

May 11 1982

Dearest Phyllis

Bet this letter will come as a surprise to you; I trust it will be a pleasant one. It's been a long time since I wrote (or spoke for that matter) to you. Anyway, here goes...(I hope I can still manage to write a letter)

Hoosen tells me you are going overseas for quite some time. I reckon a change of scenery, albeit a temporary one, can only do good for you. It should be a welcome break, I believe, for you to come down from ~~x~~ your mountain kingdom and stretch your limbs a bit... assuming of course you still can stretch them properly after coming so close to being catapulted into the hereafter a while ago.

I know that the blame for communication -- or rather lack of, it -- between us must rest with me. But that's only because I am still as you will remember me: a careless, reckless swine bouncing from one emotional bruise to another. I collected so many in the period you've been gone that I'm sure ~~xx~~ I have enough to open The Manu Padayachee Museum of Broken Affair Bruises. Quite a motley collection it is too -- some deep and enduring, others mere pinpricks on the surface.

The deepest hurt is ~~xx~~ ^{over} the breakup of my second marriage. I was so sure everything would be alright. But sadly, I was mistaken. We eventually called it a day in mid-December. I was staying in Reservoir Hills then in rented premises, so I had to move out and am living with the folks in Asherville. (They are all well, by the way.) The tragedy of the whole sorry affair is that when Navi (vrou no 2) left, she was already a couple of months pregnant. The baby is due any day now, and I grieve ~~xx~~ the fact that we're not together to celebrate that joyous occasion. I thought seriously about getting together but somehow I am convinced things will never work out between us, and the situation as it is, is the best for all concerned.

Presently, I am heart-free, proud of it and intend remaining that way for as long as is possible. As long as, I suspect, a ~~xx~~ cute little number from Red Hill I am lusting after, walks into my arms. (Some of us never learn, do we?) Only kidding! I figure there's so much more for me to ^{do} than waste valuable time and barely afforded ^{money} skipping from marital bed to ~~bum~~ and back again.

Whenever I can find the time, I turn to the ~~xx~~ script of a play I am writing. I showed ~~that~~ draft of the first couple of scenes to Muthal Naidoo (remember her?) and she is very excited about it. She calls me every few days to chide me for my shirking. Hopefully, when the script is done, it will be a work I'm proud of. If it isn't, then I would not bother staging it. There are a couple of other ideas I am mulling over as well that seem capable of being moulded into good relevant theatre material, but I am holding back starting on those until I am finished with the first one.

Ronnie Govender came to the disco on Saturday. (You do know I work as a disc jockey, don't you? More of that later.) He told me he has the financial backing to set up a new theatre in Durban and he wants me to head the project. I am quite willing to co-operate for in all my dealings with Ronnie in the past, he's always placed both hands on the table. If this theatre is realised, it could become the pivot around which fringe theatre in Durbs would revolve. The Upstairs theatre has been declared a fire hazard; The Our House theatre (non-racial but pre-dominantly white) closes down in a fortnight; Communikon is run by the egocentric Ketan Lakhani who is best ^{at} playing his wierd ego games on his own; the Hermit Theatre (attached to the Hungry Hermit Restaurant in Hermitage St) is too small and rigidly arranged to make viable productions there possible.

Ronnie plans to convert The Summit Ballroom in the Himalaya Hotel into a theatre with private bar and restaurant for patrons. It could turn into quite a place since theatre here these days is no longer considered the exclusive preserve of the academic bourgeois. (Spelling?)

Curses for not thinking of this sooner! I should have made some tape recordings of yours truly in action at the disco for your/edification and critical approval. Ahyway that can still be done. Will let you have a couple of cassettes in the near future.

Will you be going to Amsterdam? My sister Dev is there and I'm sure she'd love to hear from you if venture to her neck of the woods. I'm writing from work and don't have her address handy, but I could sent ~~xx~~ it to you soon.

Bye for now and take care.

Love
Manu