

Recd.
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14 March 1999

Dear Phyllis:

It's Sunday again, so I'm writing you a letter as I promised. Fourth letter in four weeks -- you should be receiving the first one anytime now, or perhaps you'll be receiving the one Clem says she left at the Embassy in Pretoria. It's a shame you didn't get that one, because it was long and covered a lot of information that I took for granted you had gotten, like the passing away of Domingo's mother. Besides, I wrote it when I was very angry, I was sick but had not yet been interned in the hospital. Well, maybe you'll get it someday.

Anyway, it's been a slow week, the last one of my long sick leave. I'll be definitely returning to my workplace again -- for how long? Do you know? I don't, and hope to be hopping out of there soon. 16 years are too many in one same place. I have made some contacts, but decided to wait a bit & see if the video & the doctorate projects are feasible before I go. I'll keep you informed of my moves.

Last Friday was Mom's birthday: 79 by her count. Thanks to my having sold the old jalopy, I was able to give her a good party & some household presents (glasses, coffee cups & pots & pans). She was happy. She deserved at least that small family get-together: after all, she's still the hub of the whole family -- for how long?

Most of the jalopy dough will go into buying a 2nd hand computer -- a slow one, but enough for me. I have several commitments that I would not be able to fulfill without a computer at home. Second priority: my spectacles -- the last pair broke last June.

There's a new tenant living with us at home now. Abel my son calls me last week to inform me that his cat (a strange cat that's never left the apartment or had sex or run after a lizard) had just attacked his mother's husband. Well, what did you expect? The poor cat is neurotic. So, of course, "Dad, could you help us out of this one? Could you take the cat?" I thought: "God must be punishing me, for having laughed at Phyllis about Flower."

Of course I kept one of the packs of envelopes you bent to CEAMO! Otherwise, how would I have been able to write to you?

Of course, I take the cat in. He doesn't like me, and the feeling is mutual. I have to get fish for him + he's spoiled, that's all he eats. There's just one rule I establish: he can't come into the house. So I build him a small cat house on my front ~~porch~~ terrace. He's been here for three days, and I think he's feeling at home already. Only problem is you can't leave the door open, or he'll sneak into the house, and then it's hell getting the bugger back out. Well, we're learning to live with that.

The long winter is finally ending. Temperatures rise, the sea is calm and transparent, and everything shines with an intense light. Only hope next summer won't be as hot as the last.

The week's highlights? Well, your call. I talked so long that I later realized it must cost you a fortune. But it was good to hear your voice, even if I hardly let you speak. I had just fallen asleep, so I must have been more incoherent than usual.

Another highlight was Miguel's call. I wasn't home, so my mother took the message: he had promised to visit me, and was more determined than ever to do it when he learned that I was sick, but his bike had a flat tire (punctured, I think that's how Brits say it) and as soon as he fixed it he would be coming. That's Miguel for you.

Do you have a good map of KwaZulu/Natal? It would be good to locate the most accessible rock paintings and nearest to Durban. In an article I sent me there are some place-names: Cathedral Peak, Giant's Castle, Drakensberg Gardens, Bushman's Nek... I have no idea for how far away from Durban, or how difficult to get there could be. Now, this is something we don't need right away, only once we're sure we'll be going to Durban.

Guess what? I just got a phone call: I'll have my computer tomorrow!! I'll have to turn Abel's room (he hardly ever sleeps there) into a computer room.

Walt is back to work after having a tough week with the hernias in his spine. I invited him & his wife to dinner last week to celebrate my selling the jallopy. As soon as I get the computer we'll be using every spare minute to write the book we promised to the Spanish editorial house. I think it's going to be a good book.

How's your book coming along? Who's publishing it? And how are your legal advisory activities? Let's work a lot, but not let work deprive us of all the other necessary things in life.

Love,
David

