felt he was "ripping you off." (Paranthetically, he also said you were upset about a remark I had made to you in jest when I entered the bathroom as if you would punish Christopher because I had made some smartass remark. Which I regret having made.)

It is all incredibly trivial in its way/ And yet...I think you are wrong if you really believe that Christopher is "ripping you off." That is unfair and I protest it. And I think it is callous, worse, it is cruel and humiliating to have him called barely an hour before curtain and told that, in effect, he is not welcome at your play (in your life?) because you do not trust him. To be told that by a person he hardly knows after thinking, as he does, that you are his friend and that he has done his best to be good to you. Maybe his best is not sufficient, nevertheless it is wrong to place him in an embarrassing position in front of the friends he was to take to your play (What was he to tell them when they arrived to go uptown? That he was not good enough or important enough or trustworthy enough to sit in a seat and watch your play?) . Well, Tenn, I cannot believe that you think Christopher "ripped you off," that he is a thief or cheat...or whatever Scott meant to imply by that term. Nor can I believe that you would extend an invitation to Christopher -- who, God knows, has done you no disservice nor harm -- and then have it withdrawn so brutally so late. But it was done, and he feels hurt and humiliated and he does not understand. "I thought he was eager to see me," he said to me, "I was eager to see Tennessee. What have I ever done to him?" I think he is owed an explanation. For he has been treated unfairly.

One further point: I do not like the idea of Scott repeating to people -- even to Christopher -- what you and I say to one another. I certainly do not repeat to your other friends what you say about them. I resent Scott repeating to my friends remarks you may have made about him in private. If you want to rebuke me you have always been able to do it to my face. You have never before needed a Scott to do it for you.

Now this is a long, perhaps boring letter. But it is long, baby, because I am disturbed, disturbed because I love you and I love

Christopher and there has been a misunderstanding. I do not know why Christopher was treated this way, nor who is responsible for it. But he is my friend, as you are my friend. I know what it is like to be humiliated (the Giffords did it twice to me, as you know) and have no one rise to your defense.

Well, it may be a storm in a teacup, and some people might find it funny and slightly absurd that Dotson would get so exercised over such a trifling thing as an humiliation done to a friend, especially one who may be a nobody in some people's eyes.....I may be going on too much. Goddamn it, Tennessee, Christopher is just a kid, unfamous, without power. He is, therefore, easy to hurt. But he feels the hurt as deeply as you would, baby, had it happened to you. And I would not tolerate anyone hurting you without rising to your defense with all I had. The same is true for Christopher.

I love you both, Tenn.

P.S. A reminder: if you have the time it would be good for you to see Dellinger and the Bishop. They are both anxious to see you. If you like, I will arrange it.

P.P.S. I won't deliver this letter until late tomorrow night. I don't want to bother you before the Wednesday performances.

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

July 14, 1972

Dear Tenn,

Christopher and I tried getting you before you left. We planned to go to the airport with you but apparently you checked out of the Elysee early leaving the ghosts of undiminished passions and Miss Bankhead behind to confront the Third World maids and lower the property values. Anyway, suffice it to say that it was wonderful with you in town and now, as usual, things seem depleted of certain joy with your absence. Okay.

On the 28th, if Esquire pays my way, I will be going to San Juan for four or five days, maybe more. And then, from there, going to New Orleans to see my sister and her poet husband and their children and the Crocodile!!!!!! Peter said he may come down while I am there. Ruth might too but it very much depends on money with her. But you can expect me the first part of next month. Tell Victor not to use all the vaseline. I have a canker sore on my... well, my lip I guess. I really want you to show me one sight above all others: Mechanics Square.

On the 18th Eric Mann comes into town. He'll be staying in my little room here. He sleeps on the floor. He learned that habit in prison. He is so driven, Eric, the sorrow. On the 20th Dellinger comes back and we'll be seeing Kazan. I really look forward to that. Dave makes me remember who I am and what I believe. He makes me become true again. You are much alike in that.

Finally, Christopher, as you asked, is blowing up the picture of you and Dave and sending it to you. I also asked him to make one up for Dave and I want to give it to him as a present from the two of us, you and me. I think he would love that. The price of the two pictures is \$80, to have them done in speia, mounted and cut. They have to be transferred from slides. So I will pay \$20. of it (toward Dave's picture) if you'll pay the rest. That seems fair.

Tommy and I went to a hustler bar -- Dirty Edna's -- the other night and saw the most beautiful blond hustler, maybe twenty years old, in blue jeans and demin jacket. He kept looking at me. I do not know why, but I was overwhelmed by pity. I cannot get over my deadly romanticism in the face of young men captive of loneliness and bad times. It is not a sexual response but a ~~spiritual~~ spiritual one. They seem like fallen angels. Trite image. I do not know how to express it.....I loves you, state of Tennessee.

1014 Dumas Notes.
7/14/72

Dear Dot: *

Being a complainer by nature, I suppose, I wish that you would once write me a letter that didn't contain a bill for services or an appeal for something of a material nature. I am referring to your suggestion that I pay sixty or eighty dollars for an enlargement of that picture, wonderful as it is, of me and Dave. Right now, Baby, I am wondering whether or not I can afford to go on living, with my hospital and surgical expenses not yet paid. God is a good provider but right now HE is holding out on me. And last night Billy informed me that Candy Darling has not proved to be a big box-office draw. Of course this could be attributed partly to her competition with the Democratic convention, but still it has been quite a long while since money moved in the right direction which is toward me and not away from me. Headed for Potter's Field, love.

Actually I am beginning to mend. Have been swimming my usual fifteen lengths of the long pool at the Athletic Club here and getting about town without wheels and engine... There are many words for the crocodile but the most impressive is imperishable - relatively...

Do you know that ~~XXXXXX~~ Morgan-Manhattan storage has not delivered the furniture? Yesterday the shipper's called to inform me that the soonest it could be expected is the 31st of the month. Victor is sleeping on a cot. He has a new hobby now. He is working with something called lucite which is a liquid substance that solidifies into objects that can be tinted. On my bedside table I was received by three lucite objects that were supposed to be a fox, a rabbit, and a rat. Aside from differences of color they were remarkably similar in form for three such different creatures.

A shadow of tragedy hangs over the household. His mother (demented for years) has died alone at night and didn't even have burial expenses.

I was thinking last night - as I dropped my yellow jacket - that there has been a terrible erosion of the capacity for sympathy and for pity among us all. So much horror is a cotidinal thing: the heart wears out the breast and we stop feeling as we did for each other. I remember how much I felt for people close to me. Of course I still feel - but it is numbed by this ambience of continual dreadfulness going on around.

You could fry an egg on the streets of New Orleans! But so far the air-conditions ARE working. - After a few more lucite objects, I think I am going to

fly to somewhere just under the Arctic or over the Antarctic circles.
- tourist class.

How awful to begin a new page and have nothing more to say.

It's almost your birthday. Are you glad you were born or sorry about it? In either case, I am glad that we are both Aries and, aside from your avarice, have so much in common.

I got a very sweet, very brief, note from Christopher and I won't leave here before Peter comes down.

Gigi survives and last night I gave her half of my filet mignon.
(Received from Welfare).

Isn't it wonderful that McGovern made it? My minority opinion is that he is going to defeat Nixon by a landslide of epic proportions, since I think the poor, the dissident, and those who appreciate honesty in this nation - in that order - are going to prevail over the corporate interests at last.

I am still reading Joan Didion and now believe she is the greatest prose writer since Jane Bowles retired to a Spanish hospital.

Remember me fondly to Ruth, and the others.

Love,

J.

At this letter arrives without postage, you'll understand why.

One West 72 Street
New York, New York 10023

July 19, 1972

Dear Tenn,

The heat is driving us all bananas! I start the day happy and then after a subway ride (it is through the July subway tunnels that we are consigned to hell) I become an irritable sonofabitch yelling obscenities at people I basically like. It is only the purest passions which survive great heat (without saying too much, that between Christopher and me is beginning to fade like blue cotton jeans in the sun).

I went to a party for an old friend, Dave McReynolds of the War Resisters League. He is on his way to Paris and Hanoi. There were about twenty old time peace types there, all of us excited by McGovern's nomination. God, I hope he pulls it off. America -- to say nothing about suffering Vietnam -- cannot survive four more years of Nixon. Even Miss Martha couldn't take it anymore, not when they started shoving needles in her ass! Who needs this shit? she was ~~taxt~~ ~~war~~ screaming as John had her bounded and gagged and packed off to a zoo. Who needs this!!! Up yours Spiro!!! No one treats Martha!
Like This!!

I saw a wonderful movie, MARJOE, about a young evangelist come in out of the cold. You must see it. Also, Ruth and I (thank you!) saw Candy on Saturday night. It was about 95% outside, the city empty of life. Candy was marvelous, as were the others in the cast. She is a very tall young lady, especially in those Claudette Colbert Fuck-Me shoes and that spotted Joan Bennett day dress with the buttons down the front. A very lanky broad, Miss Darling.

As to my last letter which upset you: I was passing along Christopher's request. It's nothing to me. I have never written you for money or anything else for myself. The times I've made requests have always been on behalf of other people. You know that, baby. I have many sins, but avarice aint one of them.

I am anxious to see my sister. I am working on my book. Have cut down my drinking. Eric Mann was in town yesterday, stayed overnight. It was good seeing him. He seems confused, at a loss for method. But he is strong, and he has his courage.

If you have the time read Judith Malina's THE ENORMOUS DESPAIR. It's rather beautiful. I want to review it.

My love to Victor. You are lucky he is into lucite. Jeez, think if he took up ballet. It would cost you a fortune keeping him in tutus and feathers. To say nothing of building a rehearsal gymnasium in the front parlor.

I miss you. Goes without saying. We are survivors, you and me. We hold on even with our nails bleeding, our pockets picked. We survive.

See you in a couple weeks. Oh, you lucky devil!

1014 Dumanie

note.

7/23/72

Baby, don't turn on your friends this way, don't leave poor little Chris out of your birthday party and say he ~~is~~ fading on you like a pair of blue jeans. This isn't in good style. It makes me wonder how long I will remain in your tolerant ^(B)graces, and how long Ruth will. We don't have enough friends to afford to cast them away. At least I know that I don't.

I don't know all your problems so I hesitate to offer this gratuitous counsel. But you say everyone is going bananas from the heat up there. How do you think we are going from the heat down here? I just wonder if there is sufficient acreage in the various banana farms to accomodate us all. And the Lucite!

I have written Chris as best I can. I told him to abandon his plan of flying abroad on your birthday, the 25th. (What the hell is your sign? Something out of sight?)

You have the incomparable gift of charm and it gets you by with a lot. You can insult and ~~abuse~~ ^{ridicule} your friends right and left and up and down and they take it from you because you've got this charm going for you. It's always good to see you again wherever..

~~Don't~~ exploit it, however. It can go bad on you when you are sixty.

I never had any charm. I remember when Miss Rose was losing her mind. Mother sent her to visit Dad's sisters in Knoxville. She come home through a flood. I mean this literally, she was marooned in a flash flood somewhere in ~~XXXXX~~ an East Tennessee depot. When she finally got home, I said, @Rose, how was it in Knoxville? She said, with no self-pity, "Aunt Ella and Aunt Belle only like people with charm and I am not charming."

Her mind went fast after that. I don't know why I am throwing this in. Perhaps only to impress upon you the advantage of your charm and how you must not abuse it in your relations with those who need you. And love you!

Love,

10.
Today I put in six hours work on my Darwleday memoirs. I can't wait to get you in them!! Now, quite exhausted, I drop a double valium and hit the sack. (over)

Am I writing against time because
in my heart I know that
it's running out on me? Every
Crocodiles perish, and are
turned into watch-bands!

I am not scared. Just
running! But not running
scared. Shut. I have had a
great life. And the hereafter
seems restless. I would like
to get abroad once more.

Drink Frascati on an open
square with Maria and the
dear ghost of Frankie. Then I
have a terrific and mysterious
urge to see Vienna again. To
sit in a wine-garden on the
Danube with a boy in Lederhosen.
And hear "The Third Man" theme again
on a zither and hold hands and
dig? — I still want some thing.

Love again,

John. See you in
n. 9. 25th!

Take photos to printer

August 18m 1972

I talked to PCPJ and was told that Dave Dellinger and Father Dan Berrigan were in town tonight. They were available for dinner.

I called Tenn at Glenville's. They were having a reading of OUTCRY. Peter answered the phone. I told him that I would like to have Tennessee join Dellinger, Berrigan and me in the village for dinner. Peter said he would give him the message. "He plans to go to Fire Island immediately after the reading. ~~Peter~~ ^{Billy} is in a snit over the delay here. He is aching to go."

I said, "Well, I think Tenn'll stay here. He's been after me for months to meet Father Berrigan."

Tennessee never returned my call. He left for Fire Island immediately after the reading was completed. "I gave him the message," Peter said, "But Billy started shrieking about meeting boats and politics ~~was~~ ruining his career. I must say he didn't speak well of you, Dotson."

"Did Tennessee defend me?"

"He seemed bewildered."

~~REXNEN~~ Having to choose between dancing with queens in the Pines or meeting the martyr-priest, Tennessee chose the Pines. Such is his politics.

877-6000

John Springer

421-6720

Schroeder
scene

Schroeder

500g 7 Yale by in R. West
notes under doors in dining
Dellinger's - Hold me!
Mailer's - Hold me!
revolutionary

See

August 18th 1972

I talked to ERL and was told that Dave Bellinger and Father Dan Berrigan were in town tonight. They were available for dinner.

I called Tenn at Glenville's. They were having a reading of OUTCRY. Peter answered the phone. I told him that I would like to have Tennessee join Bellinger, Berrigan and me in the village for dinner. Peter said he would give me the message. "He plans to go to Fire Island immediately after the reading. There is a salt over the delay here. He is coming to go."

I said, "Well, I think Tenn'll stay here. He's been after me for months to meet Father Berrigan."
Tennessee never returned my call. He left for Fire Island immediately after the reading was completed. "I gave him the message," Peter said, "but Billy started shrieking about meeting poets and politicians next evening his career. I must say he didn't speak well of you, Gordon."

"Did Tennessee defend me?"
"He seemed bewildered."
Known having to choose between dancing with queens in the Pines or meeting the martyr-poet, Tennessee chose the Pines. Such is his politics.

Commodity

Bill had love no money

agreed with 047-147

7/25/72

de Free's Inc.

dot -
Stay out of
The Migratory
Stream, Rowe
Tennessee

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

August 28, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

I saw an item in the Times about your being in Venice. You were quoted about Outcry coming to New York, its being your last major play, etc. I hope Venice has gone well for you -- i.e. that Maria made it down from London and you settled things happily. I know if she gets to know Billy she'll like him. I think jealousy is at the root of the problem.

My parents were so delighted to meet you, and I thank you for being so sweet to them. My mother said to tell you that they included you in their prayers each day. God knows it might help.

I went out to East Hampton with Ruth last weekend. It was very restful. I stayed in the house most of the time, avoiding the coke-sniffing, sex-in-the-bushes ronde of the Warhol-Colacicello set. I rather like nude swimming parties. It is the drug usage which frightens me. You know, don't you, that Candy's friend, Andrea (who jumped out the 18th floor of her building) was on drugs at the end. Last time Andy saw her her face was covered with red scabs. She was in the habit of pressing burning cigarettes to her face. What is the sorrow which drives the young into death? I do not know.

Arkansas, the kid I met in New Orleans, keeps calling me collect. Lonesome, I guess. Why do I get involved in these situations when I have nothing to offer but long distance promises of future comfort which does little good when you are sixteen and street hustling and tempted by capsulated undoing.

Eric Mann comes into town next week. Dellinger gets out of jail today. Spent an evening with Julian and Judith at their Living Theatre commune in Brooklyn. They send you their love.

As do I. I miss you, Tennessee. I hope you get your four wishes, the one's you told that young Italian playwright. You've earned them.

PS: When do you come home? Christopher will try to look you up in Italy. He's been in North Africa. I miss him too. It's been a hard summer for me. But I am at work on my difficult book. At least there is value ~~ys~~ in that.

Dotson Rader
One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

RITORNARE AL MITTENTE
RETURN TO THE SENDER
UNCLAIMED

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
%American Express
Piazzadi Spagna
Rome, Italy



USA 21c
UNITED STATES AIR MAIL
VIA AIR MAIL
CORREO AEREO

36 1/4

R
AON

AFTER 3 DAYS RETURN TO

ZIP CODE

Note from Tennessee
Sept. 7, 1972

Mr D. Rader
Suite 129

Dear Dot - Left
my address book in
Venice. If you wish to
establish communications
leave your phone no. at
Elysée - Leaving box

New Orleans soon
Love,
LO.
(with Vic)

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

October 9, 1972

Dear Tenn,

I've finished the first part of my new book (120 pages!), and I am very happy with it. My agent likes it which, hopefully, speaks more to her excellent literary taste than to her loyalty. I haven't gotten my editor's reaction yet. Needless to say they (Knopf) are irritated, to put it kindly, over my discontinuing work on the Decline of the Straight book, a book they wanted rather badly. So I am on pins and needles waiting the editorial reaction to Part One. But I have already begun the next part of the Book (it is in three parts), which deals with my life late last winter and spring. In a sense both you and I are writing memoirs and that must say something about our effect on each other or, at any rate, the high appreciation we have of our mortality. I think you were so goddamn right to deal very directly and honestly in your Materiel (is that how it's spelled?) with the boys and the private matters of your life. I am trying, very hard, to do the same thing. I no longer give a fuck what people think of me. I paid out -- as you have -- a lot in grief and depression, in booze and bad times, for my life and I think I own it, or at least the memory of it, and have the right to speak it!

I have also begun making notes about the novel I will begin immediately on completion of this book. It is a love affair story about an affair interrupted quite suddenly by the ~~horses~~ hero's going crackers in the middle of it and having to be placed "under care", as they say. The interruption lasted five years, which is a considerable period of time to have a door put back on its hinges, and the ~~next~~ book begins with his release from the potso ward. Obviously it is somewhat autobiographical since I spent sometime when I was a teenager in a loony bin having the hinges oiled if not replaced. Anyway, that is, at the moment, my rather vague ~~of~~ conception of the next book. What do you think?

I've had several dinners with movie folk who want me to write a screen play. I don't think I'll do it. I'm not that kind of writer. I have this awful conviction that time is very short and I ought to spend it in getting the essentials written down. I can play with the fun-and-games writing later, if there is a "later." And this: I distrust movie people the way chickens distrust knives. Or crocodiles bounty hunters!

How is Robert? I hope ~~xx~~ he is getting a tan. He will look ~~ing~~ smashing when he is dark -- all that blond hair. And I hope he works good.

This is the epigram (is that the word?) for my new book. What do you think? It is from a poem by Voznesensky --

Life is a series of burned-out sites.
Nobody escapes the bonfire:
If you live -- you burn.

I also quote your poem PULSE in the book, the entire poem. I hope I have your permission to do that. It seems to me that it describes quite accurately the dream of the left -- to find the spark to raise the land fishlike, etc. I don't suppose you had that in mind when you wrote it. But that is how I understand it.

Tommy is in Ohio visiting his girlfriend. I see Peter for dinner on Thursday night. I haven't been going out since I have been working constantly. Christopher is better. He is working on a book of photography with Steve Paley. Little Brown is interested in it. That is, he will begin working when he is better. I hope the book is published. It will, like marriage, make an honest man out of Chris. Tom Ligon leaves for North Carolina on Friday to do the movie, The American Hero. Tom is such a sweet and ~~has~~ decent man. Dellinger is in bad shape, and I am trying to raise money for his operation. When will his troubles end? And raising money is difficult, and it aint helped none by that schmuck Nixon and his shell games with the war. What a bastard! I even hate his family. As Krassner said, "Tricia Nixon is the kind of girl that doesn't give good head." She also is giving cleanliness a bad name. I did go to the opening of HEAT. Silvia looked stunning, all in white with the Crown Jewels riding like mail sacks in the bodice. I loved the movie. Incredibly funny. And Joe would be perfect for One Arm. He has that smoldering sexuality and something else: the caution of a wounded animal, and the rumbling, inarticulated rage.

How I wish I were in Key West now with you. That time down there last winter was one of the happiest of my ~~lives~~ life, and I think about it often. God, the mistakes I've made in thirty years. Jack is so cool with me now. Won't see me. Doesn't talk. I never should have let him go. Never. But it is paper burned.

Ruth is rehearsing a new play, Madame DeSade, by Mishima. It goes on for a very limited run the end of this month. She is happy because she is working. God bless her.

And God be good to you, Tenn. I miss you. I always do. You don't seem to ever believe that. Yet it is true.

P.S.

I talked with Kazan a few minutes ago. It looks as if he has finally gotten funding for his new movie. Although he is having trouble casting it. It is about a Puerto Rican family in New York. He sends you his love.

1 Key West.

10/7/72

Dear Dotson:

You said that you wanted to resume our badly lapsed correspondence and I am taking you at your word for this, as I do for most serious matters. We are not as close as we were a year ago and that is depressing to me; there is still so much that binds us together, and more important things than the abrasive little incidents that always take place among people in New York, especially when both are writers.

Key West is comfortably warm and lonely but lovely. I should not say lonely since Robert is with me. He is very absorbed in his work, which is constantly improving and of the best quality - if there's not a ^{contradiction} paradox there. We work at opposite hours due to my insomnia. For instance, I just now woke at 1:15 A.M. and made instant coffee and repaired to the studio - or mad-house, as we call it.

Leoncia tries to interrupt Robert's day-time work and force him to drive her home despite the fact that cab-money is included in her salary: but he has learned to tell her, politely, to shove it, and I think she respects him for it.

I had a beautiful dream ^{to} last night: that I had a new brother, only a few months old but already on the streets, hard to keep up with.

I loved him very dearly and I remarked to Maria, who was with me, ^{searching for} pursuing him, He is the only one of us that has the eyes of my grandmother and he's just a few months old but is already much

10/5/52
1st West

brighter than Dakin.

Dear Watson:

You said that you were disappointed that I did not disagree with you. I am taking you at your word. I must get to work. I do for most serious matters. I do not disagree with you and to Ruth, that is depressing to me; there is still so much that binds us together, and more important things than the narrative little incidents that always take place among people in New York, especially when both are writers.

Jew

Key West is comfortably warm and lovely but lovely. I should not say lonely since Robert is with me. He is very absorbed in his work, which is constantly improving and of the best quality - it there's not a paradox there. We work at opposite hours due to my insomnia. For instance, I just now woke at 1:15 A.M. and made instant coffee and repaired to the studio - or mad-house, as we call it.

Leonora tries to interrupt Robert's day-time work and force him to drive her home despite the fact that car-money is included in her salary; but he has learned to tell her, politely, to shove it, and I think she respects him for it. I had a beautiful dream last night: that I had a new brother, only a few months old but already on the streets, hard to keep up with. I loved him very dearly and I remarked to Maria, who was with me, pursuing him, that he is the only one of us that has the eyes of my grandmother and he's just a few months old but is already much

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

October 16, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

I appreciated your letter. I think you have a live one in Robert -- writers, especially young writers, are the best sort to have near you, more or less. Almost all my best friends are writers. There is weight to their souls. Hmmm. Anyway, I trust you gave my regards to Robert. I like him very much.

I sent your letter down to Ruth, after taking the liberty of reading it. I thought it was for me. In it you mentioned Chris. I was with him last night (the first time I have seen him since his operation). He called me up about 8PM, terribly depressed, lonely, his voice breaking, and rambled on about life not being worth the living, "Dotson, I can't go on like this. Is it going to be thirty more years of this, the same thing over and over. I don't know if I want to spend my life as a bachelor-man," etc. So I took the subway downtown. He was very happy to see me. We spent about an hour looking at pictures he took on his European trip and then we listened to some music. Finally, about 10:30, a hustler friend of Christopher's, named Buddy Timberlake (part Indian, lovely name), came by the apartment. Buddy is 27 years old, handsome, very well built, with long, auburn hair, blue eyes, thick wrists and arms (sadly, on the arms needle tracks from shooting drugs. Does everyone want to die?). The three of us sat on the floor and Buddy read our cards for us, telling me of what my future would be, the story not altogether to my liking. I left the two of them about midnight, for by then Chris was happy again and I was not needed anymore.

I work everyday on this book. It should be completed in two more weeks. I wish you had commented on my last letter, on what I had told you about what I was writing and about my novel idea. I could use the feedback.

I saw Fellini's ROMA. It is a work of genius, dazzling. And at the end of it, who do we see sitting at a table in the Roman courtyard with a badly made-up face and rather too precious diction speaking of the reasons for his exile to Rome: Gore Vidal. Baby, somebody should have warned poor Gore that he is too old to be doing cameo numbers in Wop movies. If there ever was any doubt about his sexual tastes (which I doubt) this slight appearance removes all doubt. Not in what he says but in the manner he says it. Poor Gore. He'll never be President.

The weather is turning cold. It was in the 30's last night. I am wearing my leather jacket again (Remember the night we first met, I was wearing it then) and boots. And I am yearning to leave New York for the sun this winter. I cannot take the fucking cold. I've always hated it.

I miss you, Tenn. My love to Robert. ~~Wait~~ If I were there we ~~gs~~ could go to the Jesus People in town and pray McGovern into office. I don't see what else will get him in. I think we have to prepare for four more years of massacre in Indochina. God help us. No, God help the Vietnamese!

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

October 19, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

My book is nearly completed. I have been working at it everyday. It should be completed (knock on the wood of the True Cross) in ten days. Then I'll set about getting the novel down on paper. It is extraordinary how happy I am when the writing is going well. Nothing gives me the peace, the assurance, as writing does when it is coming good and strong and true...it is better than booze or drugs or even sex, and in a curious way it is more intimately related to one's mahood, to one's mastery and command. Should I tell you what I miss about Key West? Not being able to write and then discuss with you what I've written. I have thought a lot about what it is which requires my dependency on you. I think it is a mutual love of language. That, & similar political and other tastes, similar senses of humor. And similar awareness of the shortness of time. That it is passing, passing.

Jack Weiser's birthday is Sunday. It would be nice if you would remember to send him a birthday card. He is down low, unhappy. And still love him, Tenn. You know? His address:

Jack Weiser
123 West 80th Street
New York, N.Y. 10024

I had dinner with Peter the other night. Tommy joined us later for drinks. We saw Bill Smith's new apartment upstairs from Peter. It is a wonderful sort of Victorian studio, very sensual. It is a beautiful fuck room.

I got a sweet letter from Kazan. He is starting a new movie. I think it is about a Puerto Rican family. He thinks he finally has the financing of it completed. He has wanted to do this movie for a long time. I wish him luck.

When are you coming home? From the canopy of the Elysee I see that Laventura is still in residence with her trained seals performing at the Monkey Bar. But I know that isn't so.

The police have been rounding up the hustlers on Third Avenue. I think we are in for a heavy crack-down in this country after the election, assuming the Blood Czar is reelected. And then? Well, then I think we begin a new chapter of underground resistance. The streets yet may run with blood. If Hanoi bleeds why should Washington be immune?

Miss you, Crocodile. My love to Robert.

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

November 14, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

I am hard at work and I am in the awful habit of sleeping days and working nights. I never go out. I am determined to get the book completed -- second draft -- by the first of the year.

I talked with Peter. He said you'll be rehearsing in Canada. Oh, Tenn, you have my sympathy. It is so cold there and vacant and dead, just like my boyhood Minnesota. Be sure you take Robert with you or you'll die of loneliness and boredom. It is the nights in the north that are deadly.

The week after Thanksgiving I am going down to New Orleans to see my sister and brother-in-law. He is working everyday on his poetry (I'll show some of it to you) and I think he is a marvelous poet, although he has the vice of drinking and wandering the Quarter, a black Irishman at thirty caught up in the feelings of foreboding and estrangement. But, God, how he loves words! And how he uses them! I am worried about my sister because she was mugged two nights ago outside the hospital where she works (she's a nurse) and her back was hurt when they threw her on the ground and robbed her. She is so sweet and gentle and, in a lovely way, so defenseless. I am outraged by what happened. It is like breaking a flower. Her hospital is in the Garden District. Muggers everywhere.

I was so happy to see you. You are so lucky to have Robert. Please let me know your address and phone in Canada. And write me now. You owe me two letters. Ruth and Jack send their love. I see both of them often. I love them both. And I love

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

1 4 3 1
DUNCAN ST.
KEY WEST, FL.

Thanksgiving

Dear Dot:

It is taking me forever to use up this stationary that Poppins had prepared for me. It does do justice to the reticence of my nature, though...

We are planning to break camp here and get back into the Victorian suite next Sunday Eve so you will probably get this letter after we're back in the rotten big apple, but you are so mysteriously and elegantly inaccessible these days that an approach by letter still seems appropriate.

I feel very badly about your sister, how know how close a boy feels to his sister, I am also very distressed over mine. She was too ill to come into New York the last time I was there, according to Jo Healy. I called her and she said 'Merry Christmas, I'm fine' - but she never was a complainer and she has been suffering a lot from nausea the doctor out there tells me and is on a bland diet.

When you are in New Orleans, see Victor and assure him that all is about as well as can be expected. Please no mention of Robert. It might upset Gigi.

With his inevitable frankness, Victor admitted to me, my last time in NOLA, that he was having a romance with an ex-Methodist minister now employed as cook in the restaurant over Lafitte's. This strikes me as a good alliance. Victor is sort of synonymous with goodness as I am with badness. Please, if you do see him, assure him of my constant affection for him: and don't call him Poppins.

Robert is sort of a gift of God to me, for whatever virtue I may still possess. I would fight to the death to defend him from all marauders: meaning those who would want to divide us, not those attractive young tricks that a youth like Robert is entitled to enjoy.

We are planning to return to Aix-en-Provence immediately after the play. That is where he was studying philosophy and languages and he wants to continue these studies and I could certainly use "the cure", the big bath-establishment there. I feel that I will probably leave for Europe just before the New York opening of the play, when I feel I have done all I can with it: and so spare myself the traumas of the ritual put-down by certain members of the establishment press.

I think the shit is going to hit the fan in this country about four or six months from now. It doesn't appear to me that the big surge in the market (and in the inflation) presage anything good for the people who have been had and had and had, willingly, it's true, but possibly once too often; then willingly no more.

I know that Peter and the two actors are going to give me a final great production. I have never known a director, not even Kazan, to approach a play with the deep understanding and conscientiousness of Peter.

We are not rehearsing in Canada, love. We are starting rehearsals Dec. 17th in the States.

I saw Dave Dellinger on TV last night, in connection with the re-trial of the Chicago Seven. He looked thinner but well and beautiful.

(over)

Out of the "Movement", shattered as it now is, there still survive some beautiful people, and I don't refer to the jet-set.

But a new generation is coming, even newer than you, and I don't intend to give a baccaulareate address to them, but I do feel that they will kick the shit and start to shine in the dark.

Right now I expect that those poor old folks are being served Thanksgiving dinner in the White House, poor Pat cashaying amongst them while they try to hold their dentures in place.

Hate is out of place. Whoever was given a choice in this world to be anything but - no. That's not an existential faith and not a religious one either. But the making of existential choices is one hell of a difficult task till you are absolutely sure where your head is.

I am so glad that you are seeing both Jack and Ruth: in your life you have two lovely people: I can't wait to see you all together again.

Love,

10

New Orleans
December 1, 1972

Dear Tennessee,

I spoke with Victor on the phone yesterday. He is sweet, you know, over the phone. Maybe it was the connection, but I had to keep repeating everything I said. Victor is spending his mornings "helping" two friends who have opened an antique shop on Royal -- (Dragon Country , a title of yours whose pertinence to an antique shop fails me) -- and since I haven't visited the shop as yet I am unable to enlighten you on the state of Victor's budding career as a pusher of antiques but I'm sure with those huge blue eyes batting at a customer like palm fronds in a gale, Victor is ringing up sales like the sole insulin salesman in a country of diabetics. Anyway I am seeing Victor tomorrow at the shop which, he tells me, is right next door to a male brothel (the Royal Inn) where the numbers sit preeming in the lobby. "How much do they charge, Victor?" Pause. "For what?" Pause. "For sex." Pause. "Uhhh...you have to rent a room." Victor also tells me that Fosty Blackshire(?), the "righest bieth in town" died today at 85. "She fucked niggers," Victor said, "Kept one nigger and gave him fifty thousand a year!" I suggested to Victor that he take the woman's place in the man's affections. With fifty thousand, even Victor's deep Southern bias might be overcome.

I called Victor and asked for your number in Key West, which I don't have with ^{me} ~~you~~. Information told me it is unlisted. The number Victor supplied didn't work either. What is your number there? I was calling because I was lonely one night, I have

hit a snag in the book, and I was down and wanted to talk to a friend to pick me up. And you always are good when one is depressed.

I am here trying to rewrite the last part of my new book. It is going slowly. And I go out drinking each night, which I think is permitted as long as I do a day's work. This spring, if I have the bread, I'm going to take a studio here and try to spend several months a year in the Quarter. I am happy here, Tenn, near my sister and brother-in-law. I very badly want you to get to know them both. I think you'll like them. My brother-in-law's a fine poet even if, when it comes to booze, he has much of the Black Irishman to him. But I think I excuse writers, especially poets, most everything. It's a tough row.

Good luck with the play. If you have the time call Jack Weiser (799-6791) he'll be back in New York on Monday. I worry about him. Ruth comes back Tuesday from Dallas. And I'll be home about the 10th or 12th of this month.

Give my love to Robert. You are lucky there. Don't lose him. I ~~am~~ envy you him.

I'll write about the continuing saga of Victor and the antiquities racket. My address here is: Rader% Wilson, 623 Royal Street, New Orleans 70113

Greet Peter and Billy and Ruth and the rest for me. I miss you, Crocodile...

New Orleans

December 5, 1972

Dear Tenn,

Do you know that Mary Baker Eddy had an illegitimate son, that the Mother Church Annex was dedicated in 1896 before 25,000 people, and that the good woman once charged \$200. to teach people the art of healing through magnetism? I spent the evening with Victor who read me his research paper on Mary Baker Eddy, showed me his lucite (gave me a sort of purple-lavender colored ball of the stuff) and his printing enterprises (the police codes, venereal disease signs, Nixon posters sponsored by the CP, etc.) and chattered compulsively throughout the night. I think Victor is very lonely, and that is why he talks so much. He misses you terribly and worries that you do not care for him anymore. I tried my best to reassure him on that score. I told him nothing about Robert, etc. I think he feels better now. ~~Stamper~~ took me to dinner at a place called the Streetcar. Apparently he eats there every night. The exact same meal -- beef paddy, hash browns, fried eggs, muffin, coffee, orange juice. It is odd to be eating breakfast at 11 PM. But, altogether, I found Victor enjoyable, the evening pleasant, and I must say that I felt sorry for him because he seems very much alone, and I don't think he has any close friends here.

Gigi is okay. My God, is she old! Tuffs of hair are missing from her fat body; she hobbles around like an old lady. Victor is very devoted to her.

I should be back in town by Monday. I'll call. Anxious to see you, baby. Read in the Times that you got an honorary doctorate from Hartford. Congratulations.

My love to Robert.

3

In Transit

12/21/72

Dear Dotson:

It strikes me as ironical that you voice such strong, compassionate objections to relatively innocent assaults on me by The Times and Dakin and Victor, in view of what you did to me in your piece about "The Movement" in Esquire.

That's all I have to say of an irascible nature in this letter: except that you did put lies in my mouth, such as having me brag about knowing "Papa" who left Key West in 1938 and I didn't see this island till 1941. And I didn't see "The Movement" nor any of its exhibitionists and opportunists until I had seen you. Remember that and don't ever forget it or I'll have to remember it for you...

I know you are going through a crisis in your life. I think you did commit yourself to the Movement and I think you were shattered by its collapse. And don't know the next step.

For me the next step is away. I avoided all affiliations of a political nature all of my life till I met you, and I am going to avoid them totally from now on, having witnessed that black mass in the cathedral of St. John the Divine - probably the most shocking and disillusioning experience of my life which has contained a great deal of shock and disillusionment.

Now through you I also had the privilege of meeting two or three pure revolutionaries such as Dellinger and Mann and Mark Klaus and they gave me a lift.

You are what is called a volatile essence: marvelous when it is for you, deadly when against.

Right now I think it is as much against yourself as me.

And so I will hold my fire till I can level with you on this terrible subject. I can help, and I want to. Of course I can also attack in return for attack, but I don't want to.

So let's respect the balance of power between us: infractions on either side could be nuclear.

I have enjoyed your company at a time when I was climbing desperately out of the black, you gave me charm and lightness and I love you for it, completely purely and with a child's trust, despite my resemblance to a crocodile. I want to forget the rest and remember that.

Please let me do it.

And take more care of your great and formidable talent. And trust Ruth.

Don't concern yourself with Robert and me, we are going to work it out because we are honest with each other: just let it be.

Take care!

Jannet

1. Wilkerson
(the Reader)
Key West, Fla.

Mr. John Baker
(the Reader)

1. West 75 (the Dakota Bldg.)
New York, N.Y.



AIR MAIL



Dotson Rader
One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

RITORNARE AL MITTENTE
RETURN TO THE SENDER
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~~Piazza di Spagna~~
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NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

2/?/73

Dear Dot:

I'm not sure which of us has been harder¹ on the other but we sure did hit one hell of a slide in our once so lovely friendship and since I am about to split the scene, I should guess permanently in person, I'd like to say goodbye in a civilized way, Both of us are hard to reach this week so let me leave my list of open dates at the Dakota and you leave yours, if any, at the above establishment. You gotta see the new suite, The Imperial, ¹⁴⁰¹1401, it will bug those baby eyes of yours out."

So much to tell you - four openings in six weeks, if I can still count, and one abroad. And the crocodile still survives!

Love

10.

John St. Just is
here!
making waves!

3/7/73

Dear Dotson:

I was engrossed in the CBS newscast when you called last night and did not fully apprehend the nature of your request but it has now dawned upon me quite clearly that you wish to have printed a complete poem of mine (published and copyrighted by New Directions as well as myself) as a chapter heading for this book of yours and you want me ^{to} sanction this without seeing advance proofs of the book and as you very well know, Dotson, this book has already been touted in columns as a blistering piece of scandal-mongering, and if your excerpt in ESQUIRE is an indication, I am sure you must understand my ~~EXI~~ refusal to implicitly endorse the book by giving you use of my verse in it before I have read the book fully.

Now that is that and enough of that. Recently I read somewhere that the world is widely divided between carrions and crows. If you must be a crow, please, dear Dotson, try to select your carrion with more care: I mean you must not use such old carrion whose bones have been too much picked over to satisfy this voracity of yours.

The rest of this letter is (comparatively) a love-letter. I am sorry that your abrupt transition from dissenter to Bat-packer has created such a gulf in our social positions that we so rarely see each other nowadays and no longer have the lovely free laughter between us that was once such a heartening thing in my life...

'Things have a way of turning out so badly,' ruminated Amanda Wingfield and I have rarely had occasion to contradict her on that point.

Still, I hope that your great talent will find its best direction and that your charm will make things continue to go well for you as long as they do for any mortal being.

Love, 110.

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

March 10, 1973

Dear Tenn,

I am not going to defend my book to you. You haven't even read it yet! I'd like to know in which "columns" you saw the book touted as a "blistering piece of scandal-mongering." I have not seen that Williamesque turn of phrase in print anywhere. What the hell. Tenn, after you have read the book, if you cannot understand it, appreciate it as a confession of sorrow and loss, if your heart is so hard you cannot understand what it took for me to write that book, the pain that involved, if you are not moved by it and instead treat it as some piece of "scandal-mongering", then I do not think you will ever be moved by unhappiness and loss in friends of yours, by their sorrow.

As for your poem, I use it in the book to express your point of view. It is not a chapter heading; rather it appears within the body of a long chapter. Since you'll be accusing me of putting words in your mouth anyway, I think the poem at least gives some balance between what I remember your saying and what you said in writing. I included Pulse as a tribute to you. I write in the book about how greatly the poem moved me, how it effected me. But if it must go, it must go.

Second point: my abrupt transition from "dissenter to Bat-packer." First, you tell me what a "Bat-packer" is. I know what the Frank Sinatra Rat Pack is, but Bat-pack leaves me completely mystified. However, I gather you are saying I have changed from a dissenter to a butterfly, a butterfly without Red wings. Or even lavender wings. Do you really believe that? I don't think you do. Don't you consider writing a form of dissent anymore? You once did. In everything I write I dissent.

The rest of this is a love-letter. I am sorry things go badly for you. I think you got the ungreased shaft from the fucking critics, and that angers and saddens me. They are mad dogs who kill in packs at night, at sunlight blinds them.

I wish we were together. You were so busy in New York and the time Tommy and Jack and you and I were to get together for dinner you forgot

and ran off to Billy's for dinner. You want me to come to Key West, I'll come. You want to see me here, my time is yours. You see, I also miss the laughter and the games, the sense of play we share, the happy mischief. But it is not my ~~fault~~ fault we haven't been together as much as usual.

I leave tomorrow for ten days with Ruth in the islands. I'll be back in New York on the 23rd or thereabouts. I would like a letter from you to read when I get back. And I would like ^{you} to tell me as specifically as possible what your travel plans are for the spring and summer. Because I want us to make an effort to connect again.

Listen, Tenn, maybe I am a crow, and maybe you are too. Maybe that's why we love each other because we fly in a sky above a jungle filled with hawks and snakes and other predators robbing nests, and so we look at each other and see enough of the crow there in each of us to make a bond between us against the predators. When it is all said and done, when I am gone and you are gone the worst they can say about us is that we loved each other in our way, and if we hurt each other -- and we have -- if it was from the best of motives, Why I say that is because I have heard you write hurtfully about me in your memoirs, you put me down. Well, even in that I will see love. And in my book I deal honestly and lovingly with you. And if it upsets you, what can I say? Tenn misunderstood. He can't see the love bleeding on the goddamn page.

My best to Robert. Get some rest, Tenn. Trust your friends more. In the end that's all we have, our friends.

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023
Ruth's birthday!
July 7, 1973 - 4 AM

Dear Tenn,

As Robert must have told you, I tried reaching you before you left for Europe, not only because I was anxious to see you once more -- it seemed to me that our relationship, in fact the whole web of friendships we share, became a little foggy following Irene Selznick's party and to this moment I do not know why you never came since there was a place for you, and Peter and I and Ruth waited and waited for you to arrive -- but also because my new friend, Jon Uker, wanted to see you once more. Jon is twenty-five, blond, handsome in the manner of Hiram Keller, and *he saw* you ~~him~~ two years ago in Rome where, he tells me, he once helped you pack. So I thought it would be great fun for you and me and Robert and Jon to spend an evening together, like old times, and laugh and play. God, how I miss that, the fun we had.

Indirectly I am aware that Billy has been trying to get a set of the galleys of Blood Dues for you. I do not have a set myself; in fact, I never ever received a set of them. And when I asked Knopf I was told that 12 were printed up and had been sent to reviewers and that everyone else would get the book when it came from the printers bound, which should be sometime around the first week of August, which isn't far away. When I get a copy of the book you'll be sent one too, as will a number of other people. In any event, you have already seen the greater portion of the book that deals with you -- the stuff in Esquire. As I remember the other stuff concerns one lunch you, Christopher and I had together and one evening at the hotel. There may be other bits and pieces but basically that's it. You shouldn't be worried about how I treat you since I love you very much and I think you come out as someone deeply concerned about America and young people and the war that was killing them. And any place I thought you might be embarrassed I did not use your name...the hotel scene, for example, is disguised and your name isn't mentioned, nor is the Elysee or any other detail which might connect you with what I describe (that is the night when I was on Demerol and in bad shape and you threw Chris and his friends out of the room, which I still look upon as a great statement of your friendship to me, of your concern). So, Tenn, please don't be anxious. I have never and would never do anything I thought would wound you or embarrass you. I love you too much.

I have been traveling a lot. I was in Dallas for Esquire, and out on the Coast, and I spent about ten days in New Orleans where I had dinner with Vic. His hair is dark brown, and he is quite thin and quite lonely for you. Gigi looks better than I've ever seen her; she's thin too, but as to her lonesomeness I cannot testify. While Gigi complained to me of the heat and bitched about Nixon and the Watergate mess she did not, alas, mention her master's absence. So it goes.

Ruth and I arrive in London on July 12. We will be staying at Burt Shevelove's flat. I would appreciate it if you would write me there. We will be at Burt's for ten days and then we're going to Majorca for about three weeks where I will try to finish the New Orleans novel. That will be the first time since early

spring that I've had the time to work on it. My London address is: Dotson Rader %Burt Shevelove, One Hyde Park Street, London W2. Telephone: 403-6931.

When I know our address is Majorca I'll send that along to you.

I had dinner with Peter the other night. He will be doing a play in Paris. He goes to France in September to begin casting. It's a story based on a writer in Russia being persecuted by its social-fascist regime. Good for Peter! I have joined a committee here to protest the suppression of Soviet intellectuals and Jews. I think it is obscene when writers in anyway support the Soviet Government as long as that Government represses freedom. That isn't socialism. I am glad you never went to Russia. Your presence there would simply be used to give the sheen of respectability to that oppressive regime. It is no wonder Nixon and the Russians get along so well; they're both totalitarians at heart, and both ~~and~~ hate to give their writers and press freedom.

Tom Seligson is working to complete his novel. Ruth goes into rehearsals for Mart's play in September -- Mart's in Martha's Vineyard resting up to face the critics/ in the fall. And I saw Hank McCormick and Donald Madden at Joe Allen's bar the other night. Have they become a pair? The quick and the dead. Ha. Christopher just returned from Paris. In January the Museum of Modern Art in Paris will have an exhibition of Christopher's photographs. Incredible! And Christopher has gotten a job! Even more incredible. He is photo editor for a rock magazine. Sweet Chris, I think he's finally pulling it together.

I hear you love Italy. And I am happy for that. I only wish you were nearer home so I could see you. Give my best to Robert. I hope the writing goes well for both of you.

PS: I was deeply moved by your Homage to Inge. What a loss! I read of his death in New Orleans. I am glad you wrote that because I think the obits in Time and Newsweek were cruel.

1014 Dumaine St (Opp. D)
New Orleans.

9/13/73

Ruth Darling:

Mr. Gottlieb's assistant gave me a copy of "Blood Dues" to read on the plane down here to New Orleans and I want to say right off that it is for the most part a brilliantly written book which will almost certainly have a fine critical and popular reception. I am happy for you and Dotson about that. However irritated I become with Dotson's little peculiarities of behavior toward his friends, I am always aware of him as an artist with intense feelings, not one of the pack of scribes who are out for hire.

Forgive me for my concern for the effect it may have upon me. That's a concern which none of us can afford to discard, no matter how trivial it may seem compared to the existence of an important work. But we are all workers, and we must defend our work and our "public images" from things that are prejudicial. Dotson knows that and you know that. Of course the episode of the actor-hustler masturbating in my living-room at the Plaza is a gratuitous bit of ^{invention} ~~imagination~~ on Dotson's part. I do not allow any visitor of the night not well known to me to remain overnight, with access to the room where I work and keep my manuscripts - also. I have never known an actor who would behave in this way. The behavior of hustlers is another and sadder matter - one would have to knock me out with a very stout piece of wood or metal - an erect penis wouldn't suffice - to obtain such visiting-privileges. I think what Dotson is recalling is a time in the summer or early Fall of 1970 when I was frightened about my heart and felt alone and I called him and asked him if he could drop by - I knew that he'd still be awake - and he sent over a very nice young friend of his named Kris Kristofferson who was a comforting presence for an hour before daybreak and then departed with a generous remittance which he well-deserved. Unfortunately he has continued along the declivitous path of such people and Dotson and I were both shocked, some months ago, to see him hanging out on a notorious street-corner, Fifty-third and third.

I will get back to the book, Dotson's, but let me try to explain some thing to you about myself which you haven't seemed to understand. I am at an age when I have a particular need for love, as distinguished from sex. I know you don't understand this because one night at Joe Allen's

I talked to you about my distress over the defection of a "secretary" of whom I had become very fond through propinquity over a period of half a year, and you said that I should not look for love in those I live with - that I could find it in bars or on streets, or something to that effect. Well, this was a terrible simplification of a very serious personal problem. I can't live that way. Oh, I can go Uncle Charlie's and pick up a hustler once in a great while-but love? Christ, no! - It makes me wish that I had some interest in onanism...

This past summer I lost my young friend Robert. He was freaked out by the shattering experience of OUT CRY: he went on pills with no control: finally, after we'd settled in a lovely apartment in Positano, he got hold of some "hash" - and then I had to split for London, knowing that we were asking for years in a foreign jail. Maybe foreign jails are better. But as Judith Malina found out, you can't pursue a theatrical career in one - and that's what we have to pursue. Still, I loved Robert deeply. Dotson didn't understand that, either, and when I stopped seeing him last Spring it was because he quite openly and brutally tried to come between Robert and me - at a time when I had only Robert to care for and by whom to be cared for. Well, reading the book about Dotson's true anguish during this period, things like that become inoonsequential almost. Almost. I think that Dotson as a person must learn a bit more about kindness and I think you could be a good teacher.

With love,

Sam.

One West 72nd Street

New York, New York 10023

September 16, 1973

Dear Tenn,

Ruth said she wanted to show me something to make me happy. She showed me your letter, and it did make me happy and so I asked her if I could reply to it since it seemed to concern me and you, baby, and my book. Why your letter made me happy is because it ended months of anxiety over what you thought about Blood Dues and its author (As soon as the books came from the printers and a copy was available to me I had it sent to you at Key West, which is where I thought you were, along with an inscription and a covering letter), for I have spent the time since spring hearing gossip of your doings and your alleged remarks concerning me, and I found the decline in our friendship very painful to me, deeply hurtful to my feelings, and, to be honest, it embittered me for I could think of nothing of sufficient gravity I had done to account for such a steep fall from grace. Now I know I can be very difficult -- and I was most difficult for all my friends some time back -- and that I sometimes drink so much and I am a possessive and jealous personality and that I too easily say wounding things when I feel defensive and threatened. But I have always thought that with us, balancing these negative traits, I had good qualities too, among them a devotion to you as a man and a friend, a sense of loyalty, and an openness to play and laughter. In your letter you say I tried to come "quite openly and brutally" between you and Robert. In all honesty, I do not remember the attempt. But I take your word for the

transgression, and at this remove in time all I can do, Tenn, is apologize because I cannot explain what I cannot remember. I was fond of Robert and, more, I was glad you had a secure and loving relationship because I think you require that for your work. And now it is over and I am truly sorry. I know what it is to lose a person one loves, worse to lose a friend and lover and to wake one night to find the bed empty of that familiar body and to long for his return. We go on. We make do. And I believe that much of what allows us to go on in life -- for I believe artists swim in pools of sharks -- is the constancy of our friends. And it was the break in our friendship and the fact that it laid ~~me~~ me open to further breakage, made me vulnerable, that was so disheartening to me. Hell, let me admit it: I just plain miss you, Tennessee. And when Christopher and Tom return ^{el} from Deep Hollow ^{to} ~~and~~ regale with me the fun they had with you, I get bitter and think, "Why wasn't Dotson there? Dotson should be with Tennessee!"

So I would like us to patch it up. And I know, like the tents my father once preached in, the tent of our friendship doesn't always keep out the rain and certainly not the children nor the wolves slipping in under its folds, and that it already has been covered with patches, but it is serviceable and good anyway and I think, considering the emotional fire of both of us, ~~our~~ ^{our} occasional torment, ~~and~~ I think ^{we} manage well. Let's get on with it, Tenn. Life's too goddamn short and friends too few. Write me.

PS: Mark Kluz apparently is in the Medical Prison at Vacaville in California. I am very worried, unable to contact him. It is a snake pit, Vacaville.

TONIGHT ON BOURBON STREET I MET A KID NAMED WEST WHO LATER SAID I HAD MISUNDERSTOOD HIM, THAT IT WAS REALLY WES. BUT I REFUSE TO DROP THAT LOVELY MISUNDERSTANDING.

THIS WEEK END I RETURN TO THE ELYSEE AND IF THAT DEFECTIVE TAPE RECORDER AND DISTORTED LENS OF YOURS HAVE BEEN REPAIRED, I'D LIKE YOU TO CALL ME. MAYBE WE CAN STILL FIND THINGS TO UNDERSTAND TOGETHER. LOVE TO RUTH, REMEMBER ME TO THE GANG. AS EVER,

T.W.
T. W.

*William
Elysee*



*Holton Rader,
1 W. 72
New York, N.Y.*

Oct. 7, 1973

Tennessee,

In my time streets led to the quicksand.
Speech betrayed me to the slaughterer.
There was little I could do. But without me
The rulers would have been more secure. This was my hope.
So the time passed away
Which on earth was given me.

For we knew only too well:
Even the hatred of squalor
Makes the brow grow stern.
Even anger against injustice
Makes the voice grow harsh. Alas, we
Who wished to lay the foundations of kindness
Could not ourselves be kind.

But you, when at last it comes to pass
That man can help his fellow man,
Do not judge us too harshly.

That was written by Bertolt Brecht, and I think it is about
having been young and leftist. It speaks for me. What I do
not understand is how, when our lives are so poor in friendship
and in love, when you know so well my life and heart, how you
can, if temporarily, turn your back on friendship and love.
It bewilders and hurts me. Are you glad for that?

Fitelson and Mayers
1212 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N. Y. 10036

H. WILLIAM FITELSON
BERTRAM A. MAYERS
HAROLD J. SHERMAN
FLORIA V. LASKY
BENJAMIN ASLAN
CLIFFORD FORSTER
ADELE RUBENSTEIN
DONALD ASLAN

(212) 588-4700
CABLE ADDRESS:
"FULMEX"

October 10, 1973

Mr. Robert Gottlieb, President
and Editor in Chief
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
201 East 50th Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Gottlieb:

I have your letter of October 8th in answer to mine of September 26th with respect to Dotson Rader's book "Blood Dues".

I have reviewed your "explanation" for the unauthorized use of Tennessee Williams' poem, "Pulse", with both Mr. Williams and New Directions Press, which holds the book publishing rights in the poem.

On behalf of Mr. Williams, I must advise you that notwithstanding the explanation, he regards the infringing use of his poem as serious and substantial. As I am sure you are aware, words and phrases from two significant lines in the poem are used as the chapter heading, which is repeated on 14 pages. In addition, 4-1/2 lines are used. New Directions has authorized me on its behalf to advise you that it considers such use a substantial infringement of the poem which cannot be countenanced either by the publisher, or Mr. Williams. On their behalf, we request that you immediately cease and desist from publishing and selling the book containing such infringing use, in default of which our client has instructed us to seek all available legal remedies.

I enclose an extra copy of my letter to you of September 26th, as well as a copy of this letter, and request that you kindly forward them to Mr. Rader, whose whereabouts we do not know, as our client shall hold him responsible as well.

Sincerely yours,

Floria V. Lasky

FVL/mel

Fitelson and Mayers
1212 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N. Y. 10036

H. WILLIAM FITELSON
BERTRAM A. MAYERS
HAROLD J. SHERMAN
FLORIA V. LASKY
BENJAMIN ASLAN
CLIFFORD FORSTER
ADELE KURENSTEIN
DONALD ASLAN

REG 580-4700
CABLE ADDRESS:
"FIMLAN"

September 26, 1973

Mr. Robert Gottlieb, President
and Editor in Chief
Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
201 East 50th Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Gottlieb:

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of
Tennessee Williams in connection with "Blood Dues" by
Dotson Rader being published by you.

It is indeed regrettable that the many requests
for galley proofs were not honored and that the book appears now
to be in print, as it contains numerous things deeply of-
fensive to Mr. Williams. I believe that we should discuss
this without delay.

Separate and apart from such offensive material
however, is the taking without permission and without at-
tribution to Tennessee Williams' authorship, of part of a
poem, word for word, by Mr. Williams entitled "Pulse" pub-
lished in "New Directions" collection entitled "In The
Winter of Cities". The language taken, as I say almost
word for word (including the title of the chapter) appears
on page 65 of the Rader book.

For your information, I enclose herewith a copy
of the Tennessee Williams poem; you will wish to refer par-
ticularly to the last three stanzas.

Something must be done about this immediately, as
Mr. Williams regards this as a serious infringement.

I look forward to your call.

Sincerely yours,

FVL:dak
Enc.

Floria V. Lasky



RURAL AMERICA



Ms. Datsun Radar,
1 W. 72 (Dakota)
City

T. Wms.
Hotel Elysée

60 EAST 54th STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10022

Hotel Elysée



60 EAST 54TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022
TELEPHONE PLAZA 3-1644

Nov. 9, '73

DEAR DOTSON:

BEING ABOUT TO SPLIT FOR TWO GIGS IN NORTHERN CLIMES, I
THINK IT FITTING THAT I EXTEND YOU A SOUTHERN GESTURE OF
FRIENDSHIP ENDURING. A BREEZE FROM THE GULF, AS IT WERE.
- WHEN I WAS IN KEY WEST A WEEK OR TWO AGO, A NEWSMAGAZINE
CALLED ME AND SAID THAT THEY HAD BEEN HEARING ALL OVER TOWN
THAT I WAS ABOUT TO SUE YOU AND KNOPF - I ASSURED THEM THAT
I NEVER INTENDED TO SUE ANYBODY ABOUT ANYTHING ANYTIME EVER,
I'D RATHER LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

SO THAT'S THAT: FRIENDSHIPS ARE HARD TO SECURE AND HARDER TO
SUSTAIN IN THIS BIG FUCK OF A CITY.

WHEN I GET BACK FROM THE TWO GIGS, I'LL CALL AND HOPE THAT YOU
AND RUTH WILL ATTEND A PARTY I'M PLANNING AT LE JARDIN.

I HOPE YOU ARE HAPPY WITH THE NOTICES, THEY ALL SEEM GOOD SO
FAR, THE ONES I'VE SEEN - AND NO DEVASTATING CRACKS AT THE
CROCODILE.

DID YOU KNOW THAT CANDY DARLING IS VERY GRAVELY ILL?

FONDLY,

Lawrence

Tennessee Williams
with
Natalia Murray - V.P. - Rizzoli EDIT.
and
Renato Paolucci - Exec. V.P. - RAI-TV

request the pleasure of your company

at Memorial Screening of
ANNA MAGNANI
in her last starring role as "Teresa" in
"1870"

on Monday - Nov. 26, 1973

at 4 to 6 p.m. o'clock
Rizzoli Screening Room
712 5 Ave. N.Y.C.

R.S.V.P.
245-0400
EXT. 52

Join in
a toast to ANNA
Rizzoli in Gallery

Memorandum for the Editor/New Times
October 28, 1973
Number 5
Frank Crowther

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS vs. DOTSON RADER

The underground literary feud of the moment in New York is between Dotson Rader, author of the newly published Blood Dues (Knopf), and Tennessee Williams, whose autobiography, Flee, Flee This Sad Hotel, is now with ~~Doubleday's~~ Doubleday's libel lawyer after a considerable rewrite of the first draft.

There have been persistent rumors that Williams would sue Rader over a plagiarized poem incorporated in the text of Rader's book.

It reads as follows:

"I had not the guts, even though I acted to see the spark, the flush that, for one pulse beat, let the land leap fishlike from the net of dark." (p. 65, Blood Dues)

That supposedly is a direct lift from a poem by Tennessee, "All Foxlike and Haunted Men."

Billy Barnes, Williams's agent, said: "Dotson has plagiarized Tennessee, in no uncertain terms."

Crowther...2 (Oct. 25)

I asked his lawyer, Floria Lasky (580-4700) if Tennessee planned or threatened to sue. Her response was abrupt:

"I know nothing about it. Do with your source what you will. I have nothing to discuss with you at this time. I don't even know why I'm talking to you. I'm a lawyer, and lawyer's don't talk to newspaper people."

That was on October 10, and it wasn't exactly the truth. On September 26, Ms. Lasky sent a letter to Knopf requesting a meeting to discuss ~~the~~ "numerous things offensive to Mr. Williams." On October 10, she sent another letter, a clear threat to sue: "We request that you immediately cease and desist from publishing and selling the book in the fault of which our client has instructed us to seek all legal remedies."

~~Bill Loverd, Knopf publicity director, said only that "the situation is pregnant, that's about it."~~ Bob Gottlieb, Rader's editor, didn't wish to be quoted.

Rader himself says it's all a mistake, and not his fault. The poem was supposed to have been removed by Knopf after ~~the~~ permission to reprint was denied. It will be removed from future editions, and Williams's

Growth...3 (Oct. 25)

representatives have been so notified.

"I love Tennessee," says Rader, "and I'm shocked. I don't understand it, because the book is true and I never did the man no dirt. If they sue, he's going to lose and it will precipitate a scandal which nobody needs. I'm sure when his book comes out, if I'm still in it, my lawyers will be talking to him."

Apparently Williams autobiography is causing nervous anticipation in many of Tennessee's friends, because he has told all, according to Rader, who has seen part of the manuscript.

I reached Williams in Key West (305-294-6769) and ➡ asked him about the Rader book and if he planned to sue.

"I have no such plans," he said. "It's just a desperate effort on their (Knopf) behalf to promote an unsalable book. If these constant attacks on me continue, I'll just have to leave the country."

Confronted with this information, agent Barnes retreated.

"It's a very sad thing that such a great writer is harrassed like this.

Dotson has said some salacious things about Tennessee, but he won't sue.

He wouldn't do that to another writer."

The question now is, will Rader sue Williams? Stay tuned.

One West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023

April 22, 1974

Dear Tennessee,

It is a beautiful day in New York, in the 70s, the sky as clean as a washed slate, the park full. I am in my new apartment on the 8th floor of the Dakota; it is small, bedroom, living room, bath, but it has a three-cornered bay window which juts out over 72nd Street like an extra breast-- and within this breast I sit and watch the people in the park. Richard is asleep on the bed. He is still quite sick. The doctors are undecided as to the nature of the sickness, mono perhaps, or some kind of internal damage resulting from his accident a year and a half ago in Paris, delayed and insidious. He looks better to day. His eyes clear, his disposition happy. Richard lay in the sun awhile this afternoon, and now he rests. I pray that he will be well soon. His spleen is swollen, his liver infected, and he has an almost continuous fever. Too many years of booze and drugs at too young an age. Too tough a life. It is as if around twenty years God knocked the wind out of him and he waits, defensively, to heal. He has not been treated fairly by life, not happily. But then, who has been? Life simply has no sense of fair play.

Ruth is in Los Angeles. She has a leading role in a new play, The Charlatan by Derek Walcott, a black playwright. Cleveland Little is also in the play. It opens at the Mark Taper Forum on May 11 (previews) and has its critics opening on May 23. It runs until July 7. Ruth is happy to be working, although she loathes the Coast; and she is lucky with this play, it is clever, witty, about blacks and whites in the West Indies (Ruth plays Mrs. Upshot, a somewhat down-at-the-heels English patrician. She has certainly seen better times, and now waits and schemes to accomplish her aging husband's death with the connivance of several unscrupulous blacks. There is music in the play, and Ruth has a long song.)

Ruth would like to mount a production of Sweet Bird... and she wonders if she would have your permission to do so?

I leave for Montana to play a small role in Frank Perry's new movie, Rancho Deluxe. Script is by Tom McGuane. It is my chance -- at last! -- to be in a cowboy movie. After, I am flying to Los Angeles to see Ruth for a few days, after having gone first to Minneapolis to see my sister. I miss them both. Terrifically. As I miss you. Please write me. My love to Robert.

Love,

PS: Richard will be staying in my apartment in my absence. Write me here if you have the time. It will be sent on.

The Gotham Book Mart
and
Simon and Schuster
cordially invite you to meet

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

and celebrate the publication
of his new novel

MOISE AND THE WORLD OF REASON

on Thursday, May 15, 1975

The Gotham Book Mart Gallery
41 West 47th Street, New York

5 to 7
o'clock

admission by
invitation only



Mr. Dotson Rader
"The Dakota"
72nd St. and Central Park West
City

TW

Sept. 5, 1976

Dear Dotson - you're as un-
reliable ~~as~~ ever! I've
been sitting by the phone
from 12 to 1:40. - I did
so want you to admire my
cosmetic surgery. You know,
they're reviving the old Andy



Mr. Dotson Rader
"The Dakota"
72nd St. and Central Park West
City

Hardy series and I am up for
the Mickey Rooney role.

I bet you're already recon-
ciled with Richard or joined
Path in Connecticut.

Whichever, give them my
love.

Ever,

Jennesser

You're a real kisser.
I love to kiss. I'm sick
I need to see a psychiatrist

Put this red pleated dress
from Bree,

I'll be there indeed.
An lai person too.

You're beautiful
How do you know?
I'm looking for me.

I don't like me.
You Miss America
Am I Miss America?

Like a penny dropping in slot

You're a real kisser.

I love to kiss. I'm sick
I need to see a psychiatrist

Muth's red pleated dress
from Bree,

I'll be there indeed.

Or in person too.

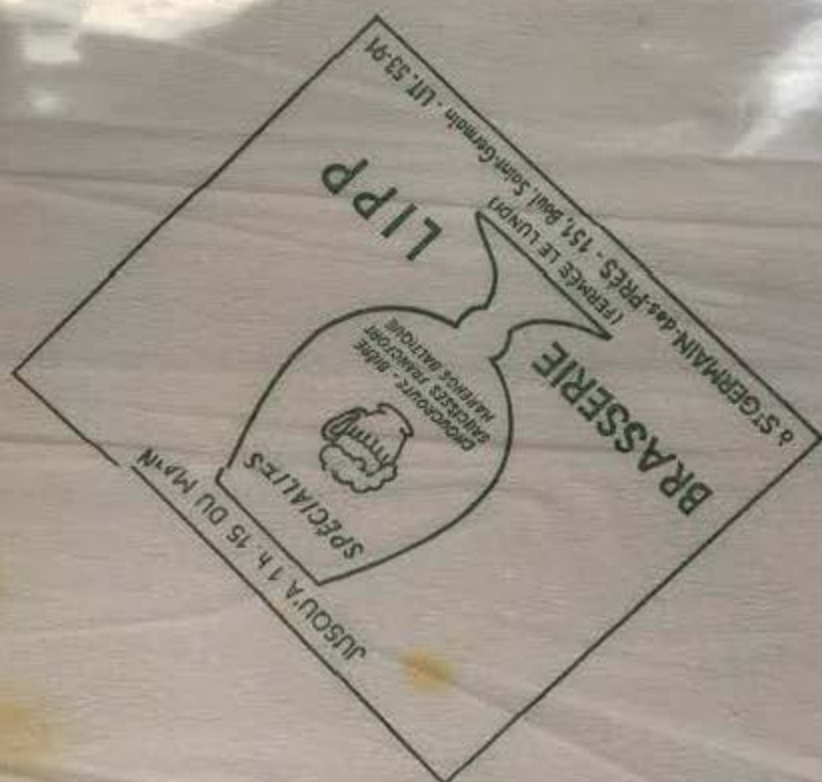
You're beautiful
How do you know?

I'm looking for me.

I don't like me. ?

You Miss America?
Am I Miss America?

Like a penny dropping in slot



NEW YORK

Photo made on a
napkin at Joe Allen's Bar
in N.Y.C. in 1973
when Tennessee and I
were drunk!

New Directions Publishers
and
The Gotham Book Mart
cordially invite you to meet
TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
and celebrate the publication of
ANDROGYNE, MON AMOUR
on Tuesday, May 10, 1977
from five to seven o'clock
at the Gotham Book Mart Gallery
41 West 47th Street, New York

The Gotham Book Mart
41 West 47th Street
New York, N. Y. 10036



DOTSON RADER
1 WEST 72ND ST
NYC 10023

One more ill-fated collaboration takes place between them, when Williams undertakes to direct Windham's play, "The Starless Air," in Houston. During this period, Windham finds himself barred from the rehearsals of his own work, only to discover later that Williams has taken the liberty of rewriting some of his speeches (introducing references to "mendacity" that are later to appear in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"). The entire project collapses when Williams can't find the time to direct the play on Broadway.

Stretched by these tokens of human devotedness, the friendship between the two men frays and tears, though it never actually unravels. The letters grow more guarded, more defensive, more infrequent, finally concluding in the 1960's after Windham has published a *roman à clef* which he intends as a tribute to Williams but which the playwright takes badly. Later, Williams gives his friend permission to sell a "Glass Menagerie" manuscript to support his sojourn in Rome. But even this generous gesture causes acrimony, since Williams does not realize a sufficiently large tax break from the sale: "The manuscript," Windham writes, "went for \$6,000 — considerably less than the \$10,000 he expected — and I was soon hearing that I had sold it the wrong way and cost him a great deal of money."

Throughout the quarter-century of mistreatment chronicled in the book, Windham maintains an air of sympathetic understanding, in a display of what Williams characterizes as his "morbid humility." The

Robert Brustein, Dean of the School of Drama at Yale, is the author of "The Culture Watch: Essays on Theatre and Society, 1969-1974" and other books.



Tennessee Williams

Drawing by Pierre LeTan

yeast of hurt feelings, however, has fermented enough in the meantime to rise subtly in the publication of this private correspondence, where Williams emerges as a figure with no apparent interest in anything but the advancement of his career and the satisfaction of his appetites. Gore Vidal, reviewing Williams's autobiographical "Memoirs," has remarked on the playwright's "indifference to place, art, history"; his observation is more than confirmed in these letters.

Indeed, it is remarkable — considering Williams's creative sensitivity in his plays — how little he actually permits himself to see on his travels abroad. He finds no "charm" in Paris except for "three lovely clubs where the boys dance together." He is "forlorn" in London because "there are only middle-aged fags who still think they are young and pretty." He adores Rome, primarily because "you can't walk a block without being accosted by someone you would spend a whole evening trying to make in the New York bars."

Landscape, architecture, nature, food, politics, philosophy, the social climate—none of these arouse much commentary from Williams, or assume much importance, as compared with that long parade of hustlers, rough trade, sailors, and young boys that

Less entertaining is the tendency, already seen in his relationship with Windham, to sacrifice people to his personal and professional needs. Williams admits that his "ratio of concerns" puts friendship well below his work and his hypochondria, but protests that, despite being "fantastically self-centered," he is not a disloyal friend; there is not much evidence here to support that contention. Margo Jones, so instrumental in getting Williams's early work produced, is scrapped from "You Touched Me!" after doing the play in Pasadena ("Margo will not be crushed over being left out of a possible Broadway production. I told her right along that she would have to take her chances on that and she knows it").

Of course, the annals of Broadway are bursting with such stories, and, besides, we expect an artist to be ruthless on behalf of his art. Too often, however, Williams seems ruthless on behalf of his career. His friend, Windham, quotes from an interview Williams once gave to *The Times* in which he said: "The real fact is that no one means a great deal to me, anyway. . . . I prefer people who can help me in some way or other, and most of my friendships are accidental." Windham adds: "I had a hard time convincing outraged acquaintances that he was saying no one meant a great deal to him compared to his work; that he preferred people whose private responses helped him with this private vocation."

The tone is exculpatory and sympathetic, but if one listens carefully, one can just hear the shrill whistle of a long-suppressed rage. Donald Windham has published a very damaging book, in which a man who tended to treat people as objects becomes something of an object himself. And thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges. ■

ON THE PRIVATE LETTERS OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Dotson Rader
% Betty Anne Clarke
I.C.N.
40 West 57 Street
New York, 10019

A friend of mine has spent most of her life cultivating the acquaintance of painters and writers, most of whom are either shy and tongue-tied or else egotistical drunks. I never understood her hobby, ~~however~~ She's a woman of considerable social cachet with a decided distaste for the inarticulate and the alcoholic. Nevertheless she collects artists with the enthusiasm some people bring to collecting tropical fish.

Let me give an example of her addiction to Art-Lit Collection.

Shortly before Thornton Wilder died I sat with him at a press party in New York. The place was noisy. Wilder was tired and spoke in a rough whisper. One sensed that he was on his last legs.

As I was talking with him this woman, the Art-Lit Collector, rushed to our table, shoved a slip of paper under his nose, and urged him to write a note to her and to sign it "with great, enduring love, Thornton Wilder." With some bewilderment, this he proceeded to do.

The following day the woman called to boast. "What luck! I'm sure it's the last time Wilder'll sign his name. I ~~was~~ own it. Signed, sealed, and dated in his own goddamn hand!" She proved to be correct.

Why I mention this is because, after reading "Tennessee Williams' Letters To Donald Windham 1940-1965; edited and with comments by Donald Windham" I keep remembering that woman's obsessive harvesting of Art-Lit letters, scraps of manuscripts, tape recordings, photos, signed menus. I think about her gathering the exhaust of the lives of artists, and doing it with a steelly eye to their sale value at Texas or Virginia U or Sotheby Parke Bernet. She

is, like Donald Windham, a scavenger of literary history, a peddler of privileged material.

The Art-Lit Collector never struck me as pernicious until I read Donald Windham's book of Tennessee Williams' letters.

I heard about the letters more than a year ago when Truman Capote urged me to read them. "You won't believe it," he said, "Tennessee is going to be furious." Capote had been sent a copy of the \$75 limited edition. I didn't read the book then, but I have now, after it was published in an inexpensive trade edition by Holt Rhinehart and Winston (New York). By then the controversy had begun. Capote was right. Tennessee Williams is furious.

He has cause to be. Even Sheila Graham, a woman not known for her caution, had the self-restraint not to publish her bathetic memories of F. Scott Fitzgerald until after the writer dropped dead on her parlor floor. Donald Windham doesn't have equal decency. But then, as Sheila and Donny know, such profitable violations of confidence have become the national party game. Be assured, Williams never would have written the letters as he did, or written to Donald Windham at all, if he had known that one day they'd see print.

The publication of the letters is itself reason enough for Williams' anger. But add to that Windham's self-serving, arrogant commentary (he refers immodestly to himself throughout the book as "Tennessee's conscience", a self-delusion), his dishonest editing, and shovel on top of that the attack on Williams in the New York Times Book Review by one Robert Brustein, a teacher at Yale, and one

marvels at Williams' patience in not taking out a Mob contract on the whole wretched crew. Perhaps he has.

1946. Williams writes in response to criticism by a drama teacher, something our Robert Brustein also is.

"These professors who write verse and criticism of verse and everything else do not realize that there are a number of artists who cannot teach school and yet have to eat, drink, wear clothes and live in houses or at least rooms of houses, and who need a bit of comfort and dignity in their lives in order to bear them. From the haven of the academy the rough edges of the problem are not apparent. I know them all too well. I have all but killed myself contending with them for a good many years. The only answer is toughness and then more toughness. That is how alligators were made through many ages, not one healthy poet in the duration of his lifetime."

In the New York Times Brustein makes a number of accusations against Tennessee Williams, using the Windham-edited letters as supporting evidence. The attack doesn't hold water. He charges Williams with "conniving" to diminish Donald Windham's share of the potential profits of "You Touched Me", a play based on the D. H. Lawrence story that they wrote more or less together in the Forties. There were no profits, potential or otherwise.

Brustein goes on to attack Williams as a blatant careerist, a man ungenerous with his friends, an "erotomaniac" "inordinately, obsessively preoccupied with announcing his erotic adventures", "grown hoarse from screaming" his homosexuality to an indifferent world. Moreover, the school teacher indicts Williams as being "ruthless", bitchy with an "impressive gift for planting teeth in another's back", self-centered, and so on.

Brustein's indictment is neither pleasant nor true. And yet, curiously enough, in the last fifteen years the charges made by Brustein have come to be part of Tennessee Williams' public image and have been used by school teachers like Brustein and what Gore Vidal calls "book chat" writers to attack the monumentality of his work by sully his character. Vidal himself, as a self-styled friend of Williams, has recently joined the chorus singing the sinner's sins. Unlike Windham's betrayal, which shocked Williams, Vidal's soprano piping against him couldn't have come as ~~much~~ any surprise. He had an accurate fix on Vidal soon after they met in Rome in 1948.

"He (Vidal) is such a lunatic that anything he says is partly discountable. I liked him but only through strenuous effort to overlook his conceit. He has studied ballet and is constantly doing pirouettes and flexing his legs, and the rest of the time he is comparing himself and Truman Capote (his professional rival and Nemesis) to such figures as Doestoevsky and Balsac."

Williams has ignored Vidal's increasingly shrill criticism of him partly, I suspect, because they were never close friends. Vidal has the vice of inflating his self-proclaimed intimacy with celebrated people, something that irritates Truman Capote. Contrary to Vidal's claims, he and Capote were never close friends.

Windham is another matter. The pity there is that, in this most recent round of Tennessee Williams' long bout with the Lit-Crit gang, the ammunition, such as it is, should be so eagerly supplied by Donald Windham, indisputably one of the playwright's oldest pals.

The first time Donald Windham ever entered my awareness was when Capote told a funny story about Williams and him. It seems the two writers, as young men, picked up several sailors in Times Square and brought them back to their fleabag hotel. It may have been the Claridge Hotel in New York where Windham admits he and Williams were beaten up by two sailors. In Capote's story the sailors knocked the two friends about, tied them to two straightback chairs, took their money and left them. And there they sat bound for forty-eight hours until a cleaning lady discovered them. After, Capote asked Williams what it'd been like.

"You know how Donny is. We had some very intense literary discussions!"

"But didn't you get thirsty and hungry? I mean, tied up all that time? What was the worst part?"

"Baby, the worst part was that the hotel charged us double occupancy for two days!"

I don't think Windham, who is a humorless man, would have seen the experience with the same amusement. Professionally, Donald Windham is known, if known at all, as a writer of effete precious prose. He is a person of dainty sensibility who trips through life with pursed lips and the air of injured vanity. Having studied his edited version of Williams' letters one discovers that what one always suspected about him is true, namely that under the treacle prose, bitter like a spoiled cherry covered in sweet chocolate, are the petty resentments and embittered false pride rubbed sore by too little achievement in too long a career.

As a failed writer Windham had the luck, good or bad, to be the friend of the finest playwright of his time. He knew Tennessee Williams before "The Glass Menagerie", that is before his first world success, and continued to know him until now. He watched at close proximity Williams' rise from obscurity to fame and later saw something of

the debility and the panic, badly covered by pills, booze and boys, that his friend would suffer in the Sixties. But Williams is a survivor, something Windham didn't believe he was. He counted him out. For whatever reason, the need for a fast buck, publicity, jealousy gone rampant, or simply an urge to settle old scores Donald Windham ended that friendship by publishing the letters. It's too bad for him because his friendship with Williams was the only thing about his life that is memorable.

What about the letters, and Brustein's charges?

This question of Tennessee Williams' erotomania. When his "Memoirs" were published two years ago, the same charge was laid at his bedroom door, i.e. that he was excessively sexually active and had the bad form to talk about it.

Worse, not only did he snitch on his lovers but, at least in "Memoirs", his memory was faulty. He got dates, places, names wrong. He botched it up. The latter -- his unreliable recall in "Memoirs" -- Windham snaps at in his footnotes to the letters.

About six months before Williams began writing ^{"Memoirs"} ~~the book~~ I went with him to a warehouse in Manhattan where he has over the years stacked plastic trees, wicker furniture, filing cabinets and other objects that he had no use for but couldn't throw away. He went through the drawers of a filing cabinet in the bad light of the warehouse bin. He was searching for notebooks he had kept in his youth.

That night, back at his hotel -- he was staying at the Plaza -- he sat on the bed reading through the notebooks, reading passages outloud, cackling with laughter as he did. As he finished each one he'd toss it to the floor. Leaving the hotel the next morning he completely forgot to pack the notebooks and had to be reminded. He seemed indifferent.

Unlike Donald Windham, Williams has always been indifferent to the evidence of the past -- manuscripts, letters, photos, and the like. Once in Key West, years ago, he told me about a long, twenty-some page letter he had received from Eugene O'Neill shortly before he died. In it O'Neill wrote urgently and sadly about his life and work. Williams remarked on how moved he had been by the letter. I asked to read it. He looked at me with surprise. He didn't like the question.

"I never save personal letters. Why should I?"

Why indeed? I was amazed that in his small conch house in Key West, a place as near to be ^{imag} his home as his restlessness will allow, he didn't even have a complete set of his own published work. I admired that, his indifference to it, to what was done and finished. He only cared about the work yet to be done. I think that's all he cares about now.

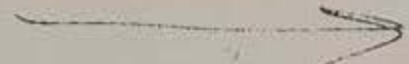

So "Memoirs" was written without benefit of a hoarde of letters and private journals, without having access to the mountain of his private writing Windham has been squirrelling away for decades. Thus the inaccuracies. "Memoirs" suffered, if that is the word, from a lack of resource material, and I think that's good because it permitted Williams to imagine his life as he thought it was lived but in fact wasn't. It's probably subjectively truer that way.

The other reason for the inaccuracies is that when the word leaked out that he was writing his memoirs many of the people who had known him over the years got their lawyers on to the case. His Doubleday editor flew to Key West to cut the book to meet possible legal objections. When he was through the book had been chopped in half.

Why the "Memoirs" is pertinent here is because many
~~against Williams because of his being~~

lf the accusations made against Williams over it are being made again, more tiresomely now, on the basis of his published correspondence with Windham. Not unexpectedly, it is the New York Times that once again leads the hounds ~~against him~~.

"Memoirs" and the letters for companion works. And there is no question, not after reading both, that he has always had a healthy, vigorous sexual life. I can't imagine why that would give anyone offense, particularly the very school teachers and critics who have championed explicit sexuality in literature and



theatre as a liberating force. But let's make a distinction: Brustein's complaint isn't that Williams has been too sexually open in his plays (the opposite is usually cited; he has come under criticism for not being open enough), it is his personal sexual life and his honesty about it that draws the school teacher's ire, despite the fact that the letters were not written for public consumption. I smell envy there, and bigotry too. If Williams' sexual tastes were butchly heterosexual the offense would be muted.

In any event, what he's being accused of is exuberant honesty. In 1943 he writes with astonishing prescience: "I may lose all my friends by excessive honesty with them, but it's my only reliable virtue -- honesty -- I have to display it."

And display it he does, like Sally Rand fluttering the gorgeous fans.

1940: "...He is so enormous. A great bronze statue of antique Greece come to life. But with a little boy's face. A funny up-turned nose, slanting eyes, and underlip that sticks out and hair that comes to a point in the middle of his forehead. I lean over him in the night and memorize the geography of his body with my hands -- he arches his throat and makes a soft, purring sound. His skin is steaming hot like the hide of a horse that's been galloping. It has a warm rich odor. The odor of life. He lies very still for awhile, then his breath comes fast and his body begins to lunge. Great rhythmic plunging motion with panting breath and his hands working over my body. Then suddenly release -- and he moans like a little baby. I rest my head on his stomach. Sometimes fall asleep that way. We doze

Check rights 11

for awhile. And then I whisper 'Turn over'. He does. We use brilliantine. The first time I come in three seconds, as soon as I get inside. The next time is better, slower, the bed seems to be enormous. Pacific, Atlantic, the North American continent. -- A wind has blown the door open, the sky's full of stars. High tide is in and the water laps under the wharf. And now we're so tired we can't move. After a long while he whispers, 'I like you, Tenny'. -- hoarse -- embarrassed -- ashamed of such intimate speech! -- And I laugh for I know that he loves me! -- that nobody ever loved me before so completely. I feel the truth in his body. I call him baby -- and tell him to go to sleep. After awhile he does, his breathing is deep and even, and his great deep chest is like a continent moving slowly, warmly beneath me. The world grows dim, the world grows warm and tremendous. Then everything's gone and when I wake up it is daylight, the bed is empty..."

Tennessee Williams' bed has often been empty since the death of Frankie Merlo in 1963. Merlo was his lover and companion for fifteen years, and Williams was profoundly dependent upon him. He loved him deeply.

"Frankie and I made love, and that is life for us." And (to Windham): "I was hurt that you never called or wrote me a note when Frankie died last september. I was sure you knew that next to my work, Frankie was my life."

It was after Merlo's dying that Williams began to unravel.

He turned rather too much to drugs and liquor for solace, to quiet the panic. Finally, under the treatment of Dr. Max Jacobson, a Doctor Feelgood, he was addicted to amphetamines and was later committed by his brother Dakin to a mental hospital near St. Louis where he suffered two heart attacks. It was the worst of times. He needed friendship, ~~and he needed love~~. Where then was good ol' buddy Donald Windham? Like so many of Williams' other friends he was around only when he needed something.

"Several times in the late Sixties, I wrote Tennessee, asking for help...He didn't answer. I heard, however, from the inevitable mutual acquaintances, that he said I wrote him only when I wanted something. The accusation was now true." Windham writing in "Letters".

What brief succor Williams found in those difficult years was often in the entertainment of a series of companions, young men to whom he showed and from whom he received kindness. I think he identified with them, anonymous and up against it, and thought them honest and tolerant. I know, for example, in the anti-war years ~~that~~ when he came ~~of~~ into contact with young American radicals he was beguiled by their youth and energy and commitment, and enjoyed their conversation and company. What he missed was Frankie.

Williams in his friendships has always displayed a reckless generosity, emotionally and financially, and an openness to affection. In the published letters one reads the litany of his encouragement of Windham's stabs at writing and again and again of his sending money and still more money to little Donny in response to his apparently bottomless need for funds. From the Forties through the Sixties Williams was paying cash out to Windham, certainly a refutation of Brustein's charge that he is tightfisted with his friends. The checks were usually enclosed in letters touchingly concerned with his old friend's permanently

derailed literary career. Williams appears to have become a personal National Endowment on the Arts for Donald Windham. One wonders at his patience. Never once does he suggest that Windham get off his arse and find a job.

1940, and Williams is flat broke: "I am in a pretty tight spot at the moment. Here is ten bucks."

Years following, when he had made money, he continued throw^w it away to Windham and others in ever increasing amounts. Their need for funds seemed to increase in direct proportion to his income.

"...I hope the enclosed check with help you to (continue writing). Regard it as a sort of loan that can be paid back when and if I should ever need it and you don't."

Williams even donated \$5000 to the Authors League as a device to slip ready cash to Windham without offending his friend's extremely touchy pride. Moreover, Williams also gave him the original manuscripts of "Streetcar Named Desire", "The Glass Menagerie", "Stairs to the Roof", "Battle of Angels" and Portrait of a Girl in Glass, the short story from which "Menagerie" came. Of course, the gifts were made so Windham could sell the manuscripts and pocket the cash, something apparently he immediately did. And, not to deny the Art-Lit Collector in him, he also sold letters to the University of Texas for a tidy sum. But it appears that Williams could never do enough for his favorite charity. In the end Windham bit the hand that fed him.

When I first met Tennessee Williams, I asked him why he traveled around so much. I never knew anyone so restless.

He laughed and answered, "Baby, it's hard to hit a moving target!"

I would guess after the publication of the letters he's on the move again. I know he was recently in Atlanta

where his new play, "Tiger Tail", opened to rave notices. But he's moved on. Maybe Key West or London or Bangkok, wherever his alligator's heart draws him. But if I know him at all, except for a letter to the Times and a complaint late at night over a martini, he'll keep his mouth shut. He always has.

In Chicago, in the early Seventies, I went to visit Williams. He was staying at the Ambassador East, and for a time I shared his suite. He was in poor health, his heart hurt, and he was on pain killers to get him through the day. His "Two Character Play" was on at a dinner theatre in town, the Ivanhoe. The work was still in progress -- it would eventually evolve into "Outcry" -- and he was rewriting and collating and working with actors, trying to knock the play into shape.

("Collating" is what he terms much of his creative work because his plays emerge out of sequence in spurts of writing, scenes and passages of dialogue composed at random. The ~~gambler's~~ trick is to pull them all together in dramatic order. Collating.)

Several things surprised me during my time with him in Chicago, and I think they still represent something about the nature of his character.

Because he was sick he would sleep late, exhausted. And "friends" would fly unexpectedly to Chicago. They'd wake him up. Sleepily he'd listen to their complaints, which sounded much like the whining of Donald Windham, and then he'd write out checks. Generous he was, Mr. Brustein.

At night we went to the play. He sat and made notes. He would laugh a lot during the performance, and the audience would grow restless hearing his cackle break through the silence at the wrong moments. One night a man leaned

across the aisle and indignantly hissed at him. "Will you please shut the hell up!"

Williams glanced at me and rolled his eyes in mock fright. Then he laughed.

"I paid good money to see this thing. Now shut up, goddamn it!"

"Sir, do you know who I am?" Williams asked.

The man looked blank.

"I happen to have written this play."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" the man exclaimed.

It wounded Williams. He has never known how to deal with an affront, whether it comes from a stranger or from someone like Vidal or Windham. It leaves him speechless.

One more story, and then I'll let it go. Again in Chicago we went to a very piss-elegant party in one of the apartment towers on the Gold Coast that loom beside Lake Michigan. Williams was very tired. Yet he went because he didn't want to disappoint his host. The party dragged on for hours. He was surrounded by people making the most banal conversation at his face. Trapped. I wandered off only to hear a crash of glass as his drink fell to the floor, and looked over to see him topple. I thought he had a heart attack, and I was very worried.

I went to him and helped lift him on to a sofa. I opened his shirt. And then I saw him wink at me.

Back at the hotel, I asked him why he pretended cardiac arrest.

"It was such a boring party, baby. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't think of an exit line."

With his self-drama, his courtliness, his genius, his generosity and exuberance, his compelling need of affection he has been badly served, and at times shamefully, by his friends. And I don't know why. I can only guess at Donald

Windham's motives, or Vidal's. And those of Brustein and his other critics are even more unknowable. After years of attack Williams' solitude grows. The most open writer alive grows remote. Old friends die or fall away or betray. And this most social of men learns distrust and remove. And that is what is so reprehensible about Donald Windham and Gore Vidal: claiming to be his friends they have acted to close him off.

1941

"I think for a good summer fuck you should cover the bed with a large piece of oil cloth. The bodies of the sexual partners ought to be thoroughly, even superfluously rubbed over with mineral oil...etc." p.37

1942 "I don't like working but it is good to have plenty of money again, to eat all I want ~~and when and where I want it~~ when and where I want it, and to see all the movies and buy all the drinks I care for."

His grandmother and Hart Crane. p.57 His will.
~~*Stayxxx~~

"Stay out of the lamplight, Babushka. Romance ends where visibility begins!" p.74

1943

"I may lose all my friends by excessive honesty with them, but it's my only reliable virtue -- honesty -- I have to display it." p.77

Miss Rose. "I got the most amusing letter from my sister a few days ago, the first she has written me since her retirement. She wrote quite normally, and lucidly except for the remark toward the end of the letter that she had been hearing me on the radio lately. She is spending the summer at a rest-home in North Carolina and Grand and I are paying her expenses there. It is the first time I have ever been able to do anything for my family which is naturally a satisfaction.

Writing is not a happy profession...(on colating his scripts).p90

p.100 - first disagreement on play with DW.

1943

"There are only two times in this world when I am happy and selfless and pure. One is when I jack off on paper and the other when I empty all the fretfulness of desire on a young male body. There must be a third occasion for happiness in the world. What is it and where? I shall have to find it, it is the Holy Grail. Have you any idea where it is?

His flirtation with communism. p. 106

Applause is not permitted between acts and laughter is discouraged. Ivanhoe in Chicago.p.120

As always, the suitcase containing my Mss. has disappeared. p.122
on family and panic, p130

p. 187, on professors.as crétics, p.187

Tenn. generosity. " I do think you should continue to devote yourself ~~to~~ entirely to writing for awhile longer and I hope the enclosed check will help you to. Regard it as the sort of loan that can be paid back when and if I should ever need it and you don't. It is a really small return for the satisfaction I had in reading the first story. "p.197

1947

Let me know if you run out of funds. I can give you another "advance" sometime this summer, when you need it. p.199

If you need this check or can use it, please do. p.202

1948

I meant to enclose a cheque with this letter but somewhere on the devious trail I have lost my checkbook. I shall have to ask Audrey (Wood. His agent at the time) to write on e

and send it to you. p.209

Vidal: I have not yet heard from Vidal about Cairo. He is such a lunatic that anything he says is partly discountable. I liked him but only through the strenuous effort it took to overlook his conceit. He has studied ballet and is constantly doing pirouettes and flexing his legs, and the rest of the time he is comparing himself and Truman Capote (his professional rival and Nemesis) to such figures as Dostoevsky and Balzac. I wonder if the Egyptians will be interested! p.216. Vidal was 23.

I wrote Audrey to continue the monthly checks until the book was disposed of, so don't hesitate to write her for what you need. p.227

in January 1949 he got \$500. from Tenn through a donation he made to Authors' League.

p. "conscience" DW p.264, p. 291

p.306-7 TW on work.

DW'S notes are rather prissy. p. 230 on tight jeans. Who cares?

It's in writing of sex that his letters pulse with passion and descriptive power. p.9

DW is a PRUDE.

Tenn's letters filled with complaints about money and health.

(BREAK WITH AUDREY IN CHICAGO).

No mention of politics or WW2.

TENN AND DW TIED UP IN HOTEL.

MISS ROSE. PLAZA DINNER. MR. WILLIAMS. MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Tenn never saves letters. Much of the inaccuracy of the "Memoirs" based on this fact. *(O'Neill letter).

Generosity, in Chicago, checks when he was sick.

~~XSICKNESS~~

SICKNESS: Arm bleeding for meeting with Fred Jordan.

Taking me in after Jack threw me out.

Falling on cafe table in Chicago. Not to offend. Passing out at party.

CHICAGO: I wrote this play. You should be ashamed of yourself.

Vidal causes dispute over Hiram Keller.

Grief over the stolen watch.

I wonder if Tenn would have written as he wrote if he knew the letters were being saved? I think not.

DW notes are prissy, defensive, and subversive ~~the~~ of the text they are supposed to clarify.
It is in writing of sex that T. writing pulses with life and wit and descriptive power and a beguiling sense of his absurdity.
TW- continual complaints about his health.
Barely a mention of politics, or even the war, as if he lived in a belljar.
DW snipes that TW's MEMOIRS are inaccurate. Of course since he didn't have the scavenger's instinct for saving the detritus and mementos of his life. I don't think Tennessee ever saw himself in history (textbooks at Plaza).

(Windham)

I was offended by the book ~~and by the review~~ with its
~~prissy notes~~ condescending, prissy notes by Windham, and by
the Brustein review which, among other things, accuses Williams
of "conniving" to take part of a collaborator's share of a
plays potential profits, of being a ~~latent~~ ^{ambitious} careerist, un-
generous with his friends, "inordinately, obsessively pre-
occupied with announcing his erotic adventures", "grown
hoarse from screaming" his homosexuality. Moreover, that he is
'ruthless' ~~careerist~~, bitchy with an "impressive gift for
himself for planting teeth in another's back," self-centered, ^{erotomanical}
and on and on as Brustein takes a hatchet to William's character
and life. Except for Brustein's statement concerning William's
well-known hypochondria, I think the rest of what he
charges is a crock.

for money we have Robert Brustein's attack on Tennessee, again in the TIMES, in what is allegedly a review of the LETTERS. That isn't surprising, thought. School teachers like Brustein have done more damage to writers than the IRS and booze combined.

Tennessee will survive it. He's survived cheaper shots.

Atson Fred's Egg.
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Pineclon, New Jersey



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18

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as a king Love to you all
Jennette

NEW YORK

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letter*

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Fate

Mr. Tennessee Williams
c/o Jean Cocteau Repertory
Bouwerie Lane Theatre
330 Bowery
New York, NY 10012

cc

Key West (day of departure for)

May 17 '79

Dear Dot -

Here's your gear plus a
"Care Package" that we ~~are~~
hope will see you through
till the next bit of
Providence descends on your dear
head from Big Daddy in
the sky.

Sorry I was not up to the
party for Tammy last night.
I even cancelled out the
Honorary Degree in PA.
Love & best wishes, 10.

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By **SUSAN SACHS**
Married Staff Writer

"It was rather funny in retrospect," the 67-year-old playwright and sometimes Key West resident said Monday.

"I've been all over the world with a lot of famous people," he said. "But this is the first time in my life when anybody attacked somebody because he is famous."

THE TWO were singing a tipsy rendition of the hymn, "In the Garden" — "I think rather well, too," says Rader — when they encountered four young men sitting on the sidewalk.

"There was no response," says Rader, who seemed less offended by the disinterest than Williams. Two of the youths stood up then and blocked the sidewalk.

"What of it," Williams says he replied. "I'm not afraid. I'm not in the habit of retreat."

Rader in the jaw, tumbling him



Tennessee Williams, Unhurt, Was Jovial
...*'It was funny in retrospect,' said the playwright*

Williams was shoved down on top of Rader. "I have tough bones," he says. "I wasn't injured."

"It was then," Rader says. "I started to think they were either New York drama critics or someone from the New York Review of Books out to get me."

DESPITE their light-hearted retelling of the assault, Williams says he won't walk in the streets for awhile. The Sunday

ing 10 friends.

And, over the past two months, tensions between the local populace and Key West's growing gay community have increased as gays have become victims of violence and harassments.

"There was nothing very gay about it," he quipped. "Except for us, of course — we were slightly drunk."

York."

It didn't seem to be a good week for saying the first word on Duval Street in Key West. First there was the Tennessee Williams incident, in which the playwright — asking if they'd like to hear a rendition — was telling the young men on the

tion of a church hymn — to tour young men on the street. His compassion, author Dotson Rader, gripped him in the jaw. Late in the week, city police detective Sgt. Carroll Key as part of the city's special walking down Duval Street as part of the downtown task force to clear transients out of the disreputable area. One unlucky young man asked the some change Key, who stands about six foot six, for some change. Key, who panders thought Matt, and told the man, "you're under arrest." Whereupon, the subject turned and slugged Key. The tall detective turned to Matt and suggested that from then on, perhaps he — Key — should do the talking.



TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

SO there they were, kindred spirits Truman Capote, Dalton Rader and Tennessee Williams, playing with their noisemakers and little party hats last night as they munched on striped bass.

Jeveline at Le Club. Dotson, who's a member of Patrick Shields' celebrated eatery, was hosting a birthday dinner for his good pal, Richard Zorn. One thing for sure: there was plenty of loud conversation, since all four are reportedly on the wagon. Among the topics probably discussed: Tennessee's new apartment law. He's moved to the Manhattan Plaza complex on W. 42d St., although he hardly resembles most of the artists and struggling show biz types intended to benefit from his federally subsidized housing.

PAGE SIX

Bianca sits

IT'S not illegal (not yet a way) to yell "Blanca" in a crowded theater. Which is what happened this week at Loew's Astor Plaza, where a capacity crowd gathered for *Superman*. The last one in, finding no seats, proceeded to the top of the balcony, where Steve Rubell spread out a patchwork quilt for Mrs. Jagger and her daughter Jade to sit on the floor and watch the *Man of Steel*. Most of the audience watched them munch popcorn.



Celebrating the sunset on the Mallory Square dock

The beach in front of the Pier House hotel



some warned would open the floodgates of growth.

The movement against growth has fed to violence, often aimed at the influx of homosexuals. A local newspaper and placed by a Baptist minister last month called for vigilantes to take action against "female impersonators and queers." Victims of recent violence include a man beaten with a pipe as he used a phone booth, a jogger almost run down by a car, a local museum director shot and killed, a restaurant owner beaten unconscious, and another Tennessee Williams, Audreya Tennessee Williams, and Dolson Rader, who were mugged. Two of those arrested were sons of prominent



ness forces—those favoring limited growth, increased tourism and light industry—will be over the use of 100 acres of the old naval station that will be transferred to city control within a year. It includes the beach, the pier, the dockway and the harbor. The city will be pressed to develop the site, but most developers are wary.

Key West's developers probably lie the true salient. The community is united against wholesale expansion of the narrow U.S. 1 from the mainland, and building costs are very high. Most Conchita

Tennessee Williams OK After Mugging



WILLIAMS

Playwright Tennessee Williams was able to laugh Monday after he was assaulted Sunday night by four Key West youths, but he shrugged off any link to recent harassment of the city's gay population. "There was nothing very gay about it," he joked. "Except for us, of course — we

were very drunk."

His companion, writer Dolson Rader, was less forgiving. He said Key West reminds him of "the gutter areas of New York."

Page 2C.

The Miami Herald

Key West News

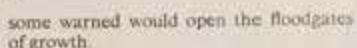
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Tuesday, January 30, 1979

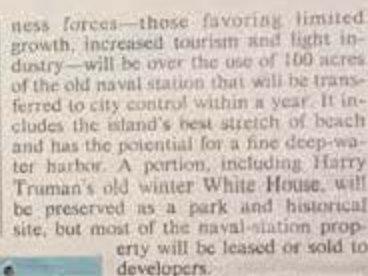
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The beach in front of the Pier House hotel



Chamber of Commerce President Tim Miller is one who sees Key West's 1.2 million visitors as a boon rather than a burden. Says he: "Our destiny lies with a steady growth in tourism." The big battle among the three busi-



Key West's isolation is probably its true salvation. The community is united against wholesale expansion of the narrow U.S. 1 from the mainland, and building costs are very high. Most Conchs, as well as most of the tourists who love the island, seem convinced that the storms may indeed come, the booms may bust, but in the end Key West will still retain its flavor as the Last Resort.

Above: Tennessee Williams at the Pier House and a pelican atop a charter boat's catch. Below: Storm clouds looming over the harbor



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Merchandise/Services

Any delayed charges
are listed below

Type of Delayed Chg.

Taxes

Amt. of Delayed Chg.

Establishment agrees to transmit to American Express Company (Amexco)
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purchased on this card shall not be resold or returned for cash refund.

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Revised Total

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Total

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34373293 3

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TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

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OWNING CITY LOC. NO.	TIME	RETURNED TO CITY/STATE
	IN 1779	K.W.
RIH/LIT	TIME	AREA/LOC.
OTHER	OUT 1779	1300-28
VEHICLE NO.	STATE	RATES INCLUDE GASOLINE <input type="checkbox"/>
5567557	FL	RATES DO NOT INCLUDE GASOLINE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CAR LIC. NO.	CLASS	
DUT621	B	
CAR MAKE - BODY STYLE	SUB.	
Toyota		
OWNING CITY/STATE		
1358		

CREDIT CARD	#1 CLUB NO.	CREDIT APPROV./DATE/AMOUNT
DC		
OTHER IDENTIFICATION	C.D.P. I.D. NO.	
DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.	STATE	EXPIRES
21599224112881347	W + 81	
HOME OR BUSINESS ADDRESS		
1 W 92 ST 59.		
CITY/STATE	ZIP CODE	
N + C	0023	
CAR TO BE RETURNED TO (CITY/STATE)	LOC. NO.	
1300-28	22579	
CAR RENTED AT (CITY/STATE)	AREA & LOCATION NO.	
KEY WEST, FL.	1300-28	
LOCAL ADDRESS	LOCAL/BUSINESS PHONE NO.	

MILEAGE IN	24
MILEAGE OUT	205
MILES DRIVEN	625
MILEAGE ALLOWED (If Any)	11900
MILES CHARGED	47600

NOTE:	SUBTOTAL
Unless car is returned to renting location a drop charge may apply. If returned outside Florida, time & mileage rate will apply plus a drop charge if applicable.	47600

GASOLINE QUANTITY	SUBTOTAL
<input type="checkbox"/> BY MILES <input type="checkbox"/> BY TANK	47600
IN E 1/8 1/4 3/8 1/2 5/8 3/4 7/8 F	
OUT E 1/8 1/4 3/8 1/2 5/8 3/4 7/8 F	

DECLINES COW	ACCEPTS COW	SUBTOTAL
X	X	292
		8400

DECLINES PAI	ACCEPTS PAI	SUBTOTAL
X	X	56292
		2252

DECLINES PAI	ACCEPTS PAI	TOTAL CHARGES
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DEPOSIT	LESS DEPOSIT (If Any)

NET DUE	
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Tennessee Williams

RESERVATION I.D. NO.	REFERRAL SOURCE	PREPAID/TOUR
		YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
I.T. NO.	VOUCHER NO.	

Renter is not driver

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a series
Organize
and the
checked a
althiest p

Keys
Edition

50 Cents

40th Year - No. 46

Violence



Man Fights Suspect
Unfazed, he beat him into alley

TROPIC

THE MIAMI HERALD

APRIL 1, 1979

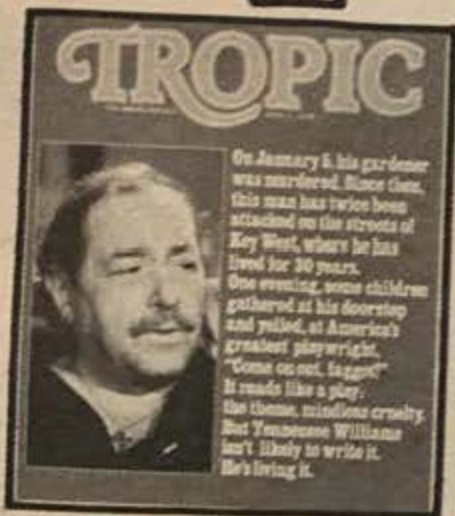


On January 5, his gardener was murdered. Since then, this man has twice been attacked on the streets of Key West, where he has lived for 30 years.

One evening, some children gathered at his doorstep and yelled, at America's greatest playwright, "Come on out, faggot!"

It reads like a play: the theme, mindless cruelty. But Tennessee Williams isn't likely to write it. He's living it.

April 1



On January 8, his gardener was murdered. Since then, this man has twice been attacked on the streets of Key West, where he has lived for 30 years. One evening, some children gathered at his doorstep and yelled, at America's greatest playwright, "Come on out, Tigger!" It reads like a play, the theme, mindless cruelty. But Tennessee Williams isn't likely to write it. He's living it.

Tennessee Williams moves like an aging lion, with slow ceremony, but it has not been a ceremonious winter for the 68-year-old playwright. A succession of violent events have touched his life on Key West, be-

ginning with the fatal shooting of his gardener in early January. Madeleine Blais visited with Williams at his home and discovered that in the midst of his difficulties, he is displaying the quiet heroism of his fictional characters. The story begins on page 12. The cover photograph is by John Pineda.



and the woodwinds are thinkers."

man in 'Lost Horizon.

Tennessee Williams and Dotson Rader Assaulted

The playwright Tennessee Williams and the novelist Dotson Rader, were attacked Sunday night by five young men on Duval Street in Key West, Fla., where Mr. Williams has a home. Both were knocked down and kicked, but their injuries were minor and they refused hospitalization. The attack was the latest in a series of assaults that have plagued the popular resort city this winter, most of the victims having been tourists and members of Key West's homosexual community.

Mr. Williams and his house guest, Mr. Rader, had finished dinner at a restaurant with a woman friend and José Quintero, the stage director. They were approached on the street by five young men, Mr. Williams said yesterday, and one said to him, "We know who you are." Mr. Williams said he replied, "I'm taking a good look at you, and I'm not afraid of you." He added: "They then hit Dotson, knocking him to the sidewalk, and shoved me over him."

Mr. Williams had planned to attend

the opening of a repertory company's production of his "The Glass Menagerie" tonight, but decided yesterday to fly to California to visit a friend.

Clyde Haberman
Albin Krebs

"ONE OF THE YEAR'S TEN
BEST PLAYS!"

-T.E. Kalem, Time Mag.

Sam Shepard's
buried child

tonight at 8
theatre de lys
see sbc's for details

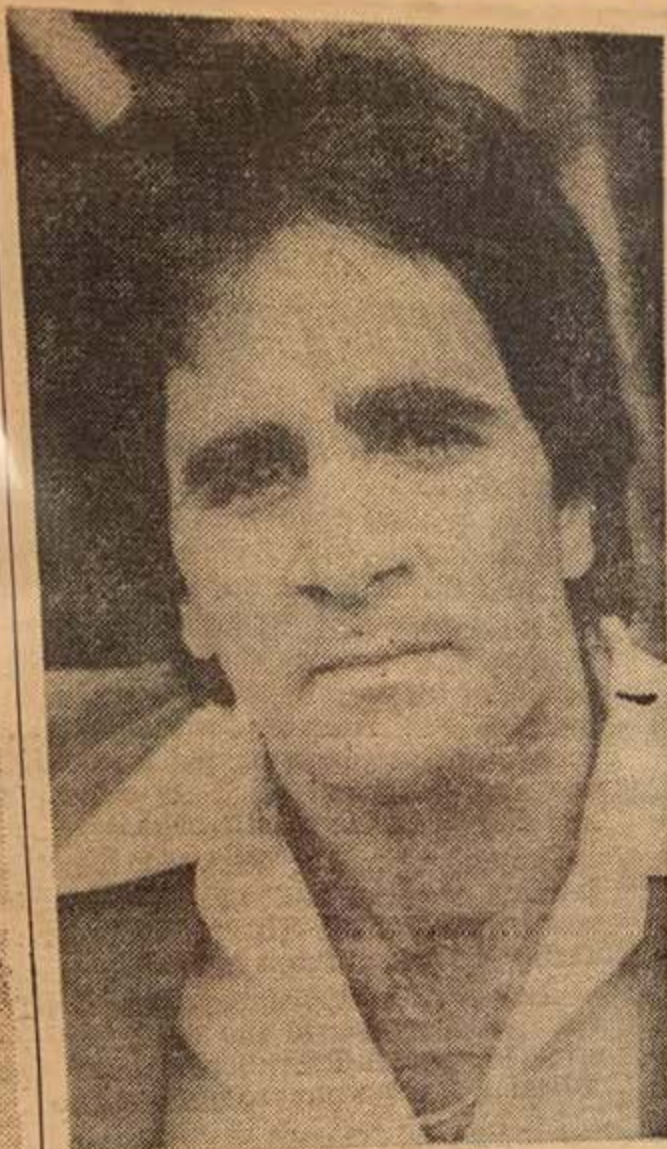
11/30/79
NY Times

TONIGHT THRU FRI. at 7:30, MATS. WED. & FRI. at 2
SAT. 11 AM, 3 & 8:30 PM, SUN. 1:30 & 5:30 PM

TONIGHT at 8
LAST 3 WEEKS!

MADE IN CHINA

Demaris is definitely the man for the Fratianno "as told to" — he has written



Tom Seligson: a book for a film

two best sellers about organized crime, "Captive City" and "The Green Felt Jungle."

PARTY POLITICS: Dotson Rader writes about and pals around with the high and mighty. Philip Kingsley is the hair expert who advises the British royal family about the condition of their scalps. These two got together the other eve to give a bash for Tom Seligson whose new thriller "Stalking" is all about the CIA's secret LSD tests on humans. Hollywood is stalking the book, which is a natural movie.

Tennessee Williams, Kevin McCarthy, Jimmy Kirkwood, Margaux Hemingway, Peter Glenville, Germaine Greer (the feminist has hardly been seen since the '60s) and Pat Kennedy Lawford were

son's dear best friends, was to show, but some think she didn't because of Pat Lawford. The Carters have strong feelings against the Kennedys these days.

NO DINGBAT: Martin Balsam was telling pals at the Assembly on W. 51st that he's off to Hollywood to co-star with Jean Stapleton in a CBS-TV movie. In it, the "All in the Family" actress will abandon her dumb Edith pose to branch out as the real-life Mary Dobkin, the first person to integrate black and white children on Baltimore's baseball sandlots. The BBC is around in California doing business on Hollywood greats; so far they've done Francho Marx and Edward G. Robinson. The next chapter in the Mick and Bianca Jagger divorce action happens Monday, when Bianca will ask the L.A. Superior Court for \$14,000 a month in temporary support. Avon paid \$350,000 this week for paperback rights to Michael Korda's memoir of his family, "Charmed Lives," and in the meantime the English publisher plunked down \$100,000, the Book-of-the-Month took it and we won't even see its hard cover until November.

NICE PEOPLE, nice talk—the gossip of the book world is Marilyn Funt's forthcoming "Are You Anybody?" The book is a set of conversations by the ex-Mrs. Allen Funt with the wives of Johnny Carson, Kirk Douglas, Muhammad Ali, Carroll O'Connor, Sammy Davis Jr. and 15 other spouses of the great to show how they cope with having famous husbands. Marilyn's best effort was in convincing the Champ to agree to let Veronica Ali give an interview. Dial Press has high hopes for this one in the fall.

TONY FACT: "Hello, Dolly!" had the distinction of winning more Antoinette Perry awards (10) than any other B'way show since the Tony awards started in 1947. But "Company" in 1971 racked up 15 nominations making it the most-nominated in theater history. Thanks to Tom Howard and James Jewell who wrote "Broadway and the Tony Awards: The First Three Decades."

Florida Skies

Chance of showers in the north. Partly cloudy south and central. Lows 40s north, 50s central and lower 60s south. (Details, Page 2A.)

The Miami Herald

Sunday, February 4, 1979

Florida's Complete Newspaper

A Latin American Edition is Published Daily

386 Pages

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Keys
Edition

50 Cents

69th Year — No. 66

A New Style in Key West — Violence

BY SUSAN SACHS
Herald Staff Writer

KEY WEST — There's something new in the languid, laid-back life-style of this eccentric town, where Cuban fishermen, native "concha," writers, artists, hippies and homosexuals historically have lived and let live.

It's violence.

Nobody's sure exactly what turned colorful Duval Street — the main street of the city's nightlife — into something akin to a battleground. Nor is there agreement on who is to blame.

But over the past few months, police and city commissioners have received a growing number of complaints, most from the city's large and influential homosexual community, of random beatings and verbal abuse. Until last week, the city's response was debate.

LAST SUNDAY, however, Key West's best-known part-time citizen, playwright Tennessee Williams, was mugged on Duval Street while ambling home, "happily drunk" and singing a hymn, with writer-buddy Dotson Rader.

Neither Williams nor Rader was seriously hurt — they joked afterward that the four youthful muggers

were "obviously New York drama critics" — but the incident galvanized the city into action.

"Our police could have been and should have been harassing more people than they have been," said City Commissioner Mary Graham. Her comment came after the city temporarily relieved Police Chief Winston (Jimmy) James of his administrative duties and dispatched him onto the streets to head an elite, six-man crew of detectives and desk cops.

Their orders were to clean up Key West's streets of the "transients" city officials agreed were a major cause of the problem.

"MUCH OF this," said Graham, whose family owns a bar on Duval Street, "could have been avoided through harassment."

James is needed to head the group, according to city officials, because of his experience.

"Some of these people (breaking the city's laws) may be bona fide tourists," explained Deputy Police Chief Larry Rodriguez, who took over James' administrative duties. "That's why we're putting experienced officers in this district. They can distinguish between



— Associated Press

Key West Patrolman Frisks Suspect

... when confronted, he had run into alley

'Romance Awaits'
... and maybe mugging

Turn to Page 36A Col. 1

Key West

1/7/80

DEAR DOTSON:

I THINK MUCH TOO MUCH IS BEING MADE ABOUT THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE 'GALA' DOWN HERE. ALL THESE CELEBS! I'D LOVE SEEING PAT AGAIN, ALSO KINGLEY AND YOU. BUT MY HECTIC TRAVEL SCHEDULE - I HAVE TO ATTEND FINAL REHEARSALS OF 'CLOTHES' IN NEW YORK, RETURNING THERE NO LATER THAN THE TWENTIETH - THEN COMING BACK TO KEY WEST ON THE 23RD - IS VERY STRENUOUS FOR ME.

JOHN UCKER IS BACK IN NEW YORK. A VERY INTERESTING AND ATTRACTIVE BOY BUT HIS PAST HISTORY HAS DAMAGED HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS. HE IS ONLY CLOSE, I'M AFRAID, TO HIS YOUNGER FRIEND ED GIERKE AND TO JAMES PURDY. PURDY SAYS HE CAN ONLY COMMUNICATE WITH JOHN OVER THE PHONE. FINDS HIS PRESENCE TOO DISTURBING.

INCIDENTALLY, IT WAS JOHN'S FAULT THAT I GOT SO UP-TIGHT WITH YOU HERE. I HEARD HIM DESCENDING THE STAIRS FROM YOUR QUARTERS. IT IS EXTRAORDINARY THAT SEXUAL JEALOUSY IS STILL SO STRONG A PART OF MY NATURE EVEN NOW THAT PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY HAS BEEN OVERCOME.

WHAT ROBERT XXXXX IS DOING WITH HIMSELF NOW IS BEAUTIFUL. I ONLY WANT TO REMEMBER THE LOVELY PART OF OUR LIVES TOGETHER: THE REST WAS TOO SAD AND FINALLY TOO DANGEROUS FOR US BOTH. I'VE ANSWERED HIS VERY ORGANIZED AND OFTEN BEAUTIFULLY PHRASED LETTERS A COUPLE OF TIMES BUT I HAVEN'T MAILED THEM. WE COULD NEVER LIVE TOGETHER AGAIN.

AFTER 'CLOTHES' - IF I SURVIVE THE TENSIONS - I PLAN TO RETURN TO THE ORIENT - TO BANGKOK OR CEYLON, I GUESS - AND FINISH OUT MY LIFE THERE WHERE VENERABLE GENTS ARE REGARDED WITH DEFERENCE BY THE YOUNG.

PERHAPS I'LL INVITE JANE (LAWRENCE) SMITH TO COME ALONG WITH ME. DEAR TONY SMITH IS IN NEW YORK HOSPITAL. ONLY A FRACTION OF HIS LIVER IS STILL FUNCTIONING. MARIA SAYS HE IS DYING. IF THAT IS SO, I'D LIKE TO TAKE HER AWAY TILL SHE'S READY TO GO ON. *in Orient gone*

ROSE SEEMS QUITE HAPPY HERE WITH MY COUSIN STELL, JIM, AND STELL'S JOLLY GIRL-FRIEND. PROBABLY I WOULDN'T STAY AWAY MORE THAN THREE MONTHS, AND THEN RETURN, IN OR OUT OF DRY ICE.

IT IS ALL 'COOL' HERE. RICHARD LOOKS WELL AND HE IS OBVIOUSLY CLOSE TO ADRIANA WHO IS A WARM PERSON. THERE'S A NICE LITTLE CROWD HERE, INCLUDING A BEAUTIFUL MODEL AND SOMETIME OVERNIGHT GUEST FOR ME AND FOR JIM.

JIM IS A PERFECT HOUSE-COMPANION. HE IS ALSO A PAINTER OF TRULY GREAT POWER. HE PAINTS HUGE CANVASES WHICH HE STRETCHES HIMSELF. THEY ARE ABSTRACTIONS WITH JUST ENOUGH OF THE FIGURATIVE OR REPRESENTATIONAL. HE'S TEACHING ME HOW TO PAINT *(boldly)* IN MY OWN LITTLE WAY.

THE LITTLE COMPOUND NOW CONTAINS THREE DOGS, CORNELIUS AND TWO NICE ONES THAT CAME WITH JIM. CORNELIUS HAS REFORMED REMARKABLY UNDER THEIR INFLUENCE AND JIM'S.

WHEN I RETURN TO NEW YORK, COULD I SPEND SOME TIME AT PRINCETON? THAT IS, *(over)*

new pet

08/11

1 I SHOULD RETURN BEFORE THE 20TH? COULD I SWIM AT THE 'Y' POOL OR THE PRINCETON POOL?

WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER TOO WELL TO EVER FALL OUT FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME.

I THINK MUCH TOO MUCH IS BEING MADE ABOUT THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE 'GALS' DOWN HERE. ALL THESE GALS ARE LOVE SEEDS - I HAVE TO ALSO KISS YOU. BUT MY HEART TRAVELS TO YOU - I HAVE TO ATTEND FINAL HEREASAYS OF 'CLOUTIER' IN NEW YORK, RETURNING THERE NO LATER THAN THE TWENTY - THEN GOING BACK TO NY WEST ON THE 22ND - IS VERY STRONG FOR ME.

Jenn.

JOHN JOCKEN IS BACK IN NEW YORK. A VERY INTERESTING AND ATTRACTIVE BOY. HIS PAST HISTORY HAS CHANGED HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS. HE IS ONLY GOING BACK TO HIS FORMER FRIENDS TO GET TO KNOW AND TO JAMES THURDY. BURNINGLY COMMUNICATE WITH JOHN OVER THE PHONE. FINDS HIS PRESIDE TOO DIFFICULT TO SAY.

work hard, me Fitzgerald

that's what you draw -

when he said to

he'd been assigned to

write a film for his

long to see your novel

ng him unless you

write it for commercial

reasons, it will surely

be your best to date.

as I once told Lester Persky

the way to make it commercial

is make it good.

Princeton
January 30, 1980

Dear Tenn,

I was greatly encouraged and made happy by your kind and loving remarks about BEAU MONDE. More, about what it meant to you in terms of my life as a writer and that which passes, only sometimes, as my "career". I've been so discouraged, Tenn; as I get older it gets harder to go on. You work a year on a book or more, you tell the truth, you make it as a fine a work as you can, and months before publication you can sense your publisher's indifference, and over you settles, like stiffening concrete, the lid of futility, the blanket of defeat. I keep wondering why I can't break through? Why it's hand-to-mouth after all these years, five books, a sixth about to come out, a seventh being written; and checks bounce, the oil company threatens to turn off the heat, and I look around and see the success of what I truly think are lesser books and worse talents, and I no longer understand. I know you've been through it, too. But you beat them all in the end, you fucked the lousy bastards but good! They can't touch you anymore. The future owns your work. The young own it. You are the best. The whole goddamn, rotten world knows it, fucking A do they know it!

My dear Richard, it's worse for him. That's why he drinks. Because he senses my distress, and is helpless before it. That I do understand.

There's a lot of things I won't forgive Ruth Ford. Chief among them was that she brought me among the rich, where I fed and grinned and came to envy what I now hate. Those years wasted among those assholes who waste the earth! I told Peter Glenville how much I hated them.

"Why?" Peter asked.

"Because they're rich."

"That's absurd," he said, "A lot of people didn't choose to be."

"Then because they're insensitive to the need of the world, and don't care that they are."

That shut his trap.

I exempt the Kennedys, the second generation -- Pat's generation -- because they paid far more than what it's worth for what they have. They didn't have to pay. But they did because Bobby came to love the disenfranchised and the underdog, the people, as Jack had. So they shot the brothers down. Payment enough, I'd say.

I'm at work on a new novel that I think is good. Bitter, yes, and anger-filled, but so what? It's what I've come to be.

Some news: Adriana Jackson's father underwent an operation in Italy. It doesn't look too good. She flew today to Milan to be with him. Pat and I continue to work on the celebration for you in October. It's going well. I know exactly the kind of bastards you don't want there that night. They won't be invited to attend.

It's very cold here. Getting colder. I long for Key West. We'll be down as soon as we have the money.

Two boys, friends of David Ford (the blond friend of mine you met last year), are in the States from London. 18 and 19 years old. Sweet, rather innocent, attractive. They're on their way down to Key West and I gave them your number because I thought it might give you pleasure to talk with them. They're English. They spent a weekend in Princeton with us, and I don't know whether they're gay or not. What's it matter, they're bright and without prejudice.

Again, thank you for your letter. When I'm really down bad, I reread it and think, Goddamn, Tennessee really loves me. And that's enough to know to go on working.

I love you, Tenn. And, as always, I miss you.

4560 Province Line Road
Princeton, NJ 08540
November 28, 1980

Dear Tenn,

I last heard you were in Vancouver, which must be very damn cold this time of year. When are you coming here or going back to Key West? Richard and I hope to come down for Christmas or soon after, whenever I sign for a new book contract. I'd love it if you were there.

My bound galleys for BEAU MONDE, the new novel, come up tomorrow and I want to get them to you right away. It's the book I started writing at your place in Key West, and it's dedicated to you. I am very anxious for you to read it, and to learn your opinion of it. As always before publication, I'm getting nervous and need support. Please let me know where to send the book, and please read it soon and let me know what you think. I tell you, Tenn, when I think of what electricians and whores make a week, writing for a living is a piss.

Richard is fine, and he's hard at work on his cartoons and water colors. They're like a continuing diary, amusing while expressing in chalk on paper what he can't say outloud. I think he's happy, or as close to it as he'll ever likely be. I love him more all the time. I love his constancy.

Pat Lawford and I are hard at work on the salute to you at Lincoln Center. It'll either be on January 26 at Avery Fisher Hall, or the Monday of your birthday, the week of March 26, at the State Theatre. It'll be a very glittering night with the city and the nation paying you homage. I know if you have a choice between public praise and a check, you'd go for the check. So would I. But in this instance, Tenn, the enthusiasm of everyone involved in honoring you has been wonderful. James Lipton, who did the salute to Beverly Sills at the State Theatre, will be producing your evening. And there's a chance it may be televised on PBS. But, the point is, Pat and I are working our asses off to make it a success.

Norman finally married Norris. I was at the wedding, a very private affair, and it was very moving to witness. all the Mailer family gathered, a simple service, and Norman weeping. He's mellowed so, and he's deeply in love with her. Lucky man.

There's an article about Charles Henri Ford in this week's VOICE wherein he admits to being 70! The last he told me -- two years ago -- was that he was 63. He's aging rather rapidly. I'm certain Ruth didn't appreciate such public honesty. By the way, he had a show of photos in Soho last month. Erect dicks coming out of various people's mouths, ears, nostrils, etc. All famous people, too. As far as I know, neither you nor I were honored by this public indignity passing as art.

I love you, Tenn, and miss you. Please write. (Philip, Joan, Richard, Pat, Eli, Norman, et. al. send you their love, as do I.)

Tennessee Williams

Mrs. Pat Kennedy Hartford
Mr. Boston Bader.

30 Boston Bader,
4560 Princeton Ave Rd,
Princeton, New Jersey 08540



T. Williams
1431 Duane St
Bay West Fla.
33040

1431 Leman St
Key West, 33040

Dec 12, '80

DEAR PAT AND DOTSON:

YOU HAVEN'T HEARD FROM ME BEFORE ABOUT THIS GALA PLANNED FOR ME BECAUSE I COULD NOT QUITE BELIEVE IN ITS REALITY: DOTSON'S LETTER FOUND HERE IN KEY WEST WHEN I RETURNED YESTERDAY MAKES IT QUITE TANGIBLE AND DAZZLING, NO DOUBT THE FINEST SORT OF EARTHLY ABSOLUTION THAT I COULD RECEIVE.

LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON I WOULD HAVE BEEN DUBIOUS ABOUT MY BEING STILL 'DOWNSTAIRS' (OR SHOULD I SAY 'UP'?) FOR THE OCCASION, AS I ATTENDED THE KENNEDY HONORS FOR THIS YEAR WITH A CASE OF WALKING PNEUMONIA AND A STREP THROAT. CAME ON ME QUITE SUDDENLY AT THE WHITE HOUSE. I WAS IN THE LINE TO BE RECEIVED BY THE CARTERS, SHUFFLING ALONG BESIDE SOME OLD DOWAGER WHOSE REMAINING SPARK OF VITALITY SEEMED TO EMANATE ALTOGETHER FROM HER DIAMOND COLLIER. I HAPPENED TO BROAK TO HER THAT I WOULD NOT BE BACK AT THAT SCENE FOR FOUR YEARS. SHE SAID 'IF YOU WAIT THAT LONG THEY'LL HAVE TO EXHUME YOU FOR THE OCCASION.' I WAS GOING TO SAY, 'MADAM, I THOUGHT THAT YOU'D BEEN EXHUMED FOR THIS ONE' - BUT WE WERE TOO CLOSE TO THE CARTERS TO RISK THE SORT OF A BRAWL THAT MIGHT HAVE RESULTED FROM SUCH A SUITABLE RETORT SO I HAD TO CONTENT MYSELF WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT IN MY CASE EXHUMATION WOULD REQUIRE A COUPLE OF DEEP-SEA DIVERS AND A GRAPPLING HOOK. DOTSON, YOU REMEMBER HOW WE ADDED THAT CODICIL TO MY WILL THAT I WAS TO BE BURIED AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO THAT SPOT IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC (I THINK IT'S APPROXIMATELY ONE DAY NORTH OF HAVANA BY SHIP) WHERE HART CRANE DIVED OFF THE ORIZABA AFTER A DISAPPOINTING NIGHT IN THE CREW'S QUARTERS.

WELL, I FEEL A LOT BETTER TODAY AND WILL BE ABLE TO SEE ROSE TOMORROW.

TOMORROW IS ALREADY BEGINNING TO BE VISIBLE THROUGH THE STUDIO SKYLIGHT.

DOTSON I THINK BEAU MONDE IS A LOVELY NEW TITLE FOR YOUR NOVEL AND I AM LONGING TO SEE GALLEYS OF IT.

WITH MY LOVE TO YOU BOTH,

Linnaea

P. S. Before I got up this morning, my Canadian Connection (no longer use compromised term "secretary") received a call from an ~~the~~ agent saying the gala was for march 2.

Dotson's letter said either January or March and I would have preferred January — any date is better if sooner! (over)

After our phone talk, I recognize
the need to hold it March
2 and will shape up
for that date.

J. D.

P. S. Before I get up this
morning, my Canadian
Committee (see paper) will
congratulate me "heartily"
renewed a call from the
the agent saying the
girls are for March 2.
Editor's letter said either
January or March and I
would have preferred January
- they are a little of course! (off)

4560 Province Line Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

December 19, 1980

Dear Tenn,

Sorry about the confusion over the date of the gala at Lincoln Center. The January 26 night was too close to the holidays and didn't allow us sufficient time to pull the production, ticket sales, etc. together. There's no point in doing something unless it can be done best. March 2 was chosen because it was the only next available night when we could have use of Avery Fisher Hall. Pat will hold a press conference in New York sometime around January 15 to announce the your gala and the rest of the Lincoln Center-Columbia University program. By the way, the gala salute to you will be to raise money for fellowships for young writers at Columbia's Graduate School of the Arts, playwrights, poets, novelists, the whole crew. It's very exciting, Tenn, and we're going at it hard, doing our damn best to make it a great night for you. There'll be the program at Avery Fisher Hall, and later a party for you in the hall or at the State Theatre.

You should have received the bound galleys of BEAU MONDE by now as they were allegedly sent to you last week, but given the Christmas mails God alone knows if they've arrived. I'm very anxious to know what you think of the book, and I'd appreciate a quote from you if you like it. I don't know whether it'll be a commercial success, but I've reached the point, Tenn, where I don't much care anymore. I'm so used to being broke that big money would probably have a terrible effect on my already frayed morals, and might even give me cardiac arrest! Speaking of which: I've not forgotten, and never shall, the codicil to your will. And if I don't slip into the final sleep before you, or if I do, I too would like to rest there in those waters that Hart found irresistible.

I've begun another novel, MAYFLIES, that my editor tells me is too romantically homosexual -- and odd turn of phrase -- and too bitter. Well, there's not romance without the bite, and it's the bite you remember.

Who's your Canadian connection? That's a surprise. I thought Gary and Sky were with you. Oh, and why didn't you call me when you were last in town? I really wanted to see you and I didn't even know you were here.

Adriana left yesterday for Key West. Assuming we've the money Richard and I plan to come down around January 9. Tennessee, I think there may be a whole busload, too. Philip and Joan Kingsley. Ruth Carter Stapleton. And Pat Lawford will be at her mother's in Palm Beach and I'd love to get her to come down for a few days.

It's wet and cold here. Richard's working on his drawings. I'm depressed by the holidays, and I wish I were in Key West and could see you and get out of the cold. And I wish I had more success and that publishers paid on time and that New York critics didn't exist and that Gore Vidal had the sex change operation he so plainly needs.

But what I truly wish is that you're happy, and working well, and that Miss Rose enjoys her walks and ice cream and knows we love her. As I do you.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

and myself -
ant
FOR TEN YEARS I HAVE OBSERVED DOTSON RADER WRITING ONE GOOD BOOK
AFTER ANOTHER, PERSISTING AGAINST AN INDIFFERENCE OF REVIEWERS THAT
DISCOURAGES THEM, NOT THE WRITER. I HAVE SEEN ENDURE PRIVATION AND
HUMILIATING DEPENDANCE.

WITH BEAU MONDE, THIS TALENTED AND HEROIC NOVELIST HAS CREATED A WORK
THAT PLACES HIM SO FIRMLY IN THE FRONT RANK OF AMERICAN NOVELISTS
THAT THOSE INCLINED TO DENIGRATE WILL FIND NO REMOTELY POSSIBLE WAY
TO PURSUE THEIR INCLINATION. THE SOCIAL WORLD OF THE NOVEL IS ONE
THAT DOTSON HAS EXPLORED AND COMPREHENDED AND SOMEHOW SURVIVED IN
A WAY THAT NO OTHER AMERICAN WRITER COULD DO. BRAVO, BRAVISSIMO!
HERE IS A BRILLIANT ACHIEVEMENT.

Thurston Williams

Dear Dotson

Use any or all of this that
you think may be helpful,
Sincerely,
T.D.

RETURN IN FIVE DAYS TO

T. Williams

1431 Duncan St

Key West, Fla 33040
ZIP CODE



Dotson Rader, Esq
4560 Province Line Rd.
Princeton, New Jersey 08450

Bob Sweet

212 355 2751 home

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EM. I HAVE SEEN
1921 AN INDICATED
DOUGLAS BAKER

4560 Province Line Rd.
Princeton 08540

April 2, 1981

Dear Tenn,

Williams

It was wonderful seeing you in Chicago. I felt a bit in the way knowing how busy you were with the opening -- the play is terrific! -- so I especially appreciate the time you gave me.

The PARADE magazine piece comes out on May 17. I sent the first draft mss. to you in Key West. About 20% of that material will be cut for reasons of space. But I think it's a lovely piece, and I hope you're pleased with it.

I leave for Texas next week to begin work on a profile of the Jimmy Carter family for the magazine. I'll be going to Dallas for a few days, and then possibly on to Plains. And after that work is done, I'm obligated to write a profile on Diane Keaton, which I'm not looking forward to with any particular delight since I hear she is somewhat difficult to interview. But I need the dough something fierce. But things are looking up, and I'm out of the depression that gripped me most of the winter. I don't feel like ~~XXXX~~ throwing in the towel anymore, even if I owned a towel to throw.

I was so very impressed by Jane Smith! What an elegant, high class, perfectly beautiful woman! I never tired of looking at her face. How good she must be to have survived this long without bearing in her features any of the grotesque sculpting that mars the faces of most women of a certain age; I mean the ~~xxx~~ harsh lines around the mouth, the suspiciousness in the eyes -- none of that. How lovely she is.

And Sky, as usual, looked like something that walked out of the pages of Vogue. A generous fellow, and good. You have a fine friend there. Tell him, when the pictures are developed, I'll send them along.

Depending on work and money, I hope to make it down to Key West before too long. Again, I loved being with you. And I long to see you soon. Please write.

Williams

4560 Province Line
Princeton 08540

May 1, 1981

Dear Tenn,

I've enclosed the snapshots ^I took of you all in Chicago on your birthday. Please show them to Sky if he's there since he especially wanted to see them.

I'm terribly sorry that you got sick in New York and had to return to Key West. Pat Lawford was looking forward to taking you to dinner that night, and we were both very disappointed you couldn't make it, and sad that you felt sick. I pray you're in good health again, baby. I called Nitch for Pat to ask him to send her a mss. of SOMETHING CLOUDY, SOMETHING CLEAR but as of today -- five days later -- Pat still hasn't received it.

George Plimpton was delighted with the interview. Next week, when I'm back from Plains, ~~next~~ we'll begin editing it. Also, I'm doing an essay about you, in praise of you! that will also go into the magazine. George is also writing an appreciation, and we thought we'd ask Mailer to write something too. Additionally, there'll be a selection of snapshots and photos with captions. You'll see and be able to make changes in the material before it goes to press. It should be out in late October.

I go down to Plains on Wednesday for a few days to see the Carters. I told Miss Lillian about your lovely remarks about Jimmy, that he'd would have had a great second term, he was a staunch humanitarian, etc. She was very touched. She said she loved your writing, and admired you. She then told me that she had known Frank Fontis, having met him before Jimmy won the presidency. She'd been in Key West, and somehow met Frank who showed Miss Lillian around your house and the upstairs room where you wrote your plays. He obviously didn't have access to the studio! When Frank Fontis died, the State Department called Miss Lillian and asked if Frank was a friend of hers. She said, "Yes". And they told her he had been murdered, and that on the table beside his bed was a piece of paper with her name and phone number, and written on it was: "Lillian Carter. My best friend." Miss Lillian said she wasn't able to go to the funeral, but she sent a cable to be read at the service in Key West eulogizing Frank.

Now I found that to be an extraordinary story. One, that she would have known Frank Fontis. And, two, that she would have been notified of his death before you heard of it, or I did. Because Frank had written her phone number beside his bed. Curious.

Miss Lillian's just come home from the hospital -- she broke her hip -- and ~~is~~ walking with a cane, but she's as bright and feisty as ever, and I know she'd love hearing from you, Tenn. If you have a ~~many~~ minute, why not send her a note saying you're happy she out of the hospital and in good shape? I know she'd love hearing from you. Miss Lillian Carter, Plains, Georgia is the address.

One other thing: John Travolta is coming to New York from Europe sometime around the 12 of May, and if you are in New York I thought we could have dinner with him and Pat Lawford and one or two others. I know you like him as an actor, and he is a kind, bright, and gentle young man who thinks the world of you. Please drop me a note and let me know when you'll be definitely in New York.

BEAU MONDE hasn't gotten the world's greatest reviews so far. I wonder why the reviewers go after me so personally? What the fuck does my personal life have to do with the quality of my writing? It's enough to make working in a sewer look attractive. Or maybe, being a writer, I'm already in the sewer and haven't noticed.

I loved seeing you here. And I miss you. Richard sends his love, as do I.

PS: I got the strangest collection of press clippings from Dakin, all about himself. I think he is gearing up for his Presidential run and thinks I've got David Rockefeller's loot or Nancy Reagan's ear. In any event, if you talk to Brother Dakin, you should tell him the Big Dot ~~xxxx~~ hasn't a subway token to his name, and if he ever got within a foot of Nancy Reagan's ear he'd probably piss in it.

Williams

4560 Province Line
Princeton, NJ 08540

December 5, 1981

Dear Tenn,

It was a great joy for Richard and me seeing you on Thanksgiving. I must say that I was very impressed by your friend, Scott. He struck me as very decent, fair-minded, and caring deeply about your wellbeing. What a sweet fellow he is.

And listen: I want to thank you for your kind letters to Pat Lawford. The emotional cost to her -- not to mention the financial -- of the cancellation of the benefit was enormous. And she was, and still is, very unhappy because she wanted very much to do something for you. She loves you very much, and your letter from Cape May went along way towards healing that unhappiness. It was kind and thoughtful of you, Tenn.

Richard leaves for London on the 14th of this month. I follow a few days later. We're going to spend Christmas there with the Kingsleys, and probably New Year's too. I'll be back by January 3, God willing. At the moment I'm at work on the runaways piece for PARADE. Then I do Teddy Kennedy, Gerald Ford, and, if he can stay in one place for a day, Ryan O'Neill. I am working very hard. I hope by spring to be out of the asshole of debt and have some money to take the time to work on my next book. Tenn, I think publishers and magazines pay writers only enough to keep them from starving, but not enough to allow them the freedom to write what they really want to write. But I'm going to keep at it and maybe, if I'm lucky, something will hit and I'll be out of the woods. Woods? Jungle is more like it!

If we have the money. Richard and I are planning to take a house in Key West in February. I hope you'll be there. We love you, Tenn. As usual, I miss you when you're not here.

Please tell me what you thought of my PARIS REVIEW interview with you and the essay. I work hard to make it as good as possible. The response to it has been very favorable. But I want to know what you felt about it.

Richard sends you his love. As do I.

4560 Province Line Road
Princeton, NJ 08540

March 7, 1982

Williams
Dear Tenn,

Richard and I have missed hearing from you. We saw you on tv, on "Entertainment Tonight", a clip from your reading in Key West. You looked great, and we both, on seeing you, wished we could be there. In July we plan to come to Key West and rent a house permanently. Key West is the only place where Richard is really healthy, and in a measure happy. So we'll be living there as of next fall, God and the real estate markets willing.

Pat sent to Columbia a \$10,000 check to endow the first two Tennessee Williams Fellowships in Writing. They will be given annually, one in fiction, the other in ~~new~~ poetry. The winners will be announced in April, and they each will be granted \$5,000 for a year of study at Columbia's Graduate School of the Arts. The students will be chosen by the Columbia faculty. In honoring bright, exceptional writers each year with a Tennessee Williams Fellowship, we also are trying to honor you.

I've been writing exclusively for PARADE magazine of late. I don't know if you've seen my stuff, but I've done stories on runaways, Carol Burnett, Jimmy Carter, Nancy Reagan. Yet to come: Gerald Ford, Mayor Koch, and Michael Ontkean (he's the actor in "Making Love"). I've also gotten very involved in trying to help the millions of runaway children by working with Senator Kennedy to set up a private foundation in Washington to coordinate aid to these kids. The average runaway is 12 years old! 35% runaway because of incest! 50% because of physical abuse! It's horrifying. My heart breaks for these kids.

Oh, I'm also writing a profile for PARADE on Senator Kennedy, whom I have come to know well and to love. And God, do I love his kids, especially Teddy, Jr., who's 20 and has lost a leg to cancer and yet who is sweet, handsome, brave. When we all went skiing, Teddy, Jr. was by far the best skier of the lot. You ought to see him go down a slope on one leg as if he possessed the best of life and its most splendid future.

So, I've been working hard. Richard is painting. The winter is ending. I feel strong again.

I miss you, dear Tenn. Please write when you have the time.
All my love.

What I think American
theatre and poetry needs
is simply a poet like
Mot Davison and
I would say needs him
desperately at this time.
A wish him whatever
luck or poet can get
from, . . .

Jennessee Williams
May 1972

March 14, 1983

Mr. Dotson Rader
c/o PARADE PUBLICATIONS, INC.
750 Third Avenue,
New York, New York

Dear Mr. Rader,

In the Spring of 1972, actress acquaintance Helena Carroll who was then starring in "Small Craft Warnings", passed along some of my poetry and plays to Tennessee Williams. What resulted, was an unforgettable meeting with "the master" at the Elysee and a bond of friendship that can never end...not even in death.

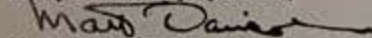
Mr. Williams spent the day giving encouragement, pleading with me to remove my mother from the hospital cancer ward and bring her home where the love is (we were too late), roaring with delight as my demure lady friend uttered the word "decadent", and in the end, writing his encouragement on a piece of paper and saying..."maybe you can use this as a forward or something. I hope it helps."

Understanding the poet, and respecting his wishes as I do, it causes me great concern that he has been laid to unrest in a place he hated, against his will. It was very kind of him to tell me that my poems reminded him of Hart Crane, and I know how important it is for him to cast his spirit next to Crane's in the Gulf of Mexico. I'm aware of the codicil to his will expressing his wishes, and it seems to me that this is a legal document that cannot be ignored. Wishing to right the wrong, I called P.E.N. in New York to see if they would gather their legal forces and take action to free Tennessee's spirit from his hated St. Louis. I was told they didn't have time to get involved in "personal matters." Knowing that you were close to him, I wonder is there anything that can be done...any legal avenues to pursue on behalf of this great man. Could petitions be signed...funds be raised...friends gathered to insure the last wish of Mr. Williams. Is there anything I and my wife can do from Los Angeles? Is there a sense of outrage in New York?

I am now what Tennessee referred to in his will as an indigent writer. After having written and produced experimental plays O.O.B. in New York, in colleges, and PBS-TV...and having written a manuscript of poems yet to be published, I am now trapped in the God-awful world of advertising in order to care for my family while neglecting my soul. More than anything in the world, I wish for one year of financial freedom to release my pent-up words. With the enclosed letter, I wonder if I might qualify for "indigent writer" assistance. Do you know how that might be approached? Hopefully not through one of those asinine committees that only assists those who are already "commercially successful." I can't imagine that's what Tennessee had in mind.

So many questions. I don't want to take any more of your time, but hope you will advise me as to the questions I've stated. I'll close with sincere thanks for listening and fond regards.

Respectfully yours,



Matt Davison
32650 Nantasket Dr., #93
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274
(213) 541-4325

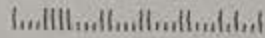
Matt Davison
32650 Nantasket Dr., #93
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274



*W. Tennessee
Willsons*

Mr. Dotson Rader
c/o PARADE PUBLICATIONS, INC.
750 Third Avenue
New York, New York

PERSONAL



Letter to Landford, letter, 1903

Terence Williams - 1971

87 L.S. 4 telegrams 1 L.S.

box 4

Terence Williams - 1717-1718

14 L.S.

Terence Williams - 1981-1983 1 L.S. 1 copy of A.L.S. + Reader's letter to him

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