

July 29, 1969

Dear Marge:

Yours of the 17th instant joyfully received. (Incidentally, if you appreciate the improvement in the clarity of this typing, you can thank H. Loeb for same. He complained about my ribbon and so I took that as kind of a TV click-off and changed the blamed thing.) But the point I was going to make was that there seems to be some kind of abatement in my Hemingway activity lately, and I don't know just what it is; whether it be Hemingway lessening, or other things going on or simply like always the wearing out process begins. Probably just a slight recession; but, I used to acquire a Hemingway book or other collector's item at least once a month and write about my man and correspond a lot and work on my files and, above all, do much, much reading; but virtually none of this is taking place now. Probably it is mostly that Ruth and I have been working on the house and I, of course, being a card-carrying spineless work, jump at any opportunity to substitute physical work for mental. Then too, I have gotten the easy items to collect I suppose, and the cheap ones, and the rest belong to other categories. At least nothing has substituted for old Hem and I no doubt will be plugging away at him again soon. There is a chance I make make a solo trip to Michigan to stay for a week at Walloon Lake with a hotel friend of mine, and that might galvanize me again. At the moment, my writing is caught in the middle of a trip that Hem made in 1947 to Petoskey on his way to Sun Valley. It rests mostly on an interview with his driver ~~man~~ seen in Fla. but there is also dependence on personal observations out there and talks with some of the old Petoskeyites. As for on-paper material, the second part of my Bill Smith piece will be published one of these days in a Conn. college quarterly, together with my blsst at old Carlos. In re the latter, I notice the Times in reviewing the latest Hart Crane book deplored that it was written in the Carlos Baker manner, that is biography by plowing so to speak. But the book remains on the best-seller list and, as I may have mentioned to you before, bids fair to outdo THE SHIP OF FOOLS as the most unread Best Seller on the nation's coffee-tables.....We will visit old Harold again for a few days around August 9, and it is after that, when the hotel rooms start emptying, that I may become a gratis guest at Walloon Lake. This coming Monday Ruth and I will journey to Keene, N.H. to pick up Marianne Palladino, our friend from Italy. That is she was a teacher here in Franconia, married an Italian, and went to Italy. There she rented for us our wonderful Rome Penthouse. We saw much of her and her delightful husband. Now, while he is resettling them in Geneva thanks to a great new job in finance, she is here visiting her mother, with her two babies in tow. Quite a girl. Born in Yugoslavia, but long since American. So we keep a little bit in the swim, albeit it is pretty puddlish most of the time. We have had rain here for ten days and I, the treeman, am the only one who doesn't mind. You my dear are one of the solid (but feminine) rocks on my landscape. Love,

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