

April 24, 1969

Dear Marge:

Your letter of Monday received, prior to your receiving my last directed to Fla. I had seen your return address and had thought you had already moved, not having notice the Monterrey cancellation or having paid too much attention to your announced sked. A failing of mine, I'm afraid.

My last reflects upset/ness at your upsetness but then what does a smooth lake mean without a stone in the middle once and a while.

To be honest I pay no% stock at all in astrology, but I must admit being impressed that you had guessed I was a Virgo. My God is there really something? Nonsense. Still, it may mean that children born in September may be affected in some way by the effect of the September environment on mothers and that seems rather strange. Perhaps shyness is born of orange leaves, something as simple as that. Now about your remark that virgos should marry cancers does that have a hidden meaning inasmuch as old Hem was born on July 21, I wonder. I don't think this is what you meant at all because it sounds too bumptious for Bump. And would you be good enough to give me the French derivation of Bump please. Beau something I suppose, contracted to B' umpity and then lessened somemore. Here in northern N.H. we are surrounded by French origins who have lost contact. My barber's name is Malinfant, for example, and he pronounces it with the accent on the second syllable instead of the first and it sounds very much unlike the original bad child word.

About the Italian bit, please, please, don't jump to the conclusion that I am sorry about that. I said "I used to worry" about that, but not any more. When I was very young, I was orphaned, that is the provider died, my father, and I was let out to stay with some of my Scottish relatives, that is Scottish three generations in this country. Perhaps that is corrupting. I don't know. But I found myself called Wop and dago and was much confused at a lowness of station that I had not know; part of the Negro experience I suppose. I encountered anti-Italianness for a good many years; even in young manhood, but that is all past, and I must say I never grew permanently bitter about it, hating society, etc. but then I passed out of the trap and of course Negroes never do so there is a difference. Oddly, I still don't love my own Italianness as much as my own wife does. I tend to be glandularly pro-British which is odd since they are the ones who made up all those terrible names about Ities and coined the cowardise rep, etc. But British people are quieter, more like the code heroes I admire in Hemingway, whereas Italians are so emotionally exposed it is embarrassing at times. I admire the Italian accomplishments but I do not buy their basic philosophy of life which is to distrust practically everybody but ones relatives and to impute wisdom to chicanery. Old Hem admired the British too, rather too much, I suppose, but it added wonderfully to his writing. Perhaps the fact that I was brought up mainly by Canadian ladies accounts for some of my bias; I don't know. One of them told me when I was a little boy that I had a will of iron and that has comforted me ever since though looking back now I doubt she meant it.

The odd thing is that Hem was English on all four sides and yet he came through as totally American. He had no sense of ancestral identity with the English; it was just that their restrained way, their clipped tones, their total control, their manliness, made an indelible impression on him. A young ensign named "Chink" Dorman-Smith whom he met in Italy before your 1919 time together, had as much influence on Hem's formation of the hero code as any single person, I think. Of course Bill Smith helped confirm it, as he himself told me.

Now about Baker - I'm glad you wondered what he wrote because I am interested in your reaction, naturally. I had somehow supposed you were getting the book. Let me cut to the main Bumptiousness: (heh, I used both words.)

1. Thank goodness he doesn't connect you with your present identity. You end in his book as Marjorie Bump, as you do in all others. He is very careful, incidentally, the way he speaks about the living, but he is wondrously brave when he kicks the dead corpse of Hemingway. To sum up Baker: an intellectual ribbon clerk who does not think that Hemingway was quite nice, which is true but rather beside the point wouldn't you say. Baker applies standards to Hemingway that would be relevant for ordinary men.

2. You are listed, as Marjorie Bump, on the following pages, (as shown in the index) 64-66; 81; 132; 585 (notes).

3. Let me now quote him fully (first reference);

"Except for the adventure of camping in the wilderness (up on the Fox in the upper peninsula with Al Walker and Jack Pentecost, Hem's high school classmate. This was the fishing trip that resulted in his short story, BIG TWO-HEARTED RIVER. End St. John insert) they need not have left home. They had been back only a few days when hundreds of enormous rainbows began to appear in the cove at Morton Bay. 'You can see 'em jumping from Dilstein's porch,' said Ernest. He meant the porch of Liz Dilworth's Pinehurst Cottage, where he had taken to sitting out after supper watching sunsets, smoking Russian cigarettes, and waiting for Marjorie Bump to get off from work. Marjorie and her friend Connie Curtis had come from Petoskey to wait on tables at Mrs. Dilworth's. She was seventeen, with red hair and freckles, dimpled cheeks, and a sunny disposition. Wesley's wife, Kathryn thought that Marjorie was 'much enamored of Ernest,' and used to watch her at the breadboard on Liz Dilworth's kitchen, making sandwiches to take along when she and Ernest went out to the Point for long evenings beside a driftwood campfire. Opinions differ as to the seriousness of their association. But Ernest subsequently used her first name and characteristically romanticized their friendship in a pair of related stories, 'The End of Something' and 'The Three-Day Blow.'

(cont.)

"After Marjorie and Connie had gone back to high school in Petoskey, Ernest stayed on through September and the first week of October, helping with the seed-potato harvest. The potatoes were stored in bags in a large shed called the Potato House. This and another building called the Bean House flanked the large dock at the foot of the sandy lane that led past Dilworth's down to the Bay. The dock was the scene of an even which Ernest later converted into a short story. One of the Pinehurst Cottage waitresses, a pretty and forward girl somewhat older than Marjorie and Connie, had stayed past Labor Day to help Liz Dilworth restore order to her house after the heavy traffic of July and August. She and Ernest took to strolling out together in the evenings after her work was done. One night their stroll ended in a mutual seduction on the chilly planking of the dock in the shadows behind the Potato House. Ernest had boasted in June of having cauterized the wound of Agnes von Kurowski's rejection (the Red Cross girl in Italy after whom the Farewell to Arms heroine is said to be patterned) and St. John insert) with a course of women and booze. The surviving evidence makes it seem far more likely that his encounter with the waitress at Horton Bay was the first of its kind. It evidently impressed him. Two years later, he wrote a fictional account of the episode in a story called "Up in Michigan". It dealt so frankly and graphically with sexual intercourse that he had difficulty in getting it published in the United States" (and it did not appear in the U.S. until 1938 in the collected stories after, presumably both Dilworths had died.) "

paragragp on typing at Potter's in Petoskey. Then:

"When high school let out in the afternoon, he was often on hand to meet Marjorie Bump and walk her home. He wore a cloth cap with a visor and a black leather jacket lined with sheepskin. Soon he was a familiar figure around Petoskey. One of his admirers was Grace Quinlan, a pretty little fourteen-year-old with dark eyes and an Indian-black hair. He nicknamed her Sister Luke and took to sitting in the Quinlans' kitchen, popping corn and telling yars about his life in Italy. His best friends among the boys were Dutch Pailthorp, whose father was a lawyer, and Luman Ramsdell, the doctor's son. Dutch was a thin, red-haired boy who had just withdrawn from the University of Michigan because of illness. He and Ernest put down a keg of cider, which they fortified with cracked corn and raisins and set to fermenting over the hot-air register in Ernest's room.

"Around Thanksgiving, the cider had turned hard enough to drink. They decided to have a part at the Ramsdell's summer cottage in Bay View, the Methodist cultural colony. They asked Irene Goldstein, Bernice Babbitt, and a boy called Home Zipp. Irene was Ernest's date, a handsome girl exactly his age who was home on vacation from a college of physical education in Chicago. They all piled into Luman's Whippet with the cider and some sandwiches. The Ramsdell house had been closed for the season and the iron cold was everywhere. They built a fire in the fireplace and spent a raucous evening sampling the cider and talking. Ernest hiked up his pants leg to show Irene his scars and discoursed at length on the wines of Italy and the guinea red he said he had drunk at the Venice Cafe on Wabash Avenue in Chicago."

(Here quoted some stories Hem is said to have written at Potters. one called: "Wolves and Doughnuts." Another on romantic Arditi episode, how they killed austrian prisoners with grenades, etc. etc.)

Although you are listed on page 66 I cannot find you there either by direct or indirect reference. The account then tells of Hem's talk to the Ladies' Aid Society in the Petoskey Public Library. I had thought it was the Women's Art group. Then the contact with Mrs. Connable is gone into, Hem is quoted as saying in a letter of a friend: "This Toronto thing looks like the original Peruvian doughnuts."

Baker says Hem went to Oak Park for the Christmas holidays and there met 15 members of his old Red Cross group.

On the eighth of January he took the train to Toronto and moved into the Connable home. Then a long section on the Toronto experience.

Page 81 - description of wedding at Horton Bay. Then:

"Night had fallen when Ernest and Hadley threw their bags into the back of John Kotesky's Ford and made their getaway. John drove them over the ridge to Longfield Farm and from there they rowed across the lake to Windemere. The honeymoon lasted two weeks. They both came down with bad colds and made a brew of mulled wine to cure their hacking coughs. Hadley was enraged when Ernest took her to Petoskey to meet some of his former girls, including Marjorie Bump, the hardware dealer's daughter. He explained rather lamely that he had supposed she would think more highly of him when she saw the girls he had rejected in her favor."

(goes into settling into Chicago and having feud with Y.K. Smith over some gossip over Y.K.'s wife, Doodles.

Page 132:

"...."Big Two-Hearted River" was the latest in a series of nine remarkable stories that he had written in the seven months since his return from Toronto (To Paris in 1924) His achievement was almost the literary equivalent of a population explosion. Besides "Indian Camp" he had completed "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," based on the episode in the summer of 1911 when Nick Boulton and Billy Tabeshaw had come to cut up the beech log on the shore at Windemere Cottage. He had written "Soldier's Home", which showed the town of Oak Park as it had looked to him after his return from the wars in January, 1919. "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" both grew out of his brief romance with Marjorie Bump at Horton Bay in the summer of 1919."

Page 585. merely repeats that Hem used first name of Marjorie Bump and first name of Bill Smith in the two short stories

As for Baker's source for all of this, I turned to his notes in the back and found the following:

Letters read by Baker included: ~~from~~ E.H. to G.E. Jan. 1, 1920; Aug. 1 and 8, 1920; Sept. 30, 1920. Edwin Balmer to E.H. Feb. 1, 1920 (Baker has Balmer staying at Walloon Lake rather than Dilworth's. I wonder if you remember which is right.) Baker's interviews: W.B. Smith, Jr. Mrs. Kathryn Dilworth and Mrs. Maxine Davis, July, 1964; correspondence from Dr. Guy C. Conkle, May 2, 1962 (Conkle tre ted Hem's legs; is now dead)

Baker's notes: EH's friendship with Marjorie Bump (This item is erroneously not listed in the index): Kathryn Dilworth to author, July 10, 1964. For autobiographical aspects of "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" see Montgomery, Hemingway in Michigan. Marjorie's sister, Georgianna, called Pudge, sometimes accompanied her sister and EH.

(cont)

Baker's notes (page 574) cont.)

"Origin of 'Up in Michigan' : Mrs. Kathryne Dilworth and Mrs. Maxine Davis to Baker, July 10, 1964. They said that the girl, (the older waitress) got a hemlock sliver in her bottom the night of the seduction. EH's story accurately portrayed Horton Bay as he knew it, mentioning the dock and one of the warehouses, long since pulled down. EH borrowed the first names of Jim and Liz Dilworth for his lovers, Jim Gilmore and Liz Coates, and made Gilmore a blacksmith, as Dilworth was. Liz's last name may come from the Coates House, a reputable hotel in Kansas City (where Hem worked on Star when he was 18) or from Frances Coates, whom EH admired in high school. In the story, Jim took his meals, and Liz Coates waited on table, at D.J. Smith's an eating establishment clearly modeled on Dilworth's. Before the seduction, Jim went hunting deer in the Pine Barrens of Vanderbilt where EH had himself seen deer in July, 1919. "

So that's it, Marge, quite a mouthful, but still rather skimpy, unless you happen to be copying it on an old typewriter.

I would very much like you to go over the quotes and notes in as much detail as possible with a view to getting the facts straight once and for all.

I don't think Hem was deep down anti-semitic, which is what the term means to me. He grew up in a somewhat anti-semitic environment and Bill Smith himself told me that both he and Hem "took a dislike to some of the well-heeled Jewish people in Charlevoix." Which parallels your remark about the fancy cars.

Mary Hemingway and Pauline Hemingway apparently liked each other. Incidentally, Baker makes it clear that the initiative in the breakup of Hem's marriage to Hadley was far and away the work of Pauline, not hem, as is commonly believed. My God she'd go and live with them, in a regular a trois situation. Hadley must have had a lot of patience. I always think he preferred you and Hadley to any of the others. The odd thing is that contrary to some of the popular local mythology, he associated you with his days of innocence and that was what was attractive about it.

About that dockside seduction, this tends to go against Hem's life-time avoidance of this kind of thing. He was really quite a moral man, according to Bill and Harold Loeb and Dutch Pailthorpe. Of course one can never tell about men, the beasts.

Please don't hold this length against me; remember a lot of it is quotes aimed at saving you buying and wading through Baker's big book.

love,