

May 8, 1973

Dear Marge:

It was so good to get your last letter, which I cannot at the moment find, and I am very sorry not to have been a better correspondent. It has not been because I haven't thought of you. I have and do and often.

Did I ever ask you if you had read Hem's posthumously published Michigan stories. I guess I must have but damned if I can find trace of your answer.

The book business has, I'm afraid, taken over our interests pretty completely. It is really too full of details to be tackled so late in life. A rather tyrannical, occasionally oppressive albatross around the neck it can be. And yet I suppose it is better than rocking or thinking about all the great books or stories I ~~am~~ could write.

I do feel bad about not getting more down about Hem, but I must confess my interest is not so intense in him anymore. My taste seems to have broadened some, but I am still a hot fan when it comes to a particular author. I rally to his defense against Faulkner or any others of those with whom he is always being compared. Lately, it seems that my admiration for Dickens has increased a lot, in some part due, I suppose to the amazing interest that one notes in his work, and the prices that his autographs command.

The book business goes well, I suppose. Our catalogues are successful and we even manage to pay our huge printing bills. Some fellow dealers put out scruffy mimeograph jobs but we have gotten into the habit of spending hundreds on rather good looking cats, and it pleases us even if it may not be the most remarkable financial idea ever invented.

I must tell you on the morbid side that this June will mark the fourth year that our dog Danny departed our life -- and his. We have not gotten another dog, although we may if Ruth finds the right one to pick her out.

We have few enough friends. I see the Loeb's about 2 or 3 times a year. And I suppose there are three other families that we see regularly if not frequently enough. I look forward rather constantly to our next trip abroad but it is not planned yet. Such things as having to lay out \$2,00 for a new second hand car dent the gazebo a bit... Was it Venice Fla or Venice Italy that you were going to. I suppose the Italian place. I have many happy memories from there. You know Ruth and I stayed at the Gritti Palace where Hem stayed.

Hadley is still around. I have not met her. Her husband died. She must be 81 now, having been 8 years older than Hem. Loeb is well and has just published another article in the Southern Review. Is planning a novel, and some additional criticism of South African Literature. He's sharp but a touch tart.

Tell me some more news. We both send our love, and I send a little extra on my own part,