1 August 1965: A day of letter-writing for the most part. At 7 to the second Mass of the day. There I observed Rich Dresen, now uncertain in his gait at 83, but still stubborn, for as he came down the north aisle he refused until he could refuse no more to take the seat the usher offered him -- and took it only because there was no other. Fr. Kalscheuer retold once more the story of Job in his brief sermon, but with considerable moderation over his telling two years ago.

In late afternoon and early evening took the family for a ride west — through the Skunk Hollow, Witwen, Denzer, Leland, the White Mound Pocket and hills, past the old Gelhaus home and the homestead site, through Plain, Wilson's Creek, up Highway 60, and via the Genz Pocket home, under sun and cloud-shadow, counting 10 fields of shocked oats in a distance of 60 miles — many more of them either not yet cut or combined. Observed also en route -- the golden spires of mullein in bloom in upland country -- the blue stalks of blue lobelia in lowland areas -- the masses of wild bergamotte everywhere -- the ironweed in bloom in various places — the great numbers of redheaded woodpeckers, mature and immature, along the roadsides -- the cloud vistas bright with sunlight jutting over hilltops and woods with singular effectiveness.

Home by 7:30 and again to work.

Learned today that Mrs. Slim Henning -- a vicious gossip and complainer — had one night recently sent the local police around to stop the proprietors of the Bee-Zee Shopright Market from completing their work on the score that they were maintaining a nuisance. "And were they trying to sleep?" asked Leroy Lamberty, who gave me the details. "Hell, no! They were walking up and down the streets." I opined that someone ought to have called the police on one or another of the occasions of the Hennings' noisy quarrels. From another source heard that the Hennings were asking $22,000 for their house (bought at $5,000), but expected to buy Rose Becker's superior house for $6,000! 'Twas ever thus!

2 August 1965: This morning just after sunrise into the marshes by way of the railroad tracks. A morning of fog and dew, with the fog lifting as I went across into the marshes, and settling back again as I turned at the second Brook Trestle, which had been widened, and the tracks cleared of grass and soapwort and everything else that grew. Many birds cried and sang -- a cardinal on the telegraph wire as in April, chimney swifts foraging over the river, swallows collecting autumnally on the wires, pewees, wood thrushes, flickers, goldfinches, a myrtle warbler in one place, song sparrows, a tufted titmouse, a towhee, crows -- as always, catbirds -- and flowers were at their peak of bloom, with wild clematis sprung into bloom everywhere along the embankment, and the tapers of wild balsam apple, thousands upon thousands of them, crowning the bushes and undergrowth at the Brook Trestle, lighting up the woods, as it were, with many orange jewelweed in flower beneath. Dogbane crowded upon the Spring Slough, now unseasonably low, and the first Joe Pye weeds stood in blossom, and Beaumont's root, and the last Steeplebush or meadowsweet, evening primroses, horsemint, wild bergamotte, spiceberries, the first wild sunflowers, buttonballs -- all dewpearled -- and wild mint, all filling the air with their delicate perfumes, so that the morning was almost intolerably fragrant, enhanced by the sunshot mists and heightened by the dew.

I asked Tom Hill this morning whether he had ever read ~~THE~~ An American Tragedy. "Read it?" he answered. "I'm living it." -- a reference to the difficulty of living with Eileen.

Prof. Karl Paul Link wrote today re my notes about the postal service. "The Postmaster General talks and writes about over-night service. This winter when Mrs. Link had to go to Miami, I kept track of the mailings. All air-mail. Some took four, once five, none less than 3 days. Locally it is not unusual for a first class item to be posted before 5 PM on a Wednesday that reaches the receiver on Friday. So I say Mr. G. is full of gall, he is very ignorant, and conclude he's just a politician."

In mid-evening, not long after sunset, to walk the Genz Pocket with Pete Blankenheim. The night was mellow, a waxing moon lay low in the west, above a mounting bank of clouds, crickets sang, and a barred owl called from time to time. Much talk, as usual. "Ninety percent of traffic fatalities can be laid to the courts," said Pete. "Drunken drivers and teen-agers arel let off too easy!" The air was fragrant with corn and mare's tail pungence.

Though there had been much publicity again today about unidentified flying objects seen aloft, I looked in vain for one, saw not even a satellite -- only the stars dimming before a high drift of clouds and a bank of dark cloud pushing up to engulf the moon and Mars and Spica, now only about four degrees apart below the moon, forming an irregular triangle in the western heavens before the cloud bank overtook them. Pete animated, as usual, holding forth on his favorite subjects -- doctors, priests, the encroaching of the population, the foreseen doom of open country, though we might not -- happily -- live to see it.

3 August 1965: Hall's Rexall Drug Store was broken into during the night and his stock of narcotics taken; the front bolt had simply been filed through, evidently with an instrument designed for that purpose, brazenly, by professionals convinced, as one local put it, "that the police of these small towns are mainly traffic cops." The event excited a good deal of conversation down town today, eclipsing the small fact that Yvonn Schmitz Rosa had "taken her husband back" leaving her divorce action open, pending his "good behavior" though, as Zimmy, her uncle, put it, "He ain't been the same since that accident -- he's been nervous and drinking. Now if he keeps on drinking too much she'll go through with the divorce."

Learned today that John Bormann had been expelled from school because Douglas Fredericks, the principal -- a martinet since resigned -- had not "liked" his haircut. John had told him that he, for his part, didn't like Fredericks' wife's haircut either, for all that either opinion was worth, which, I thought, was a fitting answer to the principal's blockheadedness.

Dennis Mack came out for his second day of work this afternoon -- a tow-headed, handsome lad of 15, slight of build, but well-built, who professed to be interested in the work, and did his best to learn, and came in very handily today, since 3,400 copies of Dagon and Other Macabre Tales came in early this afternoon, and we began shipment at once, managing to ship almost all the 200 plus copies on order, save those sent from the plant -- an additional hundred. He seemed to me to carry in his appearance somewhat more of his mother, Mercedes Roessler, than of his father, Hilary Mack.

This evening to take the family for a ride -- down the Yellowbanks Road, into Mazomanie, where I paused at Utpatels, finding Sandra at home before she set out later this month for London and ultimately a year of teaching in Turkey, thence along 14 to the cutoff to 19, along 19, and the Old Settlers Road to the Dunlap Hollow Road, and thence over Minette's Hill home -- an evening of sun and cloud, with the musk of flowering corn, the fragrance of alfalfa, the pungence of mare's tails invading the car from time to time, and ever and anon the sweet smell of cut hay drying. Then later, went alone to see Goldfinger at the Midway -- a film I found preposterous but entertaining. So home and to work until Rikki came for a romp in the studio and went off again, leaving me to work until midnight. So to bed, with a light rain falling outside.

4 August 1965: Woke to another day of sun and cloud, another day of shipping books, though today we caught up at last.

To the library in late afternoon to check over 200 or more books removed from the shelves by the women in charge of relettering and renumbering, finding among them non-fiction they had taken for fiction, and books which ought to remain on the shelves in no matter what condition. Effie Bachhuber said later that she had found Consider Your Verdict among them, and had restored it to the shelves, since no one had known that it was my book. Billy Kirschner, who had a library science degree, quite naturally went "by the book" and not by any knowledge, never having been a genuine reader of books, and thus lacking any adequate frame of reference, which seems to be an occupational lack, curiously, among library science "experts". However, only about ten percent of the books were salvaged.

Denny Meng out to work tonight, and with him after work to walk the Genz Pocket -- a night of the moon near first quarter, and a soft south wind blowing, neither too warm nor too cool, one not given to mosquitoes, but rather to katydids and crickets, and occasionally an owl calling out of the bottoms -- a great horned owl. The air was redolent with the aroma of corn in blossom, and the musk of the bottoms, and the wonderful fragrance of the fields and roadsides, begun to be permeated by the pungence of mare's tails. Walked so for half an hour and then returned home.

5 August 1965: Into Madison today, Rikki driving, taking Dennis Mack, so that Dennis could get his social security number. Since we went at noon, went directly to the Simon House for lunch -- an experience for Dennis, as it had been for Rikki five years ago, Dennis too having his first shrimp cocktail, and liking it. Thereafter myself briefly to shop, picking up an Alec Wilder record at Victor Music, and learning via telephone to WHA the name of the curious Impromptu for Six Woodwinds played over WHA two nights ago, heard while riding with the family. Thence to the Social Security office. En route, passed Irving Court, taking note of the desolation there, as the wreckers prepared to complete the destruction of the remaining buildings -- among them the Irving Apartments, on the ground floor of which I had eaten many a meal when the Irving Cafeteria and Restaurant functioned during my years (1926-30) -- particularly the earlier years, at the University of Wisconsin. The block looked stark, with the life gone out of it. At the far end, the University Club still stood, and would remain-- all else was destined to be leveled.

Hastened home in early afternoon, the heat and humidity being intense, and, leaving Dennis off at his home -- he having a cold -- changed to swimming trunks and went into the Wisconsin, sending Rikki north to the Cliff Kohlmann farm for the children who came presently together with Vicki, Jean, and Steven Kohlmann, and Shawn O'Leary, and came ribbing down the sandy beach and into the water, delighted to be in the Wisconsin. Snuffy Manon came down the beach presently and beckoned me over to talk to an appraiser he had with him; he said he was intending to sue the state in re the destruction of the beach when the new bridge went in -- beginning in September, and wanted to know how long it had been used. I opined for close to a hundred years, having been swimming here myself four decades. The water very pleasant, and the beach crowded with Manon's tourists.

6 August 1965: To swim again today, despite a heavy mail, which included an order for 59 Casebook of Solar Pons for the New York Public Library -- an inquiry about German and British rights to the Pons quintet -- a letter from Morrell Gipson about her concept of the anthology of psychic tales on which I was at work, one which varied so widely from mine that I halted all work on it immediately, called Rikki off the typescript, and set him again at the Lovecraft letters -- a clipping from the Concord Free Press, reproducing that part of my column dealing with our visit to Concord -- the customary plaintive letter from Joseph Payne Brennan -- and an amusing note from Dorothy Guilday. But a cool wind blew, and clouds covered the sun, and last night's rains had cooled the Wisconsin that was yesterday so pleasantly warm; so, though the children enjoyed it heartily, I myself did not stay in long. A group of tourist children from Illinois had discovered that I wrote books for youngsters, and were all now about reading one or another of them; they asked me questions about writing books to satisfy a natural curiosity.

Late tonight with Forrest Hartmann to walk the Genz Pocket road -- once when clouds still covered the moon, though Mars and Spica, now scarcely two degrees apart, shone from under a bank of clouds -- and a second time when, after riding through the Diehl-Von Behren Pocket across the Mosemann ridge through the Badger Valley -- when the moon had come out, and the fragrant south wind had gone down, giving the many mosquitoes free play. On both occasions the musk of corn and the pungence of mare's tails was very strong in air, and the fragrance of cut alfalfa, too, along the field where it grew. Passed Rikki and Mary Ellen, on their way to Susie's for a moonset idyll. -- Much talk about human adjustments, sexual freedom, and the like, so that two hours passed very pleasantly and swiftly.

Rikki in very late. He and Mary Ellen Schwarz had decided to "try again" -- an attempt made easier by a happily libidinous night together, for the dawn was, in fact, coming in. His pride was still needling him, but I repeated what I had told him more than once before -- heart before pride, but not before self respect; and in this case self-respect was not in jeopardy.

7 August 1965: Another day of overcast sky and brief showers, very humid, though no longer so oppressively hot . Ed and Kathy Burdulis and Harry and Mildred Cargas out, Harry to suggest doing a Twayne American Authors book on me, though I thought and said as much that the editors at Twayne would hardly consider me of sufficient importance or calibre for such a book. A lively discussion for somewhat more than an hour about the creative process, theology, mystic experience, my methods of writing poetry, the place of the artist in society, etc.

Harry Cargas suggested that he might ask at Twayne Publishers about the possibility of doing a study of me for their American Authors Series, to which I was not averse, though pointing out that I was scarcely significant enough to merit inclusion in the series. He still spoke of it on his way out.

Inez Weaver wrote today -- "At Bible School the preacher was to direct the singing and supervise the general teaching. He showed up just one morning and no one has seen him since. We now call him Pastor Useless."

John Bogni and Mary Ellen Rich out for most of the afternoon, John pursuing his manuscript proofing, Mary Ellen entertaining the children until we were ready to drive down to Pendarvis House in Mineral Point for dinner, picking up George Marx en route. A fine dinner, some lively conversation with Dean Mark and Mrs. Ingraham, and then we sped homeward through the lovely landscape, pausing at the House on the Rock -- closed for the evening just before our arrival -- to look at the valley below, and again in the Genz Pocket to walk a little there, in spite of the mosquitoes, while a storm approached from the west, though it did not reach us until we had got home, where we sat talking for an hour longer.

8 August 1965: A dark, dreary morning, with rain that began while the children and I were at the 7:30 Mass, and continued throughout the morning, making pools to stand in many places before the water could sink into the thirsty land.

Woke this morning to the sound of much mourning dove song -- more than I could recall having heard at any other time, and subsequently, driving out of the yard for the morning papers, I started up some seventy mourning doves from the pools of water standing in the driveway, where they were bathing or drinking or simply standing nearby in the road, surely not yet a migrating flock.

9 August 1965: Rikki in during the morning hours after a halcyon weekend spent with Mary Ellen Schwarz at a motel near Beloit. He said the two of them had come to an agreement to be married in the summer after his senior year, and hoped it would stand, and that no impulsive act on her part -- or his -- would spoil their plan. I hoped as much also.

A fine day of sunshine and moderate temperature, begun with a heavy mail -- including proofs of Country Places -- a visit from Frank Utpatel to pick up the dummy for Marcia Masters' Intent on Earth -- Dennis Mack out to work, this day outside, to resume the trimming and cutting Denny Meng had not finished, und so weiter. -- I found time to pause in the harness shop, in the day's early hours, when the shop was bright with sun, and again in afternoon, when it was redolent with the aroma of new lumber which had been delivered for him, including some cherry wood he expected to use on my manuscript cabinet. Hugh was still at work on the pieces of the set Carl Lachmund had ordered, but he sat to talk of the trivia of the day -- Bertha Becker's most recent stroke, and the expense of her illness, forcing Carl, who had retired from the lumber company, to go to work again in the canning factory -- of the difficulties which had forced Pete Blankenheim to seek relief in hospital -- of the rain, which had accumulated to two and a half inches in Sac Prairie.

In evening with Rikki to Baraboo to see What's New, Pussycat? a zany comedy burlesquing psychiatrists and psychiatry, and thereafter to walk the Genz Pocket in the beautiful, moonlit evening. In the west Mars and Spica went down, a light east wind blew, rustling the corn, which gave forth its musk into it, a spring cricket frog called, together with many crickets and katydids under the waxing moon high in the south, and, at the Ferry Bluff, a wood duck cried repeatedly. So home and, after a brief romp, to bed/ sleep.

10 August 1965: The morning mail brought in first news of The Pontine Dossier, a projected irregular "magazine" to be sent around to members of the Praed Street Irregulars, edited and published by Luther Norris, who had conceived the idea. Along with a print of the heading, designed by Henry Lauritzen in Denmark, came attractive seals for the PSI, designed by John Kohler, and the ominous conclusion of the editor, "I seriously doubt that your public will allow you to stop writing the Solar Pons adventures."

Lizzie Schluckabier's garden was aglow with sunflowers and hollyhocks today. They shone forth from well up the road in either direction, pointing up the drabness of the house, long needing a coat of paint. Among the flowers grew cucumbers.

A splendid day of moderate temperatures, a pleasantly cooling north wind, and cloudless sunlight. In evening took the family for a ride, going north toward Merrimac on 78, then by the south road past Devil's Lake through the park to Highway 12, and turning at Payne's Corners, went west, skirted Denzer, and came home by way of Skunk Hollow. The corn already showed the effects of the drenching 2½ inches of rain which had fallen generally all over the area on Sunday. Everywhere bergamotte stood at its height of flower. And almost all the oats were now either combined or in shocks. Everywhere, too, the rich, heady musk of corn in bloom. Wild sunflowers, Joe-Pye weed, white boneset, Beaumont's root, black-eyed susans -- these vied with bergamotte for the eye along the roadsides, but none exceeded the bergamotte in number. Out for an hour and a half, hearing all the old refrains, all the old directions, as Dad spoke of Fred Payne on the Highway corner, and John Payne on the inner corner of Stone's Pocket, of the corn in sandy soil, of frozen corn in low places, and drying leaves, of the wealth of pigs, and April counted horses, and both the folks recalled who had lived where as we rode through the scenes of their childhood and youth.

Ewald Blum -- now head of the Wisconsin tax office in Milwaukee -- stopped in for an hour or so tonight. He had grown more corpulent. He had been in town for a while, long enough to notice the many changes which had taken place. "I don't think I belong here anymore," he said with whimsical resignation. "Everything's changing." It would be more patent to one long away, but I agreed that changes were coming now with ten times the rapidity of their taking place three and four decades ago. Sat talking of the inevitability of change and the fittingness of death when change had come full circle. He had visited the family graves in Roxbury cemetery just at the hour of the matins ringing from the steeple of St. Norbert's -- "It seemed just right for that place then," he said. "The family's finally got a stone -- it took about fifty years since my sister's mother died, and thirty-two since mine died! But it's there at last." He sat talking until I was ready to go for a short ride by moonlight; but he would not go along, so I bade him farewell and went in to the harness shop, where Hugh was at work.

With Hugh to ride to the Ferry Bluff. A fog was rising rapidly in the meadows and bottoms along Highway 60 between the Wisconsin and the highway. In the west Mars and Spica hung, low in the heavens, while Saturn rose in the east, well to the left of the waxing moon, now nearing the full, and filling all the night with its wine-white glow. At the Ferry Bluff fish rose, a wood duck cried, crickets and katydids sang, but no other sound came to ear. So, reluctantly, home, where I showered and went to bed.

11 August 1965: At the Standard Station down town this morning, the zinnias arranged around the roadside post, were at their best -- a riot of colors, tall, bright, eye-catching, ringed round with a border of sweet alyssum in lavender.

The morning mail brought in a card from Keith Witwen, vacationing in Canada. "Finished supper of fresh caught lake trout. Last night walleye, Northern the night before. Wow!" A letter from Judge Gollmar: "We always do things by pendulum in America and we have swung very far in one direction and I suspect that we are about to start swinging back toward a more realistic approach to criminals."

Off at 8:30 for Milwaukee, taking the children, Rikki to drive. The day very fine, with low humidity, moderate temperatures, so that riding was cool but not chill. -- Observed everywhere in the landscape -- on hillsides, in groves in the lowlands, along the fence rows -- many dead trees: elms, oaks, and ash. -- The discourtesy of a Dane County Highway Department truck driver on the Waunakee road -- spurting forward when another truck attempted to pass, a discourtesy that somewhat balanced the frequent courtesy of Highway Department drivers in going offside to the shoulder to allow accumulating traffic to pass. -- The Waunakee marshes this morning were yellowing with goldenrod and wild sunflowers, though there were large patches of Joe-Pye weed in purple bloom, and many cattails to be seen. -- Many fields of newly cut hay -- clover, alfalfa, grasses. In one many chickens and birds of all kinds foraged, devouring something invisible to my eyes avidly. -- On the single lane portion of I-94, frequent slowdowns and stops by flagmen and officers, to permit trucks engaged in work on the uncompleted portion of the highway to cross the road, complicating traffic. Some of the officers on duty might better have been engaged in flagging to the shoulder trucks or abnormally slowly moving cars, in order to expedite traffic and prevent the frequent bottlenecks en route.

gamotte a very pleasant and exhilarating pungence. Indeed, the morning air was stimulating and fine, untainted here by the odor of any work of man. Saw in some places the first vetch abloom, and the first blackberries flowering. In another started up a whippoorwill from a bed of leaves, and found her nest there easily enough; two eggs lay there. The bird, the hen, clearly, did not fly far away, and always described a circle, coming to rest lengthwise on the limbs of fallen brush. As I described one arc of a circle around her nest, she described another, opposite, and so moved gradually back to her nest once more. In open places this morning fleabane was at its height of bloom, little patches of yellow daisies were in flower, and the small blossoms of blue and yellow star grass shone. Columbine stood everywhere in full bloom. -- Hunted only the north face of the hill, making a loop there of the most familiar area, and collected 15 morels -- most of them quite fresh, for the year's total of 1,586, almost twice last year's low take. In less than two hours back in the village for the mail.

With Mike Price -- sixteen today -- to begin clearing out the north side of the garage, so that Hildred might put her car there if she liked, while Mike's occupied the south side during our trek westward and back. An onerous task, not finished by the time it was necessary for him to come inside and pack books.

This afternoon with the children to Hilldale, so that they could be checked over by Dr. George Orsech, who came out to say how well satisfied he was with their progress -- and indeed, it was evident. Shopped briefly in Hilldale -- buying swimming trunks at the Hub, marshmallows at Gimbel's, and some briefs -- and then took out again for home, as the sky clouded over and rain impended, though it did not begin to fall until after six this evening.

George Marx, out this evening, lent a hand to packing for the trip west. Outside rain fell steadily. I saw that great pools had collected at the roadside when I took him home at 10:30.

3 June 1966: Rikki in at two A. M. for the night. Mary Ellen had called him, clearly to be solaced with his loving, and, he said frankly, they had made love for a couple of hours in my driveway -- not in his new car, however, which was awkward for that purpose, but in the old, he having exchanged cars for that purpose, and then, after taking her home, got into his new car to come out here. It was, he said, an altogether satisfactory evening, and appeared to have been highly pleasurable for her. Once, however, the loving was over, he could not help feeling depressed at her general inability to hold to the line, her flightiness and her irrational impatience.

Woke to a grey sky, though the rain had ceased to fall, and to the prediction for more rain today and tomorrow, for the first leg of our journey -- to Hannibal and St. Louis.

A grey squirrel this morning found the aspen outside the west window of the studio difficult and too smooth to come down readily. He slipped a little way, then clung, slipped again, clung again, and, at twelve feet or so from the ground, gave way and fell, landing unhurt but bewildered.

With Rikki early this evening in his new car to Deerfield, forty-five minutes from Sac Prairie, to deliver the address at the Commencement exercises at the high school. The Superintendent, Dean Wiseman, who had asked me to speak, turned out to be an onetime foe of Ken Poppy -- which accounted, no doubt, for my having been asked in the first place. Some talk about Ken in his office; he plainly shared my low opinion of him. Presently in came members of the Class of 1916, marking their 50th anniversary, and the Rev. E. J. Tetlie, an amiable, well preserved Lutheran minister -- who, however, subsequently rambled on considerably at the invocation, and the corpulent "Dr." Thomas Lyle, a veterinarian, president of the Board of Education, and some others. In to the auditorium at eight, finding the stage as hot and uncomfortable as Cambria's stage last year, and in good time delivered my address, which did not sound as good at this fifth or sixth delivery as it had sounded at first, and which seemed to me to take too long. But in an hour and twenty minutes all was over and done with, and I made a ready escape, and rode home with Rikki in the same time it took us to come, my eye fixed on the rising moon, great and orange-yellow, still looking full, following it among the trees, behind barns, sheds, houses, around and above hills, until home was reached. So to bed with Rikki, pleasantly.

Rikki and I -- with some help from the children -- completed cleaning out the north side of the garage today -- and what a cleaning out was necessary! Dad had, clearly, all the instincts of a pack rat, for he filled every can, pail, and cigar box with everything he collected -- nails, staples, bits of string, pieces of rope, old tools, paint brushes, screws, nuts, boltsm pieces of wire -- everything, in fact, that he could conceive of possibly having a use for. Most of it was simply too much for me; I ordered it all put with the trash for collection. Discovered, too, that Dad had been in the habit of ~~#~~ caching his chewing tobacco in his electric saw! -- for we came upon what remained of a package of it he had forgotten there. "He never fooled me a bit!" cried Mother.

4 June 1966: Up at five, and after breakfast, set out an hour later on the first leg of our trip to California. Rikki began in fine fettle, but it was all too soon apparent that he was tired and, worse, sleepy, which kept me needling him and trying to keep him awake. Finally, at Maquoketa, Iowa, he rallied, got his second wind, as it were, and went forward with more assurance. -- The day was clouded over at home, but south of Dubuque the sun shone. -- Aspects of riding through the countryside -- the oldness, the quaintness, the charm of the old parts of Dubuque and Ft. Madison in Iowa, their old buildings and great old trees bespeaking age beyond memory -- the changing face of the land: from late spring to summer -- here, in southern Iowa and northern Missouri, lilacs were done blooming; instead, last bridalwreath, hawthorn, elderberry, black haw at their height of flower, with pennies, sweet rocket, calamus, roses abloom -- the fragrance of hay from many fields, cut and drying, some being baled and loaded -- the perfume of multiflora roses used as hedges along many roads -- the locust trees in full blossom -- the dreadful condition of U. S. 61 south of Dubuque and to Maquoketa -- and the upcurved roadsides in both Iowa and Missouri, the infertile inspiration of some eunuch in the highway department, an actual danger to the motorist.

Arrived at Hannibal just before one o'clock, and went to eat lunch, then to the Becky Thatcher Book Shop to buy some souvenirs and also some postcards, then to the famous cave now named, of course, "The Mark Twain Cave" and thoroughly commercialized. But the cave itself, when at last we got into it behind a young guide who played up to the children, much to Walden's delight, resisted commercialization -- it was as impressive to me today, in the 45 minutes we took to walk through the central passageway, as it had been in 1953, when I first saw it. Being lost in its darkness could indeed be a terrifying experience. The guide made the most of it, adding a good deal of nonsense and legend obviously made up to be ~~#~~ fed to the gullible, including the tale of Jesse James' hiding in the cave, and conveniently leaving his name and the date inscribed on stone -- as farfetched a story as one could possibly dream up, with the help of an enterprising soul who inscribed Jesse's name. Almost as impressive as the cave were the giant sycamores around the entrance, one tremendously big, old tree, easily three hundred years old, directly down from the mouth of the cave. The temperature inside was 52 degrees, and outside some thirty degrees higher, with a few raindrops coming down when we went in, and the sun shining when we came out. The rock formations, the deep pits, the side passages (all adding up to six miles of cave), the deeply figured ceiling of the cave all added together to make the experience of going through the cave a memorable one. The children were not likely to forget it, and more than I had forgotten my first venture into it, which accounted for today's walk through it -- though I could little appreciate much of the fake lore the guide somewhat whimsically handed out, as if he could not help doing so.

From Hannibal back to Highway 61, and thence rapidly, at 70 miles an hour for most of the way, down to I-70, and in along it and 270, and the 66-7 bypass directly to the Holiday Inn where we had reservations -- through country that was once again hilly and wooded; but indeed, the entire route down the Mississippi Valley was more or less hilly and wooded, pleasing to the eye, and until we reached the St. Louis area, comparatively little travelled. ... Dined, and to work, while Rikki and the children swam in one of the pools. Wrote some postcards, and then to bed with a new collection of poems by Philip Booth, in for review. The night outside slowly cooling.

5 June 1966: Up at six this morning and walked down to the Holiday Inn office for Sunday's St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which gandered through leisurely, looking at the comics and the pathetically little space given to books. Then again to walk down to the restaurant with Rikki and the children for breakfast, and away by a trifle after seven, bound for Oklahoma City. The day began with the moonset opposite the red sun rising, promising heat, though the morning temperature was under 70 degrees, and a wind blew coolly, making the morning very pleasant. Along the 66-67 bypass for 15 miles or so and then joined 66 and I-44, and sped rapidly southwestward.

Aspects of the countryside -- the muddy streams of eastern Missouri giving way to clearer streams west -- the hills, heavily wooded -- the Ozarks, with many sudden beautiful vistas looking down deep, far valleys -- yucca abloom, and a blaze of coronilla so intense that its slight fragrance was so multiplied and intensified as to reach us in the car going by; whole roadbanks were blue with it -- yarrow flowering -- some grain fields already ripe, soon to be cut -- catalpas in full bloom, and Shasta daisies in flower along the roadsides -- turkey vultures and hawks soaring high in the blue -- the tastelessness of far too many billboards advertising the Meramec Caverns ("Jesse James' Hiding Place"!) and the Onondaga Cave; the roadside landscape improved notably once these "wonders" had been passed by; I eschewed visiting either, since I concluded that anyone who could so despoil the landscape by such insistence upon advertising them every few hundred yards for miles could not possibly have any eye for natural wonder or beauty -- the sycamores, magnificent trees, some very old, standing out, others in little groups, younger -- what I took to be pecan trees -- Stuckey's candy shop-restaurants, tastefully arranged, offering a surprising amount of pecan candies and other delicacies made from pecans in part, as well as other inviting foods; I sent home pralines, quince jelly, fruit compotes in the course of stopping at three of them along the way -- blue vervain and black-eyed susans abloom in some places -- a tree of ripe red cherries -- syringas in flower -- the diminution of religious roadside billboards: "Ye must be born again!" -- "Choose whom ye shall serve!" and so on -- the flaunting of a billboard calling for the impeachment of Chief Justice Earl Warren, put up by the neo-Nazi Americans of our time -- the plethora of cars from Illinois; at the St. Louis Holiday Inn this morning they were first in number, exceeding even Missouri cars; on the turnpikes they were second only to Missouri cars in Missouri, and Oklahoma cars in that state.

At Oklahoma City in late afternoon found the Holiday Inn without trouble, though the desk could not seem to recall having had reservations and confirmation of them, but assigned us to connecting rooms without demur. Rikki and the children immediately to swim in the pool, while I got to work, finding the rooms air-conditioned and very comfortable. After I had finished, took up Lorna Beers' new book to read for review, and, when Rikki and the children returned from their swim, we went down to dinner. The day ended in a pleasant interlude with Rikki, after the children had gone to sleep.

6 June 1966: Up before six, and by six with the family to breakfast in the coffee shop, where the service was something less than satisfactory. Bt 6:45 once again en route, our destination this time being Albuquerque, well over 500 miles away. The morning began under clouds -- a tornado had set down at Enid, well to the north of Oklahoma City, and the clouds still loured darkly overhead, for all that they were clearly dispersing. Driving west, we were soon in sunlight, and the temperature rose slowly, though the day remained far cooler than the last time -- in 1953 -- I had passed this way en route to Amarillo.

Aspects of the day -- the flat green country of Western Oklahoma -- the smell of ripe grain, some fields of it already cut -- the looming up of the grain elevators, so integral to this landscape, remembered so too from 1953 (April finally persuaded me to consent to Rikki's stopping the car, so that she could take three pictures of a grain elevator -- one from her knees) -- a kind of red painted daisy growing profusely along the roadside; I got out of the car and picked one to examine it -- the tree-bordered gulleys, cut through the prevailing red clay and sandstone, with most brooks at the bottom of deep gulleys, bearing witness to many flash floods --

the abundance of underbrush flowering a delicate lilac with a red cast, which proved to be nothing other than that much-admired bush at the end of Hugh's row of hedge honeysuckle! -- a prairie dog crossing the freeway, just safely -- buzzards and hawks in wheeling flight from time to time -- the chaparral-covered wasteland, stretching away as far as eye could see -- the magnificent mesa country beyond Adrian, ØXIAMØ Texas, presenting ever more challenging and often mysterious vistas to the watcher -- that strange inverbed bowl mesa called Tucumcari Mountain, seen for many miles from along the road, delighting the eye, and presenting one with some haunting mystery of its coming into being there -- wild sunflwwers in bloom -- a town named Moriarty in New Mexico (presumably some devotee of the canonical writings of Baker Street founded it) -- the looming mountains as one approached Albuquerque; these Rikki and the children alike found impressive, as were the long flat and rolling slopes of chapparal -- the road extension going on, designed to make Highway 66 a four lane highway for its entire length, which it was not now.-- the growth of Albuquerque to 300,000 people, which I thought incredible, remembering the city of 1953.

We were not long settled at the Holiday Inn, with Rikki and the children in swimming, when Scott Home called. He proved to be a tall young man (6'2"), who spoke with a slight s sound because of dentistry's altering the shape of his upper teeth in capping them with gold, and sat talking for an hour of his family background, Albuquerque, the commercialization of the pueblo at Acoma, the desert flora, and H. P. Lovecraft before he took his leave and left us to go to dinner, from which we returned very tired and ready for bed.

7 June 1966: Up at 5 for early breakfast and away at six o'clock, this cool morning, with the long shadow of the mountains still covering most of Albuquerque. Down the lengthy Central Avenue for miles, so that half an hour elapsed before we were out of Albuquerque and into the desert -- such as it was, one of sagebrush, mesquite, and ultimately chaparral. Albuquerque was so changed that I could recognize no part of it, though only 13 years had gone by since last I had seen the city.

Aspects of the day -- the rising sunlight on the mountain slopes, particularly in the redstone or red sandstone country -- sight of a green finch --- of a desert lark -- of a blackheaded jay -- the University of New Mexico buildings, all in frontier style, and good to look upon, passing by -- the red and purple of the hills and mountains -- some blossoms still of purple sage, mesquite, yucca -- a host offlowers I could not recognize -- the open range, with cattle scattered widely -- Thoreau, New Mexico, which must have been some early settler's Walden -- the Roadrunner Motel, which showed more originality and taste in its choice of name than any of a dozen "Sands" -- the magnificent red mountains beyond Bluewater State Park, brilliant with the sunlight on them -- the large wild growths of what the natives call tamarack or salt cedar //, which is the same bush as Hugh has growing at the rear of the harness shop -- pausing at the Painted Desert, where April took some color pictures, and at the Petrified Forest, both of which intrigued the children -- sand storms and sand spouts, caught up in whirlwinds and dancing across the desert -- snow on the mountains near Flagstaff, in Coconino County, Arizona, Krazy Kat country. After registering at the Holiday Inn there, went on up 180 to the Grand Canyon, and here at last Rikki and the children were properly impressed as not before during the journey west, for the canyon, seen from the heights next the road during a period of sunlight and cloud shadow made an unforgettable impression on us all. April took a dozen color photographs, and Rikki could hardly tear himself away from the sight. I watched a crow busily secreting some food in a niche/ in the stone face of the cliff below, unconcerned with us and other watchers, before he drifted out high over the canyon once more. We remained at the canyon only half an hour, but a day or two could not have made more of an impression on us. So back to the Holiday Inn for dinner and the evening. Observed en route in bloom iris (L. missouriensis), mountain penstemon (Penstemon Newberryi), nolina (Nolina Parryi), quinine bush or cliff-rose, creosote bush (Larrea divaricata)and jumping sholla.

8 June 1966: At six this morning off for Hollywood by way of the Oak Creek Canyon Road, alternate 89, an extension of 89 92 miles long, which, it turned out, because of the intricacies of the road down into the canyon and up through the mountains on the far side, took us 2½ hours to drive. Nevertheless, it proved to be one of the most pleasurable and revealing aspects of the entire journey, specifically because this one stretch of road was nothing less than the entire southwestern United States in miniature -- the canyon, though not a replica of the Grand Canyon, was nevertheless impressive; its walls were for the most part tree-grown, but it too was very deep, and the road that wound down into it revealed breathtaking vistas at almost every turn, and debouched finally on a forest road that followed Oak Creek down through Coconino County National Forest, past redstone formations that were not at all less than those seen along the freeway coming to Flagstaff yesterday. It passed finally through the town of Sedona, which seemed to me certainly a paradise for artists, for at every hand it was possible to see landscape without parallel, with striking stone formations upthrusting into blue sky, most of them red, wind-shaped, ancient in appearance. Moreover, this area seemed to be somewhat behind in flowers, for here many yucca were in blossom, both the common Yucca schidigera or Mohave yucca, and the Yucca baccata, here were Joshua trees, both in bloom and otherwise barren, and finished blooming and showing green along the long slender branches, reaching spider-like out of the desert, many Yucca Whipplei (Our Lord's Candle) and, most striking of all, century plants or maguey or agave (Agave deserti), rising from the mountain slopes in barren places -- a plant of bracts of composite flowers in yellow and carmine, some plants being the one color, others the other, but all striking in that landscape. Beyond Sedona lay, high up on the face of a mountain, the ghost town of Jerome, now being reinhabited, through which steep, hairpin streets led the highway ~~[illegible]~~ to the mountain top, offering many breathless views of the valley we had quitted, between Jerome and Sedona, visible far off, like a mirage in the desert. Save for the Grand Canyon, this drive was the best by far of the entire journey west, one we did not regret being delayed in passage to make. Also seen abloom, in addition to blossoms seen yesterday, were winter fat (Eurotia lanata), which I first mistook for seedheads, which its woolly flowers resembled -- wild four o'clocks (Mirabilis Froebelii), -- fremontia or flannel bush (Fremontia californica) -- some last prickly pear -- giant saguaro -- yellow saucers (Malacothrix sonchoides) -- purple sage -- red penstemons (Penstemon utahensis) -- goldenhead (Acamptopappus Schockleyi) --viguerea (both a bright yellow) ~~[illegible]~~ making a brave show in terrain one would not have thought could support their growth, let alone the flourish of blossom.

But after the Oak Creek Canyon road came the desert, many miles of it, growing increasingly hot beyond Indio, but then at last cooling, only to find it necessary to pass through a sandstorm strong enough to pit my windshield! As in Sedona and the Oak Creek Canyon area, oleander and sumac stood abloom, and trumpet vines increased in nummber, putting me in mind of Grandmother Volk's two oleanders in tubs, which had to be moved into the basement late each fall and out again in spring, the Wisconsin winter being too cold for them. Both in the canyon and beyond, too, pink locust abounded, growing wild everywhere, and beyond, on the desert, the Joshua tree and the saguaro were predominant. On the desert many vultures coursing the roadway, as in search of food, of which dead jackrabbits and other small animals supplied some. Palm trees made their appearance, and the foliage began to change. Approaching Hollywood, April caught sight of her first jacaranda tree in full bloom, and soon saw many.

Reached the Hollywood Hawaiian without difficulty, and in advance of the freeway rush at four. The Hawaiian proved to be a residential hotel, evidently devoted to elderly people, for very few of them were in evidence either at our arrival or later on. Once settled in, the children and Rikki went immediately into the pool, and I went to shop at Mattson's and the Pickwick Book Shop, on my return finding Dick Bachhuber here with roses for April, and the evidently clear intention of staying. So with him presently to the house he shared with Stanley Berger on Creston Drive, an attractive one surrounded with flowers, and had dinner there, staying until the darkness had fallen and the lights of the city gleamed on all sides. So home and

to bed

9 June 1966: Walked to Hollywood Boulevard this morning with the family and found the same Coffee Dan's restaurant which had so often served us in 1953; there had breakfast. The service was still good, though the restaurant no longer remained open all night as it had then, but closed at eleven, opening at seven every morning. It was still crowded, but at this hour at least it was not the rendezvous of the young male homosexuals, as it had been in 1953. After a sound breakfast all around, back to the apartment and to the car, and off for Fred Schroyer's place in Monterey Park, which found despite a delay occasioned by going the wrong way. Fred, Pat and Madeline were waiting, but I had now to make some telephone calls -- to Cousin Jessie, to Sonia Lovecraft, to Cousin Bea Kitch, and only then was I ready to go. So followed Fred, who had the children in his car, to the Santa Ana Freeway, and on to Disneyland, where, once the Shroyers were off with the children to ride, and ultimately to return to Montery Park, leaving the children with us, I indulged in people watching. Disneyland itself was overwhelmingly big; I rode the monorail train around it, but I thought it, however ingenious, no more than a glorified carnival, and, just as its size was much inflated, so its prices were, too, so that the profit was all the more for the management. A great many college students were employed here -- one as a quick sketch artist, to whom I talked at length while he sketched me, one as a guide, and so on. A cartoonist had set up his desk near a building housing the history of animation, which I went through leisurely; he was on leave from a shop for the summer months, because he could make more money here than at his winter work. People were everywhere, and by the thousands, constantly trudging back and forth, moving from one area to another, most of them accompanied by children, but few of them looking as weary as I felt.

At 5:30 back to the car with the children and Rikki, and off for Knott's Berry Farm not far away. Here all was the same -- save that the price per meal had gone up, and the service was limited to a plate of food -- not all one could eat, as in 1953; yet there was no dearth of people, cars filled the parking area, and buses -- ten or more every half hour -- brought loads of people who debouched into the area. The dining-rooms were always full, yet no one stood in line waiting. After a delicious chicken dinner, topped with boysenberry pie, I went around to buy some jelly for shipment home, and some fresh fruit -- boysenberries and strawberries -- to be eaten at the apartment. So home, reaching there before dark, very tired.

Aspects of Hollywood -- the typical smell of that city, very probably rising from its foliage and flowers -- the jacaranda trees, fairly numerous, rising blue in many places; I observed this visit for the first time that they carry large seed pods, not unrelated to those of the bladder-nut -- the palm trees, tall against all horizons, and so different from the midwestern landscape -- the comparative lowness of the city buildings; few tall buildings break the skyline, so that one seldom has the feeling of being in a large city -- the singular number of Mustangs about on the streets; evidently here the Mustang is the "in" car -- the various offtrail characters on Hollywood Boulevard, not alone the homosexuals and the kooks, but various lost souls outlandishly dressed and clearly isolated from their fellowmen -- the notable expansion of the Pickwick Book Shop, now occupying triple its 1953 space.

10 June 1966: A week gone by on the western venture, and another day spent at Disneyland, though this one was less long, less tiring. I took no rides, and we reached there in late morning, having first taken breakfast at Coffee Dan's, and then shopped, myself buying two more slipover shirts, Rikki one. I sat down closer to the entrance this time, in the shade and a cool place close to the central Plaza, though I got up now and then to walk around -- into Fantasyland, Frontierland, and Tomorrowland -- but always returned to the place I had chosen. For some time conversed with a retired public instruction official, a pleasant woman, visiting from Virginia; she had broken her ankle some time ago and, being heavy, did not want to overwork it, so allowed her three friends -- "We grew up together, and this is the first visit we've had with one another in over thirty years!" -- the one having moved to California -- to go on for themselves while she waited; she spoke of her life, not ill-pleased with it, but fearful of falling into a rut and simply vegetating until she died. She said they were visiting briefly in Wisconsin on their way back, one of the ladies having a son now

employed there -- "I can't think of the name of the city" -- and they had traveled for the most part by train, "the Santa Fe --- and they put us in a rear car, and how we switched from side to side, except on the special trip up into the Grand Canyon" but expected to go part of their way now by bus. We talked until her friends returned from the Tiki hut, and then they went on their way with the air of having fulfilled another part of their mission west. They were all but one, I saw, well fleshed women, not overly fat, but very plump, and all in late middle age, from 65 to 70. With the children and Rikki, showing up finally at 2:30 to go into Frontierland to lunch, and found ourselves next to a Dixieland jazz band, which played, among other things, the Joe Turner Blues -- a lively, pleasant, and able band of players which vied with the standard bands and German orchestras elsewhere in the grounds. Neither expense nor effort has been spared in Disneyland to make of it -- for all that it is a grandiose county fair -- the most successful of its kind, and the cleanest -- hundreds of young and middleaged men having been hired and uniformed and sent around to pick up refuse discarded by visitors, and to follow the horse-drawn carriages about, for there was never any evidence that the horses performed any bodily functions whatsoever. Moreover, the planting of flowers was lavish, and the tending of them no less so, for the place blossomed at every hand -- with marigolds and oleanders, with roses and crysanthemums, with geraniums and jacarandas, with jasmine -- a bush of which flowered close to where I sat, surrounding me from time to time with a cloud of delicate fragrance -- and every kind of seasonal blossom. At three o'clock home, through heavy traffic -- back to Hollywood, where I shopped a little more, and then read the evening papers, while Rikki and the children went to swim.

At 6:30 with Dick Bachhuber and Stanley Berger and two young women to Kowloon's for a chop suey dinner -- but Kowloon's was now hardly recognizable; it had been transformed from an intime little Chinese restaurant serving superlative Chinese food to a popular commercial establishment, filled with Chinese glitter, and serving largely Cantonese food, with the concomitant and expected reduction in quality, though it was still acceptable -- canned pineapple, for instance, replaced fresh pineapple in their pineapple shrimp dish, and the like. They had expanded, a waitress said in answer to my question about nine years ago. After dinner directly back to the Hollywood Hawaiian, and in for the night.

11 June 1966: Decided this morning to avoid the weekend crowds at Disneyland and remain in Hollywood -- so took a late breakfast and then went up and down the boulevard to shop, Rikki and I both buying some shirts, and then dividing -- Rikki and the children going to see The Trouble with Angels, some tyical Schmalz about nuns and convent school education, while I went around to see Malcolm Willets of the Collectors' Book Shop on Wilcox Avenue, where I picked up some titles and a few magazines, including the first issue of a new magazine devoted to comic art. Much talk of magazines, back numbers, comic books, Arkham House books, and the like. Then to join the rest of the family at a theatre well down Hollywood Boulevard, and with them until the picture ended, after which we walked leisurely back to the apartment.

By cab in late afternoon to Bob Bloch's home on Sunset Crest Drive. "The Los Angeles cab drivers," our driver assured us, "are the most courteous in the world; they have to be -- they don't know where they're going." He demonstrated the fact, for we were soon astray -- as it turned out, immediately over the crest of a hill from 2111, but without an access road, making it necessary a) to consult the map repeatedly; b) to enlist the help of two fire department officials, who did not know either where it was but eventually led us to it. Nevertheless, saw a good deal of the environs -- all winding roads and closepressing houses surrounded by flowering bushes and trees in what is clearly the pattern of Hollywood domestic living. Bob's home -- or really, his new wife Elie's -- proved to be handsomely apportioned, but so is his wife, Elie, a handsome big-eyed, wide-mouthed, pale-skinned woman with an undeniable attraction for me; she moved around in a floorlength gown, serene, confident, self-assured and unobtrusive, save only as she had to fulfill her obligations as a hostess, while Bob shone, clad in a brown smoking-jacket, his usual jesting, amiable self. The party proceeded as custo

to

tomary with such events -- with drinks, food, and the constant flow of new arrivals and departures. Among those present were Ferde Grofe -- still suffering a little the effects of a cerebral some time ago, and ensconsed in a large chair in the middle of the room -- A. E. and Mayne Van Vogt, Sam and Florence Russell, Sam Peeples and his wife, Forrie Ackerman and his ex-wife, Wendayne -- now 9 years divorced and still running around together -- he clad to the hilt in evening clothes, cummerbund and all, Jose Philip Farmer and his attractive wife, Tom and Terri Pinkard, Hal Curtis, Al and Mrs. Germeshausen, Bob's agent, Molson, and a goodly company of others, with many of whom talked about books and writing, though I eventually gravitated to the side room where luncheon was laid out -- lavishly, and partook of it. All this time the children and Rikki either sat watching television in a back room, or, when Walden was uneasy about a horror program, he came out and talked with members of the party. All together, the children made an enchanting impression on everybody, and all too soon the party itself came to an end. We left with Ackermans, and drove on over to his home, which he had turned into a veritable museum of science fiction, monsters, and horror, with robots, rubber monsters, photographs, and the like scattered all about, and every conceivable space, including the bathtub, filled with books, files of magazines, photographs, and related objects. We had hardly begun a t our of the house when two little boys showed up at the door asking to "see the Wizard" -- such Forrie's reputation in the vicinity. He assured us that the children came from miles around to look at his "horror or monster museum" and took a great deal of pride in the achievement of massing so much desiderata of horror in one place; small wonder there was no room for Wendayne! The children went wide-eyed through the house, but in twenty minutes we were off once more, this time bound for the Pinkard home, not very far from the Hollywood Hawaiian, and there we remained only half an hour or so, long enough for me to lunch again, and then we were off, Tom Pinkard driving us, for the hotel, where the children went to sleep immediately, and, after a pleasant interlude with Rikki, I followed, though he read for a while in magazines delineating the effectiveness of his new car. Soon to sleep.

12 June 1966: Up early so as to be ready for Dick Bachhuber when he came this morning at 8:45 to take the children and me around to the Diana Lynn Lodge in Sunland to pay a visit to Sonia Greene Lovecraft Davis, who sat in a wheel-chair near the entrance when we came in -- still a handsome woman at 85, with dark flashing eyes and a quick wide smile. She beckoned the children to her at once, under the eyes of other oldsters -- two old men, two women -- sitting on benches near the entrance, where we, too, sat to talk with Sonia, who went on again about Lovecraft -- as her most satisfactory lover, though there was now some question in my mind about her sureness of memory -- and about her desiring to appeal to men not physically but intellectually, as they appealed to her. Nevertheless, there was no denying her civilizing and broadening influence on Lovecraft, for his letters testify to it. We talked for fourty minutes or so, she with great animation -- of HPL, Davis, the lying innuendos of disparaging people about Lovecraft, her life with Lovecraft, their differences -- which were this morning not so clearly set forth as in her controversial piece on HPL, and then we took our leave, hastening back to the Hawaiian for Rikki, who was up and waiting for us. Thence out to Sherman Oaks, where found Cousin Jessie McLeod only just getting up, and Nancy likewise, though the hour was now 10:30. Nevertheless, in to the apartment to wait for them to finish getting ready, Jessie the while calling out from the kitchen that the turkey was ready, turkey being, as she made clear, "the least expensive meat you can buy", and Nancy flitting in and out, good to look at, animated and clearly attracted to Rikki, at which one could not wonder. Presently, however, we were off for Northridge and the park chosen for a picnic, near Bea Kitch's home -- Nancy traveling in Dick's car, myself with Jessie and Don -- Jessie taking the opportinity of Don's absence at a filling station to say that he was still philandering, but she didn't mind as long as he continued to support the family, und so weiter. At the park joined Cousin Bea Kitch and her children -- Greg, Jerry, and Juline -- Cousin Bea as attractive as ever, Cousin Della Whittemmore Sidall, and her husband, Don, both now showing their late middle age -- and after some talk and a round of photographs, sat down to

the picnic dinner -- of turkey, potato salad, fruit, juices, etc. From here it was necessary for me to leave at two o'clock with Dick for Roy Squires' place over in Glendale for another reception. Clyde Beck, Mal Curtis, and Lynn Watson were already present, and soon came others, among them Wilbur Smith, the librarian at the University of California Los Angeles, and Francois Jenest, who produced a suitcase full of sculpture he had made -- all very weird and most of them very well executed; he said he was about to cast them in bronze, and I asked him to send me photographs of them and a price list when he had finished doing so, for I meant to add some to my collection unless his prices were prohibitive. Finally came Ray Bradbury, volatile and vociferous; he sat down next to me on the davenport and immediately engaged in much talk, wishing I might be in town longer, und so weiter, and promising -- on learning that we were ready to set out for the children and Rikki -- to see us later. Some talk with Russ L. about Dwig, who had been his Pasadena neighbor, and about the books, which Wilbur Smith wanted for the library at UCLA, but for the most part the conversation was desultory and disconnected. Roy Squires himself proved to be a slight, slender man with a rather full but not long beard in a general Van Dyke, greying; he was soft-spoken, amiable, obviously eager to be of service. He seemed anything but aggressive. Here we stayed until 5:15; then I sped away with Dick to Jessie's apartment in Sherman Oaks, where we picked up Rikki and the children and came back to the Hawaiian.

Off presently with Roy Squires and Mrs. Watson for the Small World, an interesting restaurant on Cahuenga, within walking distance of the hotel, and there, after being made to wait -- despite reservations -- we enjoyed a delightful meal, each of us choosing a meal originating in some other country; I elected to eat teriyaki, which I found different and good. From the Small World around, following Roy's little Healy, to the Germeshausens -- a Morroccan home built in Hollywood in the early 1920's, up and above our hotel by six blocks by crowflight and fifteen or so of winding roads, very handsome, high-ceilinged, all of white stucco or crushed stone painted white outside and in, and filled with books in all its upper reaches, and handsomely appointed below. Here some fifty or more Pontine fans had already gathered for the investiture meeting of the Praed Street Irregulars -- among them Ray Bradbury, who with Mal Curtis had also been with us at dinner, and who had delivered himself of a scornful opinion of most modern plays of the absurd (Pinter, Ionescu, Beckett, et al), an opinion with which I agreed wholeheartedly -- Bob and Elie Bloch, A. E. and Mayne Van Vogt, Luther Norris and his wife (he the Lord Warden of the Pontine Marshes), the Pinkards, Charles Powers (heading the Si-Fan Club), Dr. Donald A. Reed (president of the Count Dracula Society), Mrs. Poul Anderson (who had flown down from San Francisco to pick up investiture documents for Tony Boucher, Poul, herself, and some other Bay area enthusiasts), many another. Soon after our arrival the "ceremonies" began, Al Germeshausen doing the honors, reading off a brief greeting -- reading telegrams from various people, including Stuart Palmer and Michael Harrison, persuading Terry Pinkard -- in Fritz Leiber's absence -- to read a poem Harrison had composed for the occasion, reading felicitations from Fred Dannay, Vincent Starrett, Nathan Bengis, and others, and then handing out the investiture documents. I observed with some dismay that the titles of the stories had been chosen as "names" rather than the names of characters, and that these titles included those of unwritten tales but mentioned in the text of the various tales. The whole affair had a certain quaint charm about it, like something that took place in a remote time and was viewed now through a glass darkly -- and audibly; and it had about it too a comic air, as if it were not quite real, and a trifle juvenile, though for everyone present, other than myself, it was an occasion for dressing-up, and tonight Al Germeshausen joined Forrie Ackerman in wearing a cummerbund -- but in sum, the whole effect was anything but serious, though I suspected that some of those present would in all good time come to take it so seriously as to slight the agent -- "The Agent" being the title with which I was duly invested, presented with a handsome document prepared by Jack Kohler. Thence to signing documents and books, and to lunch, and so presently home, Ray Bradbury riding part of the way with us. To bed, tired.

Learned today from Cousin Della that one of the principal sources of the typical Hollywood smell is the eucalyptus tree -- which I must certainly have known ere this, and forgotten; but the pungence is distinctive and all-pervasive.

13 June 1966: The day at and around the Hollywood Hawaiian. To breakfast in mid-morning, having left Rikki andthe children to sleep until eight o'clock, while I wrote letters and did other small tasks. Thereafter to the Big Boy clothes shop to buy some shirts, and then leisurely back to the hotel, where Rikki, April, and Walden went in to swim until dinner time, and the buying of some books carried on in the meantime. I stopped at the Cherokee, Gilbert's Book Shop, and Collectors'. After lunch at the Coffee Dan's near Grauman's Chinese, went to see Judith and The Silencers, but the latter was so bad that we walked out on it.

Along the rear wall of the Hollywood Hawaiian today some magnolia blossoms opened, spreading their wonderful perfume into the area -- a kind of sweet, lemony fragrance, very permeating, very strong. The tree, however, seems not to blossom all at once, but piecemeal, as it were, so that buds, blossoms, and seedheads occur together on the tree and lend it a kind of dishevelment, which the fragrance of the blossoms amply counters. Quite possibly an entire tree of blossoms would be overwhelming.

Dinner tonight again at the Small World -- but tonight all the meat was overdone, tasting overmuch of charcoal, quite dissipating the good impression of last night, since one could not know which was the fluke -- last night's meal or this. Talked for a while with a young artist, a follower of Delacroix and Rousseau, with no use for abstract art; he was pacing time working at the Small World's imported foods counter, which he need hardly have done were his sales good enough to keep him, or he not to independent to be supported for a while by some man or woman. So home and to pack against the morning's departure.

14 June 1926: After breakfast at Coffee Dan's off this morning at eight o'clock on the Hollywood Freeway and along 101, after a brief venture along Venture Boulevard, eschewing the longer Route 1 below Oxnard because fog obscured the ocean and the coast line in any event, and did so until we reached Santa Barbara, where it began to lift. At Santa Barbara some minor repairs to the car. I was told also that a pitted windshield, grille, bumper, and headlights ought to be replaced if insurance covered it, which I believe it did, though I did not much fancy laying up the car for that purpose. From the station went up into the city, and after some little difficulty found the old mission of Santa Barbara. But some changes had taken place here since last we visited. Now all doors were kept locked except for guided tours -- save those leading to rooms at which postcards, missals, pictures, statues, and the usual religious desiderata were for sale; time did not permit a guided tour, nor were many of us much interested; I had seen the place before, and to April, once she had taken a few pictures, the mission reduced itself to an old church, now thoroughly commercialized by the Franciscan fathers who were in possession. So back to 101 and on up toward the Monterey Peninsula. ... Observed in many places the effectiveness of state landscaping of roadsides, which were a blaze of flowers in all colors, and of all kinds. Saw also in many places orange groves -- tall yucca just beginning to come into bloom, increasing as we moved north -- curious areas of intense heat of close to 95 degrees, alternating with equally curious areas of temperatures from 65 to 70 degrees; though the former were almost universally in low areas in the mountains, and the latter closer to the coast, or in high places -- the flowering mountainsides, some of them masses of blossom as far as the eye could see, whether tree-grown or in chaparral. Presently, with the lifting of the fog, the rocky Pacific coast came into view and offered a series of unparalleled scenes of striking beauty -- of sea and sky and rock formations. Paused in one place, along the roadside north of San Simeon, to go down to the beach and walk among the kelp and seaweed and starfish at low tide, while Rikki and the children dared the cold water of the Pacific, wading out into it to knee-height at least, and taking pleasure in the waves, each of them getting a trifle more wet than he had planned. The tide seemed now to be coming in. After half an hour, resumed

our journey, detouring briefly into the San Simeon National Park, from which we could see the "castle" of the late William Randolph Hearst perched on a hilltop -- or, more properly, a mountaintop overlooking the Pacific; but the tours were divided into top storey and lower storey, and each took two hours, which was too discouraging for us; so, after lunching there briefly, went on up the winding highway along the coast, along steep cliffsides from which enchanting vistas opened up at every turn, both ahead of the car and behind it. In late afternoon reached the Carmel Hill Motor Lodge and registered for the night. After settling in, and being given directions by Bruce, the boy at the desk -- a Chicagoan now at Monterey for the summer, went down to the famed Fisherman's Wharf and had a sauce-ridden dinner at the Red Pony; the setting out over the water, where we could watch the gulls and seals, was picturesque, but, though it pleased the children, it hardly made up for me for a meal which was too rich in cream and sauces to do me any good. After dinner walked along the wharf to its end, standing to watch the seals at the point of rocks beyond the wharm, and the boats tied up along the dock, and the people shopping at the various plades along the dock -- offering everything from gew-gaws to art works -- hailed by a fellow Wisconsinite as he drove by, announcing he was from Milwaukee -- "Look at my license," he shouted, going past -- and pausing to buy a modicum of candy from two young ladies who had a difficult time determining that bits of caramel covered with mint-chocolate selling at "two for a nickel" came to fifty cents for 20. So back to our quarters, and all too soon the children retired, and so too Rikki and myself, after a brief foray.

15 June 1966: Leisurely away from Montery this morning, abandoning our plan for a further drive up California 1 along the coast in the face of coastal fog, and cutting across to 101 again. Past great groves and some alleys of eucalyptus trees, which made the air fragrant, past many flowers of all descriptions, including yucca, through many small towns, around San Jose, and into [illegible] San Francisco, coming at last to a bifurcation of the highway which left us in some doubt as to which way to go. However, we chose to go down town and found ourselves on Seventh Avenue which, though not according to directions given us for finding the Beck Motor Lodge, seemed to me to lead to Market Street; and so it did. We turned at Market Street and all in good time found ourselves at 2222, where our quarters were ready for occupancy, and we moved right in, up on the third or top floow, and along the street, so that we had a good view of the mountains up the street, and the Pacific fog still flowing in to keep the city cool, while all its suburbs sweltered in unseasonal heat. The children made themselves at home, drawing pictures, watching TV, reading -- and showed up at my desk presently with a sealed note, a fanciful check drawn on the "Bank of April and Walden" reading: "Pay to August W. Derleth Amount of One raincheck for two father's day gifts when we get home. Added Amount Lots of love and kissed Total for a wonderful Dad From April and Walden. Happy Father's Day 1966."

Attempts to telephone people, however, met with little success. No one had heard of Emil Petaja at the number he had given me, no one answered at Les Anderson's, and Mark Schorer urged a Friday dinner date on us, which I accepted with some misgivings, and some reservations. Called home, and assuredthem that we were all right. Mother was under the hair dryer preparing for a party tomorrow; so talked only to Hildren, as did the children. Presently reached Ethel Anderson who gave me Emil Petaya's number; it proved to be different by one digit than the number he had given me -- or that I had most likely miscopied, if he had not, setting down a 3 for a 5; and, calling it, I heard his voice. He agreed to join us for dinner at the San Remo, a family style Italian restaurant in the old town, and came down in half an hour. He proved to be a Finn and was a gentle, quiet-voiced fellow of 50, mild of manner, complaisant and eager to be of service; he was also still young enough to have kept his youthful awe of someone whose work he had long admired, though I did my best to disabuse him. With him to the San Remo, where the food was very good and inexpensive, but where, alas! the Italian menu was severely restricted -- no meat balls with the spaghetti, no chicken cacciatore, no spidieni, und so weiter. They did have veal scaloppini, which I ordered with some misgivings; it came too heavily garlicked to be eaten, but there was enough other food to more than satisfy my need. Thereafter back to Beck's Motor Lodge, from which in an hour I went with Emil to the home of Anton Szandor LaVey:

self-styled magician, on Clement Street not far from the Golden Gate bridge. It was a house of red brick, set back from the street a little way, with a black door, and cabalistic signs, which abounded inside the house, decorated to suit his profession -- the walls of one room black, of another red, und so weiter. Stuffed animals were much in evidence, too -- a jaguar in the hall, a "werewolf" named Lazlo in the living room, a marsupial on the mantel, an owl, and so on; but the piece de resistance was a two-year old lion caged on the back porch. Anton himself was a tall young man in his thirties, with a pate-shaved head, and a small Van Dyke which swept upward into a thin, lip-curving moustache. He spoke of having a "police permit" and of "helping" people to understand their problems, of the cabalistic angles, the hexagon and trapezoid, pointing out where they abounded -- on the Golden Gate bridge, the focal point being the place from which many suicides jumped -- in coffins, et al -- of the Sutro baths, now being demolished -- "I'm going to put a hex on that place," said Anton confidently, of the psychic events of everyday life. I did not stay long, being tired; so Anton took me back to the Motor Lodge and carried Emil off with him. The children and Rikki were already abed, the hour being eleven, and I too went to bed at once, though sleep was difficult for the heavy traffic up Market Street and the inconsiderateness of late-coming tenants in the adjoining quarters, whoyse loudness woke me at two.

Aspects of the day: the singular attractiveness of San Francisco -- its wide streets, its clean buildings, its cool air, its handsome overblown churches, its relatively low buildings everywhere but in a small, central downtown section, the easy flow of traffic, its hilly vistas, offering startling views the like of which few other cities of my knowledge have to offer... fried potatoes with breakfast, served whether or not asked for -- the ever-present street-cars running through most of the night -- the preoccupation of a minority of its citizenry with the San Andreas fault, and the likelihood of another disastrous earthquake.

16 June 1966: After breakfast this morning, ca. nine o'clock, came Stanley McNail -- a broadshouldered six-footer, quite as gentle-mannered as Emil Petaja, not ill-favored in looks, but on the whole rather diffident. He had planned out quite a tour and went on about the unfortunate circumstance of the bus strike, which gave me no grief, since the last thing I wanted was a tour of the public buildings and historical sites of the area; I was bent this morning on taking the children to see the giant redwood trees in Muir Woods and needed Stanley rather more to guide us to the Golden Gate Bridge than for anything else. Though somewhat taken aback, Stanley quickly adjusted to this change in his plans, and off we went -- though by rather a circuitous route since, traveling as he did most of the time by bus or streetcar, he was not entirely aware of traffic patterns -- which streets were one-way, which led directly to the Golden Gate Bridge, and so on. We came to the bridge at last, much to the huge delight of the children, paid our toll, and sped across it. Fog still held to the upper reaches, so that the top of the bridge was hidden in fog, though in Marin Countythe sun shone in lower areas. Wound our way into Sausalito, where no one opens for business until ten or later, and there stopped for Stanley to buy some film -- a picturesque seaside town, looking out on the bay, and in every aspect a tourist trap, albeit an attractive one. From there up into the hills and down into the valley, through fog, of the Muir Woods, where we got out and walked around, among the sequoias, impressively beautiful, towering high up toward the mountain-tops, into fog in some places. The park was crowded already, early as the hour was, chiefly, I saw, by people in middle age or older; mine were the only children there, though others had been there, as was evidenced by the presence of names and initials scrawled on park benches and even on some of the trees. Everywhere here the California buckeye stood in full bloom, and thimbleberries were reddening, and the air was fragrant with the pungence of the redwoods, though along the road to the woods only eucalyptus perfumed the morning. Walked up viewing one group after another of the old trees, crossed the brook, and walked back, pausing in the guest house for souvenirs, and signing the guest register, and then at last leaving the oasis of cool -- almost chill -- weather in the redwoods for the city once more.

Back in San Francisco, parked down town and boarded a cable car at Sutter and Powell Streets for the ride to Fisherman's Wharf and back, one that afforded many revealing vistas of the city and the bay and gave one yet another perspective on San Francisco. The children delighted in it and so did Rikki, manifestly. At various corners along the way tourists took photographs of the car, as were it already an antique -- as indeed in some respects it was. But once this was done, and luncheon devoured, we repossessed the car and made our way back to the lodge, leaving Stanley down town, so that we might rest for the evening.

In late afternoon with Stanley once more to the edge of Chinatown, and there met Les and Ethel Anderson. With Stanley, Emil Petaja, Rikki and the children, to wander about in Chinatown, taking note of the small changes which had taken place there since 1953 -- finding the teashop, however, at which I had purchased tea in that year, unaltered -- seeing pressed duck, lichee nuts, sugared melon rind, live frogs, snails, and all manner of unidentifiable things for sale in arrays reminding me of the oldtime country stores, sometimes lining the walk in boxes. There was an undeniable charm, an aura of timelessness about Chinatown -- the milling Chinese and tourists filled the streets, traffic moved slowly through them, the crowded storefronts, the colorful calligraphy and ornamentation -- all added together to a corner of San Francisco different from any other and essentially more changless than any other. Met the rest of the party finally in front of Tao Lee Yon on Washington Street, and went in for dinner, and upstairs. The party had grown to 10, being augmented by the addition of the Anderson children, likable Erik, 12, and temperamental and unlikable Kris, now 15, going beat, much to her parents' distress -- she left the table and vanished in a pet at our disparagement of long-haired boys, of one of which she was fond, and did not show up again until we were at the Anderson home later. The food which was placed before us, however, left a great deal to be desired -- the meat in it had all obviously been prepared previously, and the vegetables had not, with the unhappy result that the vegetables were by and large underdone, and the meat overdone, and such taste as it had lay in the sauces that covered it. Once finished, we rode to Woodland Avenue, to the Anderson home, where Emil took some pictures, and Les showed us his magazine collection, which was almost complete -- of fantasy and science-fiction. Thence upstairs to wait upon the evening's guests to show -- among them Miriam Allen deFord, now in her seventies, and still alert and very much aware of what went on in the world; she seldom went out to such gatherings any more, she confessed, but she had wanted at least to get a look at me, calling me one of the prolific three -- Creasey and Simenon being the other two, marvelling at how I got so much done. Ed Hoffmann Price and his wife also came, hale and hearty, and good to see; Ed had brought along two bottles of wine, a traditional gesture -- he had brought them to Wright, to Bob Howard, to Clark Ashton Smith; now it was my turn. One was to be drunk at Ed's death, if I did not precede him. He was now thoroughly white, but still ruddy of complexion, and looked healthy and sound; so too his wife. Both were delighted to see the children again. Among others -- Tony Boucher White and his wife, he having grown a trifle more corpulent -- Poul and Karen Anderson -- Leif D. Ayen, Bill Donohue both very heavy young men -- Jeremy Barry, Dr. and Mrs. Populos, Anton and Diane LaVey, Alva Rogers and his wife, Merrill Johnson and his wife, and others, among them three long-haired beat types, one of whom -- who ran around all evening with a cap on his head -- was Kris's boy-friend. Took ourselves off at 10:30, tired.

Paid a visit to the Discovery Book Shop today, where met young David Meltzer, the poet, and bought his chapbook, The Process -- of modern but coherent verse -- and to the City Lights Book Shop, upstairs and down, chiefly avant-garde magazines and books to be seen, and such "in" or "camp" items as Batman books, of which Walden had to have one. The shop was infested with avant-garde types, free souls, and long-haired beatniks, black and white, but all, save one young woman, sadly needing to be shaved. Nevertheless, found the atmosphere stimulating, and did not particularly mind the free souls or their modes of expression.

17 June 1966: Up at leisure this morning, at seven, and to work after taking breakfast alone, the children and Rikki electing to sleep instead of rising, and to take lunch and omit breakfast. At eleven came Frederick Goshe -- he had shown up at Andersons' last night, but we had had too little opportunity to talk: a thin, almost scrawny man, consumed by fires of ambit/ion and earnest intention to reform his corner of the world, and for a long time a champion of the American Indian and Indian culture, his moderate eyes looking out from behind horn-rimmed spectacles, his thin mouth not entirely humorless. I thought he would talk about his hope for a book's being published -- he had had others published, but he said nothing about it while we were at lunch at the Happy Boy restaurant at the corner, preferring to talk instead about a theory of "poverty vs. abundance" in the creative world, one I thought a trifle confused, not really well thought out, and ill-named. He proved to be an amiable fellow, however, who endured a great many handicaps; he had lost his wife at 36, and had a seven-year old daughter, none too well, and lived with his mother. After lunch at the lodge, he spoke hopefully of a book sometime in the future, but seemed disinclined to trust a New York publisher with the necessary distributional facilities to do something for him. I could promise him nothing under the Stanton & Lee imprint, and presently he took his leave.

At this juncture, at long last, Donald Fryer telephoned, and followed his call by persenting himself in person twenty minutes later -- a moderately attractive young fellow of 31, rather unabashedly homosexual with a preference for oral satisfaction, who spoke with great animation of his collecting of Ambrose Bierce's poems for the Arkham House imprint, and of his own poems for our possible publication sometime further in the future. He seemed to me attractive in his openness. I observed particularly his green eyes. He did not stay long, for we were due to leave for Berkeley.

In Berkeley, beyond the Bay Bridge -- far more impressive than the Golden Gate bridge -- went at once to the building housing KFPA, the local FM station, and there met Don Boucher, with whom prepared a tape on Solar Pons -- not neglecting to say something of the Derleth-Schorer collaboration forthcoming. Then sped on to 68 Tamalpais Road, where Mark Schorer waited at the head of the lift at their attractive house there, and presently sat down to dinner of salmon and chicken and a French pastry with a detestable coffee flavor. The evening, for all that the house stood in a setting of singular beauty, with trees of all kinds -- eucalyptus, loquat, buckeye, pepper, acacia -- and many flowers surrounding it, and afforded a view of the surrounding terrain, including Mt. Tamalpais -- for which the street was named -- that left the impression of being in the country rather than the city, was somewhat strained. Fortified by liquor, Mark seized upon every opportunity we were alone together to declare his affection for me -- in words, as before, never in deed -- and recalled events as they had never occurred, but in a manner designed to conceal his own guilt and his flaws in that early relationship -- and worse, he sincerely believed that this sequence of events had actually taken place, having wanted for so long to believe as much; he strove all evening to return to the past, to turn again a corner turned irrevocably long ago, and was offended at each attempt on my part to set the record straight. I was relieved at last to set forth in the dusk for the lodge and our last night in San Francisco.

Aspects of the day -- the Bay bridge in the dusk, with the lights coming on in San Francisco -- Alcatraz sitting darkly in the Bay, with a single light flashing there -- Don Fryer's concept of Fritz Leiber as the focal point in the animosities of his wife on the one hand, and his mother on the other -- the incredible complexity and inadequate markings of the freeways approaching the Bay area from San Francisco -- the birds that came down to feed at the Schorer terrace: California towhees, house finches or linnets; wren-tits, humming birds, Steller's (or the blackheaded) jay, all eating food that Mark had scattered for the purpose of attracting them, knowing I would be interested in watching the birds from the dinner table.

18 June 1966: Off at 5:30 this morning for the middle west, and all of us elected to go as far as we could without tiring, and though the Nevada barrens -- the alkali flats and the desert areas -- were very hot, we ended at Twin Falls, Idaho 12 hours later, a distance of some 700 miles, having averaged close to 60 miles an hour even allowing for a brief half hour luncheon stop in Lockport, Nevada. And at Twin Falls found lodging in the elegant new Holiday Inn, where Rikki and the children at once plunged into the motel pool.

Aspects of the day -- San Francisco and the Bay Bridge in the mists of morning, with the lights of night still on, and the dawn among clouds in the east: a place of enchantment even though, at this early hour, there was an appreciable amount of traffic on the Bay Bridge, a majority of it, I saw, negroes, evidently going to work in Berkeley and Oakland, for most of the traffic seemed to be moving out of the city -- the gradual increase of traffic beyond Berkeley: California vacationers, and teachers -- now that school has closed -- Auburn changed; though I located, still on the highway, the place Clark Ashton Smith had breakfasted with us, I saw that the town had grown to almost double its former size -- the Donner Pass almost unrecognizable; in 1953 we went through in a snowstorm; now the road is new, three lane each way, and would indeed be a revelation to those hardy souls who dared the pass and those who perished there -- Truckee River, winding its way for many miles, a forest and mountain stream, in and out under the road, beside it, gleaming in the morning sun, lovely to gaze upon from time to time -- the trains: a dozen or so went by one way or another, and one along the face of a mountain lost in a tunnel near Truckee; the children spent their time counting the cars -- 92 one of them, 100 another, und so weiter -- the mountains and the mountain trails visible from the road, and the mountain lakes, and in one place a long sluice box carrying water, which I remembered from 1953 -- in Nevada in late morning, beyond Reno and Sparks, the white salt flats, and the reek of them -- and Nevada's bare mountains and its desert -- the tumbleweed massed along the fences -- the two greens: one clear and distinct, the other watered, thinned, paled, made almost grey-green -- the magpies making their appearance along the roads -- an Olson gasoline station boasting "25 pumps" where they hadlost the oil funnel! -- the turn north from 80 toward Twin Falls on 93, and the steady cooling of the air in that direction -- the distant peaks near Wells, with snow crowning them, though in one place a four-domed structure rose, evidently a satellite tracking station.

For most of this hot day across Nevada, the only comfort any of us endured was in the knowledge that we were nearing home -- and for Rikki, his new car!

19 June 1966: Away from Twin Falls, Idaho at 5:30 this morning, facing into the rising sun for the early hours. The road wound along the Snake River for hours; I saw many ducks and gulls on it. Among the day's aspects -- meadow larks beginning again to make their appearance -- the site of the Hunt party massacre along the Snake River, now marked as Massacre Rocks -- Idaho Falls, unrecognizable in large part from memory, though we spent hours there in 1953, and I sat in the motel writing a long poem while the car was being repaired -- Targhee National Forest, with its kind of raw beauty -- the Grand Tetons coming into sight as we neared Yellowstone Park.

At Yellowstone, all seemed to occur as if it had been planned for us; we had not gone far into the park at the west entrance when we came upon two mother bears and five cubs, affording April a chance to take photographs -- and subsequently six more bears came to the roadside, black and grizzly, one black standing at the car to take a plum I offered him. A little farther along saw a moose feeding, then a herd of antelope well away from the road, together with some elk. At the geysers, saw Castle Geyser erupt, and then, in five minutes, Old Faithful gushed forth a magnificent charge -- close to 60 feet in height, and lasting five minutes. Stopped at the Inn and had a light lunch, the day's first, and then went on past Yellowstone Lake with its splendid view of the Grand Tetons for miles along the road. The aspects of Yellowstone that impressed me different not at all from those that had done so in 1953 -- the fragrance of pine in air -- sight of small birds I thought might be water ouzels -- the Grand Tetons in their majesty against the blue heaven -- the cascades, spring fed, tumbling

down the mountainsides, some gushing forth white with spray, some trickling down and growing in volume, beautiful to see springing forth along the roadside -- Madison River flowing through the park, with much white water, but little compared with the Shoshone River and Ten Sleep Creek at the far edge of the park -- millions of blue lupins in full flower, surpassing dandelions in number -- and these lupins covered the mountain meadows far beyond Yellowstone, making the earth blue for miles -- nothing more beautiful than Shoshone River was to be seen in all this day.

Beyond Yellowstone: -- the blue lupins everywhere -- Ten Sleep and Greybull, and the smell of sagebrush strong after rain there -- deer along the roadsides -- woodchucks, two standing beside the road like old men watching the cars go by, paws folded almost together across their breasts -- the deep canyon at Ten Sleep, before the climb over the Big Horn Mountains: but this, alas! bore no resemblance to that tense journey in 1953, before the road was repaired and altered, and made more passable -- and Buffalo at last; there the Idlewild Cafe still served us an evening meal, though the cafe itself had been remodeled and refurbished, and Buffalo had changed -- the motel at which we had stayed was gone. Found a motel, and after supper went to bed, determined to be up early -- without protest from Rikki, for every day's journey, no matter how long and tiring, brought him closer to his beloved new car!

20 June 1966: Off for Sioux Falls, South Dakota this morning, the distance from Buffalo, Wyoming, being 580 miles, according to the pretty young clerk at Kearnhey's Lodge, where we stayed overnight. The day began hot and grew hotter, and we rode steadily, without either breakfast or lunch, losing an hour in time change, and reaching Sioux Falls at 4:30.

Aspects of the day -- the Powder River Valley, where trees followed the course of the river and were nowhere else to be seen, cottonwoods all of them -- the isolated ranches, which bore a resemblance of a sort to those to be seen in certain movies -- the thousands of sheep foraging the range, together with white-faced steers -- sheep beind herded in one place, giving the children some impression of their numbers -- Wyoming creek names: Crazy Woman Creek, Wild Horse Creek, etc. -- great fields of yellow sweet clover in full bloom, filling the air with fragrance; the yellow slopes reached for miles as far as eye could see -- the cluttering of the roads with house trailers, modern covered wagons, caravan cars, which ought to be allowed only on double-lane highways, for their presence on two-way traffic roads is dangerous, since their slower pace so impedes other travelers that they are driven to risk in desperation; twice today we had to take the shoulder to escape crazed women drivers who deliberately swung out to get past some such vehicle! -- the magpies more numerous -- the gradual alteration of the landscape into the more familiar one of corn and oats, of trees and grassy pastures. And the oil pumps!

Though this was their third day of riding the fully day, the children bore it well; they rode like troupers, without complaint, anxious now to be home once more. They played license games, counting the various state licenses, and otherwise amused and entertained themselves, sometimes quite vociferously. At the Holiday Inn in Sioux Falls Rikki and the children went into the pool to swim for almost two hours before we had dinner -- at one of the poorest of Inn restaurants.

21 June 1966: Up for breakfast with the children at five, and then, an hour later, having awakened Rikki, off for the final lap of our journey home, reaching there at 2:20 this afternoon. Among the aspects of this last day -- great ponds of water in fields and pastures at Blue Earth, Minnesota, as a result of a downpour last night, though just north of the city rain did not fall, and the city's fire department was kept busy fighting a grass fire while the city and south of town drowned in rain -- encountered once again in a gas station Dr. Thompson of Philadelphia, who had a relative from Madison, Troy Thompson, driving his Cadillac; we had met him off and on during the past two days from Yellowstone east: a pink-faced, white-haired man in his late sixties, one who obviously enjoyed life; they intended, he said of his party, to be in Madison tomorrow, after visiting two sisters in Minnesota today -- many horses grazing along the route we took, testifying to an increasing number of horses kept by farmers and others; April counted 126 -- the ~~lack of rain left farmers~~ heavy rains in

the Blue Earth area made it impossible for the farmers to work their fields, left them free to clutter up the roads, impeding the movement of traffic -- the winding descent through the hills west of La Crosse to the Mississippi River valley, cooler and more aromatic under the heavy tree cover, affording many pleasant vistas along the Root River that wound its way to the Mississippi through the hills.

No one was at home when we reached there. After unpacking the car, Rikki got behind the wheel of his new car and was off, and the children set themselves to putting their things in order and waiting upon the arrival of their grandmother and Aunt Hildred to surprise them, which in due time they did, though Mother caught sight of me down town before they reached home.

Learned that in our absence Kate Spellman Walsh had died quite suddenly. She and her husband, Bud, had been "on a toot," as one native expressed it, of some duration; in the course of it -- on the weekend of our departure -- Kate had been taken ill, and had been sent on Saturday, the day of our leavetaking, to hospital in Madison, where she died on Monday -- of, as an autopsy suggested, in all probability, acute myocardial leukemia, which seemed to me strange indeed. And Jack Seiler likewise, though more publicly -- he had come into Roos's tavern and had come to the bar for a drink; having had his drink, he leaned his head forward on his arms and rested there for two hours. Fellow drinkers directed remarks to him from time to time, even slapping him on the back -- he had been dead almost from the moment that he lay down his head, as Marvin Roos learned when he tried to wake him. And Pat Walsh, Kate's brother-in-law, had come home from hospital to die of cancer, even younger than Kate's 45, and with five children to be left fatherless. Nor was there much in the future of Jack Bachhuber to offset its bleakness, said Effie Bachhuber when I saw her later today, for Jack would not eat, and continued pessimistic -- and yet was looking around to buy a new house!

Spent the rest of the day and the evening at opening mail, managing, by ten tonight, to have opened all the letters.

22 June 1966: Continued hot. Saw in the village that the catalpa trees and syringa bushes stood in full bloom, spilling their fragrance to the sunny air. -- At the bridge under construction, arrangements were almost complete for the pouring of cement for the roadbed, but nothing whatsoever had been done to prepare the approaches, and it began to seem to me that the official "bridge dedication" so ardently planned by the Men's Club, theVillage Board, and Paul Meyer, might be premature.

This evening, late, to walk the Genz Pocket road with George Marx -- a wonderful, fireflylit evening sweet with the fragrance of drying hay and young corn. A doe showed at the roadside on the way, along the highway, but no other animal -- save cats -- was to be seen or heard, though a dog barked in the Pocket. The absence of owl voices was again noticed -- doubtless the big bigds have fallen victim to insecticides -- which George called "incesticides". Whippoorwills sang, however, in some numbers, both near and far, though those far called longer, it seemed to me, than those nearby. Walked down to the cattle pasture south of the Genz farm, and back up to the woods just before the old Roerich house; there, in the dark woods, the fireflies abounded, and were readily seen, for the woods held out the light of the still new moon, umbral in the western heaven, and the fireflies therefore were all the brighter, many thousands of them on both sides of the roads, ranging through the grasses, and woods, and over the fields of cut hay there, which saturated the air with the perfume of drying grass and clover. Though no breeze stirred the air, the mercury had dropped sufficiently to make the night comfortable abroad, if not inside.

23 June 1966: Yet another day of work at the accumulated mail -- with Rikki at invoices, Mike Price at the lawn, Dennis Mack at packing books -- though Dennis could work but half the day, and Mike moved in off the lawn for the afternoon. The day very hot, but with a south wind blowing steadily.

The village, as a result of heavy rains during our absence, aglow with blossoms -- a striking bed of sweet William at the foot of Madison Street, peonies, petunias, irises, cornflowers and a host of others; but it was the sweet William that particularly caught my eye and filled me with nostalgia for that time, those earlier years, when it was a staple in village flower gardens, and especially in those of my two grandmothers -- in one of which, Grandmother Derleth's, Aunt Gene still kept it abloom, bright and gay in the summer sun.

30 July 1968: Once again on foot to the high school this morning, and again a morning of listening to manuscripts, begun with one by Verge Karow. At noon sat after lunch with Kay Price Mulcahy, talking, and presently walked out with her to shop, playing at marriage -- buying furniture, decorating a house, planning a honeymoon in England ("I always wanted to go there!"). In the course of three hours she recounted the facts of her marriage -- her unfortunate pregnancy (evidently at her first sexual experience) -- her going to Seattle to have the baby and give it up -- her inability to do so, and her telephoning her husband to bring him west for a hasty marriage before a justice-of-the-peace -- her having the baby alone, and the painful experience of another girl, a friend, who had given up her baby -- of her return home at last, and the reaction of her parents, who had not known about the baby: "They didn't show any understanding or affection -- the only thing they thought about was what people would think and the church -- we had to get married in the church right away -- we never had a chance to live togehher for a while to find out whether we could hit it off -- and I didn't really know anything, for the longest time my husband didn't even want me" -- which I thought incredible indeed -- to the present, when a sort of arrangement has been achieved, but not one which, in my opinion, will last, for Kay continues to grow and he does not, and the augury for that marriage is not good. Thereafter in to read more manuscripts, dreadful stuff for the most part -- to which Kay appeared later with her own first short story and poems. So spent the evening -- reading, writing critiques -- until 11:30, taking time out to watch a Hitchcock "thriller" with Dennis, who remained glued to the television set all evening.

Some rain in the night, but the temperature stayed up, permitting the air-conditioning to run all night long.

31 July 1968: Once more to walk to the high school this morning, the air fresh and pleasant, fragrant with a post-rain musk, and now and then a whiff of flower perfume -- phlox, now at their height of blossom, and yarrow, and on the school grounds, white clover. Observed this morning that the lawn along the wing where I lectured was filled with fairy-ring mushrooms. Class lively, as usual, particularly for its characters -- Genevieve Turk, who always emphasized life and living, and let it be know that she was equally good in kitchen and bedroom: a plump, jolly woman, who had clearly lived & was now fearful that living was about to stop -- and Phyllis Marking, going blind, though still a young woman, and forever protesting that she was "aware that I am not writing to my full potential," though every manuscript submitted is manifestly not promising, overwritten, weakly plotted, and the like, and it was clear to me that she would never really achieve any goal in writing, since she lacked the discipline -- and perhaps the energy -- to revise and rewrite. She protested that she appreciated my evaluation, but since her scripts already carried two other evaluations, without any changes having been made, it was patent that my evaluation would in the end mean no more than any of the others.

Read manuscripts throughout the afternoon -- dull, dreadful stuff for the most part, very discouraging to read; so it took me a long time to read half an hour's reading, and to comment upon it at sufficient length to satisfy the authors of these sad pieces. To bathe and to supper, where, after eating, I sat for a while with Al and Mrs. Nelson and one of his students, and then stood talking with Helen O'Brien, Bob Gard, and Dr. Bump, who were waiting to be seated, before returning to 113 to work, Dennis having gone to see The Graduate.

To the high school presently, walking, but Al and Mrs. Nelson stopped to insist that I ride; so I did so. The second of the autograph parties -- for Tere Rios, Ted Olson, Russ Arnold, etc., was being set up there. At once to pose with Dorothy Guilday for Cedric Vig and Dorothy Litersky, for a shot to be used with an October 14th (publication day of The Beast in Holger's Woods) story for the Rhinelander Daily News, which Dorothy Litersky was preparing. Once again, Kay Price Mulcahy, all in red tonight. And a Mrs. Lucy Wilbur, who turned out to have been an Underwood -- the daughter of Elbridge Underwood -- late of Upper Sac Prairie, and related besides to both the Keysar and Perkins families; she recalled Holmes Keysar's might ability to curse,

saying that when Holmes used to come up river to Portage in the Ellen Hardy, and come overland to visit at Montello, the driver who drove him back to Portage said he would do so for nothing just to hear him curse! -- an aspect of him I do not recall hearing about previously. Presently, giving Dennis the key -- he in from the movie -- I went off with Helen O'Brien, Dr. Bump, and Bob Gard to visit briefly at Dr. Bump's sylvan retreat -- for it was nothing less seen in the light of the first quarter moon, riding the western heavens low above the horizon, near to Spica, with Arcturus red high over and Antares red to the left in that evening sky, and moon and stars doubled -- seen above, and again in the surface of Baldwin Lake, from which wisps of mist were rising, altogether an enchanting scene, which for many years was enjoyed by Dr. Bump with his wife Ruth -- since 1935, exactly -- whose death three years ago had left the doctor, though still in active practise as a surgeon, very lonely. He was reluctant to have us leave, but leave at last we must.

1 August 1968: Again this morning to walk to the high school for class. A cool, very pleasant morning. Took time to walk around to the rear of the school to examine the fairy-ring mushrooms there, growing in some profusion, in many well-defined circles, and on three sides of one wing of the school. Then in and upstairs to the classroom, where presently began to read from Wisconsin in Their Bones to illustrate story beginnings and endings. Then listened to Sara Rath read a new story -- the last for this session of classes, and, after the customary mid-period break, took up again the initial notes in succinct lecturing, promising to complete in tomorrow morning's last class. Thence with Kay Mulcahy to lunch at the Cavalier room of the Claridge -- and with her spent the next three hours, until she had to go to another class, to which I sent her in the car with Dennis. Then to read the last two manuscripts -- more sludge -- and comment upon them.

At six to Lake George and Pine Point Cabins for dinner with Al and Mrs. Nelson, Tere Rios, Bob Gard, and Ted Olson, after which Dennis returned to Rhinelander to see a movie, and the rest of us sat talking shop -- and of life in Sac Prairie, while the sun went down and the moon shone over Lake George. Much small talk until 9:15, at which hour rode back with Bob Gard. Nighthawks skycoasted above the town, and the night air cooling. Dennis in by 9:50.

2 August 1968: Up early and to breakfast at seven, after which to help Dennis load Kay Price Mucahy's things into the car, observing that she had brought along enough dresses for a stay of two months instead of but two weeks, and these no doubt represented by a selection of her clothes, making me realize how expensive she must be to keep. Dennis presently took her to her eight o'clock class, while I checked out and waited upon his return. At 9:30 out of the Claridge and to the high school for my final class, dismissing it promptly at 11:40. Kay joined us from Edna Meudt's poetry class, and we were off to the Mead at Wisconsin Rapids for lunch. A deer crossed the road ahead of us perhaps ten miles south of Rhinelander -- the first deer Kay had seen in her fortnight in the northwoods country. An uneventful drive, making good time, to the Rapids, where in 45 minutes had another of the Mead's excellent lunch eons. Thence directly home, reaching there at 3:45.

Myself directly to work, and, on Dennis's return from taking Kay home and unloading her, he began hauling into the basement the 75 cartons of the new printing of At the Mountains of Madness. Worked throughout the evening, laying out books, and taking care of the most urgent mail, but at last, as the dusk faded and the moon shone low in the southern-southwestern heavens, between Spica and Antares, I rode out west -- the night very humid but cooling, low mists aglow under the moon in the bottoms, framing the trees that rose out of them, the sky clear. A deer bounded across the road from the field near the Genz house and up into the hills at my approach, beautifully seen in the headlights' glow, but no other animal was to be seen. Crickets churred evenly out of the night, but no frog voice and no whippoorwill song fell to ear. Drove down along Highway 60 beyond the Cassell Prairie road, taking pleasure in the sight of the moon lowering among the treetops, in the mists and the musk of the marshes, in the musk of corn in bloom, the pungence of roadside weeds, the fragrance of hay, in one lone firefly flickering there and cricket chimes -- returning presently by the way I had come, driving slowly, so as to savor the night at its best, before I need come to the night's humidity in the studio.

out, which I had not counted on doing. Thence to the Courier office, where I sat down with Jack Howe and went over copy for the new stocklist, setting down October 1 as a target date for its completion. Thereafter to a rootbeer stand on the way out of town for lunch, and so directly home -- in an hour and 22 minutes, which made me suspect that Dennis was primarily interested in matching Rikki's old record of an hour and 20 minutes, and would have done so had we not been held up by slow traffic for part of the way.

Encountered Kay Price Mulcahy outside the Bee-Zee Market late this afternoon, and found it impossible to keep my pulse from quickening. We stood talking, unmindful of the heat, until Tommy Sheets came along and interrupted us; then I took my leave, fully aware of a certain absurdity in the evident mutual attraction that exists between that lovely girl of 25 and myself -- at 59! -- something that is certainly bound to shake down to reality all too soon.

To ride tonight with Forrest Hartmann, pausing at the Ferry Bluff to look out at the risen moon -- still full to the eye, though it was not in reality so -- hearing a whippoorwill in the bottoms below Laws, and a wood duck's reiterated cree-ee up along the near shore of the Wisconsin. The water tranquil, the mosquitoes less so. We walked a half mile up the road and back, fighting mosquitoes, and then drove down through the Genz Pocket and so home. Mists were lying low, lakelike under the moon in the bottoms, in some places beginning to drift across the road, promising a heavy fog by morning.

9 August 1968: April 14 today. Cindy Hicks came out with a gift, and looked several years younger than April, for all that she is but two weeks younger. Child April is no longer, and impatient to be a woman. To Fish Lake with the children and Denny Meng this afternoon.

Moved by a dream in the night that I had done so and written lines to her, I sent Kay Price Mulcahy this morning an anonymous red rose, with these lines: "Who would have thought that mortal flesh / whatever beauty its disguise / should raise this cautious pulse and keep it so / an hour past those lovely eyes!" -- not without some amusement at the thought of how she might explain its presence to her husband.

The village celebrated Maxwell Street Day today. By seven o'clock bargain hunters waited on Water Street for the stores to bring out their wares -- most of them stock that had not moved, and which could not be resisted by people who always yield to a mark-down under the belief that they are indeed getting something for little or almost nothing. By 8:30 the street was crowded, and women were beginning to pick over clothing, etc., while the businessmen were still bringing it outside. A little later a clown began to move through the audience, and a section of the street near the bank had been roped off for the band, while in Upper Sac Prairie Curt Mueller had a lively bratwurst stand doing a flourishing business in the street before the drug store. Seeing me, Curt insisted that I return "at eight o'clock tonight" promising me "a feast" -- by which he meant that some dancing girls -- "go-go girls" -- would be on hand to perform in the street, an entertainment sure to draw a crowd, which alone would put me off. At the Upper Sac Prairie Library lawn, a lively business was being done in selling discarded or duplicate books, together with some brought in for the occasion; paused there to talk with Leah Gruber, Alice Graf, and J. Henry Gingras, who had stopped to buy a book for his now pregnant wife -- on home decoration! The threat of rain that never came did not deter buyers; the steets were crowded whenever I ventured into them today.

10 August 1968: Saw down town this morning Elgin Behrendt, his lips tightly pressed together; when I hailed him he did not speak, but gestured to say that his teeth had been pulled out; which I somewhat heartlessly thought amusing because for once he did not stop to go on endlessly about some trivial thing or other -- and both Hugh and I laughed heartily at Elgin's predicament.

Mother and Hildred off for O'Hare Field to fly to California, Ernest and Frieda Koenig driving them down this mid-morning; and Lari, Joan and her child, the lively Teri, by car with Dennis Mack to Truax Field just after noon. So the house was once again tranquil, and, with the humidity passing, and cooler air flowing in from the north, I got to work at correspondence before I must write book reviews on Sunday morning, prior to taking the children to meet Sandy and her little girls for the viewing in the afternoon of the Holiday on Ice show.

currently stationed on the West Coast, newly home from a hitch along the coast of Viet Nam, and in general seemed a trifle withdrawn. We were off presently to the Colliseum, Sandy having obtained good tickets, and sat through a 2½ hour performance which tired me, largely because it consisted primarily of costumes, since there is a manifest limit to what can be done on ice skates. I did enjoy heartily a skillful performance of one skater playing the role of two china dolls which had to be wound up and ran down, making for some difficult and artful skating. After the performance back to the Monona Grove house, where the party was diminished by the absence of Joel and his family. Took our leave in twenty minutes, and stopped at Frenchy's for dinner, after which home, myself close to exhaustion, as a result of which I accomplished nothing for the rest of the evening. ... A screech owl out of the woodlot at dusk this evening.

12 August 1968: Into the marshes this morning by way of the bridges, the morning cool and cloudy. Along the Wisconsin killdeers cried steadily, not only the long kildee, but also the scattering of subdued lesser cries common to a time of seasonal change. Mists rose off the water, and mallards foraged along the shallows. I walked leisurely -- not much troubled by mosquitoes -- down the tracks to the edge of the Lower Meadow, noting in blossom a great many flowers, among them bouncing Bet, goldenrods, Joe Pye weed, wild sunflowers of various kinds, evening primroses, white and yellow sweet clover, wild clematis (both in blossom and in silky seed), fringed loosestrife, mare's tails, rattlesnake weed, small white milkweed, sorrel, horsemint, penstemon, peppermint, cardinal flowers, jewelweed, Beaumont's root, white boneset, forgetmenot, dogbane, smartweed, wild balsam apple, hemlock water parsnip, monkey flowers, fireweeds, mullein ironweed, blue vervain, osiers, catnip, steeplebush, arrowroot, meadowsweet, ground nut, nettle, spice berry blossoms, small white asters, and buttonball flowers -- though most of the buttonball bushes now sported seedheads; and heard the cries or songs of crows, bluebirds, song and field sparrows, chewinks, pewees, little blue herons, crickets, wood thrushes, cuckoos, orioles, catbirds, a broad-shouldered hawk, yellow warblers, grackles, goldfinches, cardinals, nuthatches, chickadees. Observed -- bittersweet berries beginning to show color -- fish foraging and rising in the east channel of the river -- some young soft maple leaves showing red -- the freshness and fragrance of the morning air -- the first ripe spice berries along the embankment between the brooks -- the beauty of the wild cucumber or balsam apple ~~blossoms~~ crowning the osiers along the brook with its cream-~~colored~~ colored tapers -- the glory of Joe Pye weed in the upper reaches of the Lower Meadow -- the remains of a dead dog, evidently a cocker spaniel, collar and all along the tracks at the little trestle south of the Spring Slough, presumably struck by the train -- the pungence of creosote rising from the Spring Slough Trestle under the morning sun, now free of clouds -- the singular and striking beauty of cardinal flowers along the Spring Slough Trestle's green verges -- anglers at the back river and on the west channel bridge.

Kay Price Mulcahy came out to spend the afternoon, decorating the studio from 1:30 to 6:15 and tempting me sorely, -- a singularly beautiful young woman who made me to think of someone from an Egyptian frieze, long-legged, amply-breasted, but clearly a woman who was spurred by some inner discontent and who did not yet know clearly what she wanted. She took delight in the knowledge that she disturbed me, but for my part I was delighted to find that my pulse rose less sharply, and settled down to normal readily enough -- unlike my previous exposures to her striking beauty. .. Ron and Donna Hering out for half an hour or so. They were on "vacation" but, as is so usual with Ron, they did not intend to spend much money. They had left their five boys with his mother, and meant to go tenting somewhere -- perhaps on Carl Breunig's hill, where they had conceived their first child.

13 August 1968: Into Madison this morning with the children, Dennis driving. Went in by way of highways 78 and 14, so that I could look upon the wealth of flowers in blossom in the lowlands along the road -- Joe Pye weed in great masses, wild cucumber or balsam apple crowning many bushes and reeds, goldenrods and wild sunflowers, bastard toadflax, wild bergamotte, evening primrose predominating. ... At Madison went to Hilldale so that the children could shop for new school clothing. While there I was seized with the impish desire to give Kay Mulcahy a few uneasy moments -- as she had given me some -- and chose to send her four pieces of jewelry, to come at separate intervals, anonymously, by mail or delivery, from Gimbel's and the Perfume Shop. From Hilldale to Kohl's, and thence to the Simon House, where had a pleasant luncheon, after which we sat through The Producers, an hilarious comedy. Thereafter home.

Sat for half an hour in the harness shop with Hugh and Pete Blankenheim, who came in while we

were finishing a glass of sherry, much to Hugh's annoyance, but presently home and to desultory work, at which I was interrupted by the arrival of Kim and Myrna Johnson -- who sat for an hour talking about Harold Bachhuber's death, Msrg. Peter Leo Johnson, his sister Meg Bauer's way with husband and children, their impending trip to Europe, the stupidity of Pope Paul VI, und so weiter. Outside, cricket churring, and the coolness growing with the night.

14 August 1968: Into the marshes once again this morning, and once more to the edge of the Lower Meadow -- Brook Trestle II before turning. Little trouble with mosquitoes, until the sun emerged from the cloud bank east, and then I was already well on the way back. Heard, in addition to the voices heard two mornings ago: least sandpipers, Bohemian waxwings, chipping sparrows, /kid/ crested flycatchers. And saw in blossom watercress and swamp sunflowers -- the season's first, evidently. The morning aromatic and fine. Anglers again at the east channel of the Wisconsin; I thought them perhaps residents of Snuffy Manon's camp upstream.

At ten o'clock to the Schwoegler funeral home to join Red Schroeder, Dr. Tom Walsh, Earl Hall, Ralph Marquardt and Wally Zauft among the pallbearers for Harold Bachhuber's funeral. Paused to talk with Edgar Peters, Harold's brother-in-law from Juneau, and two of his sons -- young Pete and John, no longer so young, and later with Harold's sister, Alice, who looked far more ill than Harold had looked before his fatal attack. The day now very fine, sunny, cool, balmy. All went with dispatch at the funeral home, but we had no sooner reached the church than the opposite was true -- Msgr. Van Berkel, failing to hear the church bells tolling, and either too unconcerned or too lazy to look for the cortege, kept us waiting a full five minutes past the hour in the church vestibule, before he came out with the acolytes to meet the coffin; then the acolytes forgot the incense and holy water, and had to be sent back for it -- the victim being a youngster I did not know, with a fine, sensitive face; the priest himself lapsed into silence in the middle of his prayers, lost his place in the missal, though he preached a good enough, if traditional, sermon, und so weiter. By some miracle, we were done -- at the graveside and all, by noon.

At home Ted Olson waited for me. With him and the children to the Flamingo for lunch, and then, later -- while Dennis went out to pick blackberries at his Uncle Werner Mack's farm -- took Ted down to the Wisconsin Heights and showed him the battleground site, discovering there the source of that sycamore-like odor I had first smelled at Rhinelander -- it rose from masses of bastard toad-flax in full bloom, together with evening primroses, hairy bush clover, blue vervain, horsemint. Thence home, and, after Ted had left, up to Bachhubers, where I sat for an hour and a half talking with the family, particularly David, whose youngest daughter, Julie, took an immediate fancy to me, at which David quipped privately and rather outrageously that she had her fancy for men from him. Both he and Dick, at different moments, suggested going out to dinner, which I tentatively agreed to do.

With Dennis out to ride tonight through the Genz Pocket -- pausing there for a while under the stars -- and as far as the mouth of the Badger Valley road, and back. Here and there still, a firefly -- but no sound of frog, whippoorwill, killdeer -- and no sight of any animal tonight. The night cool, filled with corn musk, and the stars over all.

15 August 1968: Again this morning into the marshes, following the usual course to the Lower Meadow and back by way of the bridges. Once more anglers fished along the back river, the east channel of the Wisconsin; I concluded that they had been catching fish here, and paused to ask how their luck was. "Nothing doing today yet," answered the near angler. "But I took eight out of here yesterday." An east by northeast wind blew, and clouds covered the rising sun until I turned back, sparing my eyes the glare of that light when I walked east. I observed from the Spring Slough Trestle that the Upper Meadow was now patched with large masses of Joe Pye weed in full bloom, and in other places with wild sunflowers, not yet at their height of blossom. Saw beneath the trestle a last thimbleweed blossom. The Lower Meadow again a glory of Joe Pye weed; so many blossomed there that a kind of lavendar haze lay in the morning sun over that sea of flowers. Hawk cry and pewee song, killdeer fretting and song sparrow, flicker cry and jays' warning notes rang through the morning.

Kay Price Mulcahy on the telephone today for almost an hour.

Dick Bachhuber out, upset and tense because of friction with David. He said that Effie had been left everything by Harold, was indeed "very well fixed", owning upwards of $250,

000.00 -- though I understood that no one had as yet any fixed figure, any taxable figure, and that matters were still in progress, though the family had spent most of the afternoon at the bank with the lawyer Harold had chosen in drawing up his will -- an old family friend from Juneau. He spoke of Harold's holdings -- 2,000 issues of stock, for one thing, apart from real estate -- and presently went off to eat at the Devi-Bara.

16 August 1968: Another hot, humid day. Up to Ski-Hi this morning for half a bushel of Whitney crabs -- an annual trek. Dennis drove and the children went along, and all of us ate apples on the way back, though the Whitney's were not yet quite ripe enough to be as succulent as they ought to be.

Kay telephoned again, and was on the wire today for an hour and a half, and then reluctant to leave. She made, in effect, a declaration of love. I was not insensitive to it and reciprocated, again pointing to the hopelessness of a situation involving a 59-year old man and a 25-year old woman. She agreed that age was the one obstacle that could not be overcome or gotten around. She had guessed immediately who had sent her jewelry, and had liked the pieces sent. I continue to be surprised at the excitement and affection she arouses not alone out of her singular beauty but also out of the similarty of views, the natural simpatico existing between us, the warmth and charm of her personality, the pleasant tone of her voice: in sum, the essential, eternal feminine. I recognized even as I talked and laughed with her, that I was frankly afraid to commit myself fully to so impossible a love, however beautiful and satisfying it might be for the small while left to me, and the voice of her daughter, Lisa, ringing happily in the background filled me with pain at the very thought of bringing to that little girl a moment of unhappiness.

David Bachhuber on the telephone this evening, in a rage with Dick over some triviality at the dinner table. He was on the verge of explaining to his wife that the tension with Dick stemmed in part from Dick's homosexuality; I cautioned him against it, and reminded him that he was not himself entirely innocent, and talked with him long enough to mollify him.

Vernon Rachek with his wife and family stopped in at the house today. His wife had begun to read my books at their home in Colorado, where they lived in or near Denver, and he wanted her to see the setting about which the books were written. He saw and hailed me first on Water Street when I came out of Lang's, and later drove out to the house: as lean and wiry as ever, and as much a "car nut" as he had been in his adolescence -- he had simply commercialized his interest, and now made his living by repairing cars and similar business. He said his folks now lived in Colorado, said that both Ronnie and Dorothy were married, each with several children. They did not stay long.

17 August 1968: Across the bridges this morning. Several anglers fished from the west channe bridge, and from the island's shore south, and one -- Walter Leykauf -- had already taken two well-eyed pike. Ducks talked, foraging, north of the bridge, in the shallows around the stone there, and killdeers mourned along the strand. Song sparrows and pewees sang on the island, and crows called more distantly. The morning air very fragrant. In the bottoms the seedpods of the bladdernut were beginning to show tan. A pleasant tranquility reigned in the marshes this morning, as were it the countryside's resignation in the face of autumn.

This afternoon with Joe and Julie Ehl and the children to the Dells, Dennis driving; Sandy and her two older daughters had planned to go, but had had to draw away because of colds -- and, I suspected, because Art Kiser had moved back into his home and the separation she had nonconfidently announced stood at a draw, a development that suited me very well. Accordingly we went directly to the Fort Dells area, where I left the family and walked leisurely up into town through exhaust fumes the like of which I had never before experienced, even in the Chicag canyons, for traffic was very heavy on the central street -- visited at Bennett's, where Ollie came out to talk, ordered a new Indian basket, and walked back. ... From the Fort Dells area, where I met the children, drove toward Delton to pause at a large slide, which the four young people took several times, while I marvelled at the ingenuity that possessed the Dells area promoters, in thinking up some new attraction every year or two, so that the area might continue to be the largest such tourist trap in Wisconsin. Indeed, the streets of the town were as crowded as Loop streets at Christmas time, and Ollie -- doubtless representing many local

Today's heat and humidity unbearable -- 90°, 90% -- so this afternoon joined David and Lea Bachhuber and their three daughters in swimming off Karberg's bar, going down behind Ace Hardware -- that is, parking where once Ehl's Slough lay, now filled in, at approximately the spot where once, long ago, we had sped down winter slopes on our sleds to slide across the ice to where potatoes lay roasting or baking in the sand on the far shore. The water of the Wisconsin cool and refreshing, unlike that of Fish Lake, and in that water I remained, sometimes talking with David, though I was unhappily aware that the boy I had once been so fond of had been lost somewhere in the past, and the doctor-surgeon at 37 was close to arrogance in his self assurance and with an aggressive, authoritarian manner that was a far cry from his once warm and gentle self. Here remained for two hours, enjoying the sunlight and the water, taking pleasure in the slow circling of a red-tailed hawk bearing westward from the far shore of the Wisconsin, until it vanished far up over Sac Prairie, and in two nighthawks flying high over the islands.

This evening with David Bachhuber and his family, Richard and Effie, to the Devi Bara for a chop suey dinner, at which I ate more than I should have eaten -- as usual when I sit down to that fare. Rode up with David and his family and my own children -- but we rode back with Richard in Effie's car, though she rode with her grandchildren. The night pleasant enough while we rode, but instantly hot and humid when we reached the house. Richard in for half an hour of talk, expressing some dissatisfaction with David's officiousness.

20 August 1968: Into Madison at nine this morning, and myself directly to Dr. Dollard's office, while April, Walden and Dennis shopped. After half an hour of testing Jim assured me that my eyes were as healthy as could be expected of a man of my age, that no disease was apparent, and that the scintillant flashes were very probably caused by spasms in one of the blood vessels of the right eye, the cause being one of three things: fatigue -- hypertension -- or medication for hypertension. He prescribed Vitamin A. "This may help. It has helped in some such cases. We don't know why. With your doctor's permission, go off medication for a while, and see what effect that has. Call me in two weeks." Thereafter I was free to shop myself -- and went promptly to the Perfume Shop, only to be shown a selection of new jewelry just in from New York, from among which I shose three pieces to be sent to Kay separately two or three days apart, and anonymously. Presently around to the Simon House where Dennis and April joined me, Walden having met me near Moseley's and joined me there, and, after dinner there, out to Kohl's to shop, and so home.

Directly to swim at Karberg's bar, finding David and Lea and the children already there. Spent an hour and a half enjoying the cooling and refreshing water, only to be all the more heated and uncomfortable once we left the river.

Aspects of this hot, humid, mindless day -- the great numbers of white and yellow butterflies, the common pieras, along roadsides, over alfalfa fields, among sweet clover -- the hot stridulation of cicadas -- the uncommon tallness of the phlox at the house, nurtured by ample rain and sunlight -- the record height of corn in the fields, thriving in the hot humid nights.

21 August 1968: Another hot and uncomfortably humid day, with both temperature and humidity in the 90s. ... Kay telephoned this morning. She had guessed the source of the jewelry coming from Madison, after some little wonder about it. And when could she come down? I set Friday afternoon, hoping that the heat-and-humidity would have been alleviated by that time, though not being very sanguine about it because the ineffective meteorologists have been predicting its end ever since Monday, and its end is not yet in sight.

Again to swim off Karberg's bar this afternoon, once again with the David Bachhuber family, to which was added today Steven Bachhuber. The water alone refreshed, and I stayed in it for two hours, while Dennis and the children played heartily with a football, sometimes involving me. Across the river another group of swimmers, down from the old wing dam. Observed today how overgrown the hills seemed, not having been pastured for some years. How quickly the wild flowers, the weeds, the young willows take possession again!

To ride through the Genz Pocket and out along Highway 60 with Forrest Hartmann tonight -- only the passage through the countryside was cooling; a deadly heat and humidity continued the moment

the car came to a stop. Observed the movement of frogs across the roads -- some slow and lumbering, some leaping as much as three feet, and able to cross the road in five or six jumps. No visible movement of animals, and a great number of moths abroad.

22 August 1968: Walden 12 on this hot, humid day -- the sixth such consecutive day in one of the worst, most uncomfortable summers in decades. April had baked him a cake last night, for this morning she went in to Ferbers to put down five quarts of cucumber pickles. To lunch at the Flamingo (Blaze) today, as usual, and in afternoon to swim once more. Dick Bachhuber returning to Los Angeles today, so only Joan and Steven Bachhuber joined us on the beach. Much talk with Joan -- re Jack's condition, about David's aggressive authoritarianism, und so weiter. A redtailed hawk soared along the east bank of the river, and over the water, gradually drifting over the islands -- a killdeer flew up and back from the the sand bar, crying, and out over the water from time to time -- mourning doves, swallows (bank swallows, I saw) and gulls haunted the river. Swam from 1130 to 4, which gave me more sun and darkened my skin a trifle more than I had counted on.

Little work done in this heat. A book review this morning, letters, journal. No more. I sat naked at my desk, on a bath towel!

To ride west tonight with Dennis, pausing for a while in the Genz Pocket. Again many frogs and moths abroad, mosquitoes lessening in number, no movement of animals, save only for rabbits on the grounds at home.

23 August 1968: Woke at dawn and heard the sounds of day beginning -- a swamp owl hooting far away, a cock crowing, a cardinal singing, and a mourning dove calling in that order before the sun rose. The temperature this morning 75°, the humidity 88%. Despite the heat and humidity, the lawn had to be mowed, since the new Mycroft & Moran book, first copies of which came in this morning, would show up sometime next week and must be shipped; mowing had been put off all week, but this afternoon Dennis and Walden joined hands and mowed the entire lawn in four hours.

Kay -- all afternoon. The first kiss; it burned deep, and I felt her lips for hours after she had been gone, and paced the floor, disturbed, and rode west of town late tonight turning her over and over in mind, unwilling to accept the undeniable fact that I wanted her despite all the violation of principle implicit in that desire. The churring of crickets mocked me from the roadsides all the way out from the house, and all the way back. Even if she were free, I could not saddle that beautiful and vital young woman with a man destined so soon to decline into age! We could not hope for more, at best, than a few scattered stolen hours to be kept forever from any prying eye.

Karl and Kay Ganzlin out briefly this evening, bringing back books, picking out others to read. Much talk of Mark Schorer -- and his bitter quarrel with his younger brother, Calvin -- another alienation in his world.

24 August 1968: Once again this morning -- after a restless night filled with Kay -- a long-eared swamp owl calling before dawn, somewhere south of the house, perhaps as close as the trees along the line-fence. Completed a first poem for Caitlin -- the Gaelic Kathleen, and went on to book reviews, the mail being not too heavy.

A day of work, the weather being at last less humid and a strong south wind blowing, catching up on various tasks to clear the desk for more concentrated work tomorrow. Kay telephoned at noon, having waited all morning for me to call -- and then, astoundingly, for the first time told me that she was on a party line! -- having never previously given me a word of warning or caution! During our conversation a telephone was lifted twice -- on her line. In mid-evening today Rikki called, having read my letter about Kay -- laughed heartlessly, cheered obviously for Kay.

To ride west of town with George Marx tonight, and to walk through the Genz Pocket. No mosquitoes in the windy night, a west wind still blowing, and only cricket talk and katydid stridulation. In the welcome coolth, even the cicadas were silent. Many moths abroad, but little else, though at the roadside south of the house a little screech owl lifted itself in flight when we went by.

25 August 1968: Into the marshes this cool, windy morning. The wind now in the northwest. Some anglers fished the west channel, particularly Gaige Dickerson at the far end of the west channel bridge, though he had just come, and had had no bites. He commented on the chill of the morning. Far up ahead a great blue heron flew across the tracks, bearing north. Along the Spring Slough Trestle 17 spires of cardinal flowers glowing, and at the east end, the first balmony in blossom. Five teal flew up from the Spring Slough, and another, subsequently, from the brook. A morning of sun and cloud, the sky occasionally clear, but more often overcast. Saw that elderberries were ripe, haging heavy. The upper readhes of the Lower Meadow a sea of Joe Pye weed in full bloom, beautiful to see, and many goldfinshes along the tracks there. Pewee song came constantly from the woods, now and then the singing of a yellow warbler, goldfinch and cedar waxwing songs, but little else. Walked to the Mid-Meadow Trestle and back, my thoughts much with Kay. Gaige displayed a large walleye when I went past homeward bound.

George Marx telephoned just after noon today to say that Carl Lachmund had been felled by a second coronary, and was now in the intensive care unit of St. Mary's Hospital in Madison. I was shocked to learn of it, for Carl had been taking excellent care of himself. Yet, it could not be denied that his heredity was against him -- Paul at 39, his mother, his uncle Rudi, and his uncle Walter had all died of coronaries. He was, understandably, profoundly depressed, his morale shattered, but he was still alive.

Worked daylong at The Arkham Collector No. 4 -- taking time out only to revise a poem, and write another -- the third, for Kay (Caitlin).

26 August 1968: A day of heavy mail, complicated by the arrival in early afternoon of the shipment of Harrison's The Exploits of the Chevalier Dupin and an interlude in the studio, which took a little time out of the otherwise busy morning. Frank Utpatel up, too, to spend half an hour, but for the most part Dennis kept busy daylong at books, and came out again in the evening to ship copies of the new book, the children helping, so that the day was well used, and at its end 252 books had been packed and shipped.

27 August 1968: Woke this morning to 35° and a heavy fog, disappointing me, for I had hoped to hike this morning before getting the mail and going into Madison. Worked instead, and then, at nine, with Dennis and the children into Madison to shop -- myself at two of the Perfume Shops, picking up ear-rings for Kay, a bottle of Canoe for Dennis, etc., April to buy the last of her autumn clothing for school wear. Then to the Simon House for lunch, and directly to the car from there, walking widely scattered. On the Square encountered Kay, much to our mutual pleasure, and there stood for close upon an hour talking, and, as usual, saying very little save for a few weighted words, both of us stressing the dreamlike quality of this curious affaire d'amour. A pleasant interlude, nevertheless. Thence to Kohl's, and so home.

Sat for a while as customary with Hugh in the harness shop in late afternoon, after April and Walden had both bought shoes, taking a glass of sherry with him, and making small talk of the day -- of Eddie Somerau, who did not stop at the harness shop because "Hugo's too busy to talk, so what's the use" -- of the idiotic way in which the canning factory was being run: beginning at 9:30 in the morning and working well into the night, instead of beginning early in the day and dumping corn for an early beginning next day -- of Les Hicks and his "work", which consisted in very large part of walking around the grounds of the Farmers & Citizens Bank -- of Pete Blankenheim's aimlessness, his frequent visits to Ragata's Du-Drop Inn -- und so weiter.

In mid-evening, just before moon-set, with Hugh to walk the Genz Pocket road, watching the umbral moon turn deep yellow, then orange, before it went down, next to Spica. Dogs barked across the river and down along the Cassell Prairie road, and now and then a great horned owl called; crickets churred, and the stridulations of katydids fell to the enclosing night, richly fragrant with the musks and pungences of summer -- the cloying sweetness of corn, the pungence of mare's tails, the cool smells of the hills, the musk of the pasture and the barnyard south along the road. In the northeast Capella rose, following Perseus and Andromeda and the great square of Pegasus, and fog began to form in low places. Rode west, following the moon, to the Goodyear place, and there turned to retrace our route, the moon now having gone down. So home.

28 August 1968: Twenty cardinal flowers glowed along the Spring Slough Trestle this morning when I walked across in the thinning fog, hearing pewee song and the muted melodies of two wood thrushes coming from the still dark wood, and the songs of goldfinches, flocks of which flew along the tracks bound for the Upper Meadow, yesterday cut to hay -- indeed, the machines still stood up the meadow, and today emerging from the fog in the morning sun, and looking like a mystical land far away. Crickets churred. At the east end of the Spring Slough Trestle saw in flower balmony, Joe Pye weed, ironweed, white asters, sneezeweed, wild sunflowers spreading over the uncut portion of the Upper Meadow, and peppermint or spearmint, very probably the former. At the Brook Trestle saw redwings, bobolinks, cedar waxwings, robins a palm warblers, and catbirds. I walked to the Mid-Meadow Trestle, taking pleasure in the sea of Joe Pye weed purpling the upper readhes of the Lower Meadow, and there turned. Goldfinch and cedar waxwing sounds abounded from the brooks south and back. Saw on the way back a little blue heron fishing the east channel of the Wisconsin, and heard along the west channel crows and a redheaded woodpecker calling. Over that channel many chimney swifts flew; mallards foraged in the shallows; a gull flew past, and killdeer began to cry.

To Prairie du Chien with Dennis at 9:30, leaving the children at John Ehls. A fine cool morning with sun. Observed along the roadsides on the way between Spring Green and Gotham thousands of blazing star or prairie gayfeather in full bloom, together with wild sunflowers, sneezeweed (in low places), Queen Anne's lace, chickory, blue vervain, bouncing Bet, goldenrod, red clover, horsemint, butter and eggs, and Joe Pye weed -- most of which were to be found all along the way to Prairie du Chien. Here and there the pleasant fragrande of hay drying, both from the fields and from the verges, where in some places cutting was going on as we passed. In gardens along the way a plethora of zinnas, gladiolas, dahlias, marigolds, asters, phlox, sunflowers, salvia, geraniums, petunias, and trumpet vines. In Prairie du Chien stopped at the bakery to buy doughnuts for the children and bismarcks for Dennis -- delivered a few books to the Villa Louis, and signed copies of Bright Journey and The House on the Mound, then to deliver copies for the fourth issue of The Arkham Collector. Thereafter to the Tick Tock for lunch, and so home, reaching there at 1:30. Rested for a while in the studio before resuming work.

In mid-evening to ride west of town, watching the moon go down -- deep yellow to orange in a rising mist or fog; for fog was shaping rapidly in the marshes and rising upon the roads. From the roadsides the smell of hay, the pungence of camomile, the fragrant musk of corn, the constant churring of crickets.

29 August 1968: April's first day as a freshman in high school -- a half day. When she came out at noon, took the children to lunch at the restaurant -- Schwoegler's stand -- Julie Ehl coming along, and the two girls cycling into the village to buy school supplies in the afternoon, while I waited on the arrival of Randall Alan Kirsch, who had been visiting with Alfred and Isabella Galpin and expected to come out with them, though he telephoned in the course of the afternoon to say he was coming alone. I directed him therefore to join the children and me at the Flamingo for dinner, and thither he came: a weak-faced young fellow of 22, with longish blonde hair, somewhat flabby of build, though he had evidently lost weight for his clothing hung loosely on his frame. He was extremely neurotic, for he began to talk with a rush, and spoke as if he drew upon a grab-bag of thoughts -- all about Lovecraft, his ffiends, and what was "wrong" with them: the homosexuals, the philanderers, und so weiter -- until it seemed that he had sought only the scatological details of these little lives and now took a pecuniar relish in displaying them. He took pains to indicate that he had accepted at face value much anti-Derleth venom and exaggerated it in addition in his peregrinations among the amateur press and fanzine publishers. It was quickly evident, even before we left the table, where he ate sparingly, that he was a pathological liar, potentially schizoid, and certainly suffered, as Ruth Eddy had hinted, from a rejection complex. He spent the evening at the house, until 9:30, producing all manner of photographs the subjects of his interviews had given him -- of H. P. Lovecraft, his aunts, of members of the Blue Pencil and Kalem Clubs, of friends of Lovecraft in Providence, and the like. He had gathered a great deal of material and had supplemented it with taped interviews, but I could not justifiably conclude that much of it, or indeed any of it, added substantially to the Lovecraft story, save in an anecdotal vein. I was glad to see him leave, though I urged him either to deposit the material he had collected in some place where it would be available to scholars, or to write a Lovecraft biography himself.

In late evening to ride west of town, watching the red moon setting, listening to the churring of many crickets, the stridulation of fewer katydids. Nothing abroad save cats and rabbits, and the night air very fragrant in its humidity. Did not remain out for long, since the hours with young Kirsch had exhausted me.

30 August 1968: Kay all afternoon -- in seventh heaven! The hours sped like minutes. We were locked inside the house, in the studio, and when, in the course of the afternoon Frank Utpatel came -- for the second time that day -- we could hear him muttering angrily below at the locked door: "What's he got the door locked for?" and once shouting, "What've you got the door locked for?" -- and walking around the house trying to look in or to listen, obviously some sheets in the wind, until at last he went away, and Kay and I resumed our urgent talk and more. She left me much shaken, at 5:15.

Syl Fasking at Lang's this noon. He came over to talk, saying he was staying with Walt and Bernice Zauft, while Meta went on a brief trip abroad. He said he would be 80 his next birthday, and he was at last beginning to show his age, having grown frail, though he had always been wiry and extremely active, not so much at work as at avoiding it.

Sat for a while late today with Hugh in the harness shop, speaking of Carl Lachmund's health and the ultimate fate of the Lachmund Lumber Company, now well over 100 years old, and still in the same family, but now almost certain to be sold, since Gary Lachmund would not bury himself or his talents in it. Hugh much exercised at the work remaining in the Fuchs house, without conceding that he need not have undertaken it with such obsessive insistence.

Spent a sleepless night, thinking of Kay.

31 August 1968: Into the marshes early this morning, while the sun lingered behind clouds. The temperature 70°, and several anglers abroad near the west channel bridge. The air very still, and increasingly humid, but fragrant. At the east end of the Spring Slough Trestle a strong pungence of mint. Hawk scream across the Lower Meadow as I walked toward the Mid-Meadow Trestle and there turned. Aspects of this morning: the last wild rose abloom along the embankment between the brook trestles -- a little green heron fishing a fading pond -- pewee and wood thrush song at the Spring Slough -- crows cawing along the river, near and far. An upsurging of mosquitoes this morning, though I managed to escape being stung.

Began clearing out books this afternoon -- selected some for Kay, shipped a box to Nathaniel Dame, Dennis having finished shipping and invoicing the morning's orders, invoiced and delivered boxes to the library in Upper Sac Prairie and that below, and then tackled the mail, working at it through the evening while George sat reading. Mother telephoned from California to say that she needed surgical removal of a cyst from her back, but that she preferred that it be done here later this autumn. She announced too that she expected to return in late September, whereupon George Marx set his date for going out at September 21, and for returning with Mother at September 27. ... Wrote another poem for Caitlin, on the cactus she had brought me.

To walk the Genz Pocket with George in mid-evening, under clouds and in a very light rain. The moon hazed and only just visible from time to time behind clouds, with Arcturus and Vega also showing now and then, equally as dim. The night air very sweet with the musk of corn, the pungence of mare's tails, the fragrance of the bottoms, where a fog lay white in the night, complementing the misty air. A deer or a raccoon rustled in a cornfield we passed, foraging there, no doubt, though he did not make his appearance, only stirring at the sound of our voices in conversation as we went by. The night mystical and very beautiful. Home with reluctance, driving around past Kay's home, and, seeing her silhouetted in the doorway, tapped the horn, going by -- the venture of a high school sophomore!

Another sleepless night, haunted by Kay and my desire for her. A night even more troubled than Friday night, broken by a thunderstorm in the early hours. In for the papers and then

1 September 1968: Woke to a wet earth, half an inch of rain having fallen. Too wet for hiking. In for the Sunday papers, and then, after an hour of pacing the floor trying to think myself out of my amorous dilemma in some way, to work -- desultorily.

Saw this morning how the squirrels -- principally grey -- were taking the acorns from the great old white oak west of the house, showering leaves and twigs and husks to the walk and ground beneath -- as they had already done to the hickories all along the east line-fence. Three of them were to be seen; no doubt there were others, all moving around the ends of the branches, from one cluster of nuts to another, sometimes devouring the meat where the nut was taken, while leaves and shell fragments fell to the earth. Evidently there is no difference between the green nut and the ripe one to them, for they appear to devour the one as voraciously as the other.

Kay telephoned today -- not once but twice, adding a dimension to this otherwise sombre Sunday. How good to hear that dear voice! -- though we spoke of nothing but those weighted matters common to lovers.

Ruth Strelow out -- and she, seeing the picture of Kay on my desk, divined at once that I had fallen in love again; and applauded -- as Rikki had done, brushing aside all the objections I could raise, philosophical or actual.

To ride tonight by moonlight and lightning glow out of a thunderhead low in the south, taking April along. The night cool and pleasant, rich with a post-rain fragrance into which we rode west of town, and resonant with the churring of crickets. Mists rose from low places, and in the marshes fog lay white under the moon. In the Genz Pocket a kit fox started up and ran ahead of us on the road, vanishing at last in the grass and weeds of the roadside at that place where the drainage ditch crossed under the road. Drove down the Cassell Prairie road and along Highway 60, and turned back to pause in the Genz Pocket and walk the road there. By this time the moon had come free of clouds and rode up the southern sky, and the storm had moved into the southeast, lightning diminishing now. The air wonderfully fresh and sweet with post-rain fragrance, for a little rain had fallen here, just enough to strengthen every odor and perfume. Owls called, and dogs barked up the valley; all else save for the insects was still. Presently home and to bed.

2 September 1968: With George Marx this morning ca 6:45 to walk down the tracks to the Second Brook Trestle. A very wet morning -- though anglers were abroad, among them Gaige Dickerson, as usual, and Clipper Niederklopfer -- and in no time at all our shoes were soaked through, despite some care in walking there. George heard everything I heard -- frequently pointing triumphantly in the opposite direction! Pewees and wood thrushes, goldfinches, crows, a little blue heron, a great blue heron (which George mistook for a hawk), redwings were either seen or heard, and the rainwet, misty morning was singularly fresh and lovely, with the sun finally breaking through clouds. The hay picked up from the Upper Meadow and the machinery gone at last. At the Brook Trestle some blue lobelia in blossom; beneath the Spring Slough Trestle a few new spires of cardinal flowers.

Worked at home for most of the day -- at mail put by, until late afternoon when I went into the village for the mail, sitting for a half hour with Hugh in the harness shop. Then home with the mail, which occupied me for the evening of this Labor Day.

3 September 1968: Kay -- all afternoon. This time she brought with her her beguiling three-year old, Lisa, who shielded us both -- listening to records, coloring, dancing in and out of the studio -- until April and Walden came home and took her, leaving us alone -- and thereafter, for almost two hours, we were scarcely out of each other's arms -- leaving me again very shaken by an incredible tide of passion and possessiveness. After she had gone I put on the phonograph the record she had brought, and listened to the number she had asked me to listen to -- "the words" -- My Lord and Master, which was a frank and warming love letter from her, though I could not help reflecting that when she is here with me I am scarcely my own master. Tonight, walking the Genz Pocket road with Dennis, I continued to be obsessed with her, so that when I came in from the moonlight I wrote another poem to her, and began two others, and wrote a letter I had no intention of sending.

4 September 1968: Hundreds of purple martins and swallows were ranged along the telegraph wires on the west channel bridge today -- virtually on the eve of their migration into the south. ... Again today Kay on the telephone for an hour. I waited for her call, having tried to call her earlier, and did little until she called.

5 September 1968: At the Post Office this morning Alice Zimmermann Schmitz flagged me down with "What happened to Charlie Schroeder?" -- which was, of course, but the prelude to her telling me that Charlie (Climmer) had fallen dead of a heart attack last night. He was almost 61. "Clarence (Zimmy) called for Ray to help last night," she went on. I observed that she took singular pleasure in being able to convey news -- in lieu of gossip, which I inferred she would far rather disseminate. ... Cap Kahn came in after she had gone, and I asked about Norma. "I'm afraid she's not going to make it," he said soberly. She had had an operation for a large brain tumor. "The doctor said it had been there a long time," said Cap, in answer to my query on this point. "And yes, it might have been the reason for her erratic behavior." ... At the harness shop a little later, sat with Hugh reflecting upon the inexorable dying of our classmates and friends of our adolescent years.

Kay came in late this afternoon, with Linda, bringing a neighbor's girl, Sherril Luher, who was an admirer of the Steve and Sim books, and had long wanted just to talk with me: a plump, sober little girl of 11 or so, rather more grave than most girls her age. Despite the presence of the children, managed by one subterfuge after another to be alone long enough for some too passionate kissing. A storm kept them all here longer than they had intended to stay, so that it was 5:30 before I got into town for the papers. Hugh had divined what had happened, and he was properly amused.

At 8:40 Kay on the telephone -- which she did not leave until 10:50. Dennis finished his labors, the children their play and went to bed, the time for a ride passed while we talked. I was astounded to learn how long we had been at it when at last we stopped. We made many professions of love, and yet left too much unsaid for which I could find no words.

6 September 1968: Walked down the railroad tracks from Heiney's crossing this afternoon at 1:30 -- a fine, sunny day with a south wind blowing, and some summer cumulus clouds crossing the heavens from time to time. Flowers abounded in the lush growth on both sides of the tracks -- wild sunflowers in abundance, goldenrod, and, at the cut -- as well as in scattered places elsewhere along the route to the Heights where they abutted upon the tracks -- blazing star or prairie gayfeather. Bottled gentians had begun, showing blue here and there, but were not yet at their peak bloom. Nevertheless, I gathered both prairie gayfeather and bottled gentians for the vases at the house. Observed the attraction of the prairie gayfeather for monarch butterflies -- as well as some white pieras. Here and there the reddening fruit of prickly pear cactus, particularly in the vicinity of the cut. A redtailed hawk soared out from the hills over the tracks and the bottoms, keeping in view for some time, lost against the blaze of sunlight now and then. He foraged and soared without sound. Read a little, but not much, and stood offside at the crossing when, at 2:45, the train came up from Mazomanie -- the diesel drawing 15 cars and the caboose. My thoughts were much occupied with Kay, and the troubling question whether this fire that burned so fiercely would, in the tradition of almost all such fires, burn itself out fast. Some redwings already flocking, flying hither and yon, as in April, their cries querulous as in that month, uncertain.

Worked this evening on page proofs of Walden Pond, having proofed Wisconsin Murders during the past two days, and sent it back to Banta today. And, having finished, I went -- while the children were at a football game -- to walk the Genz Pocket road by the light of the full moon, so preoccupied with Kay that I scarcely heard the owls calling or the steady churring of the crickets along the road. Much troubled, both at the situation and at the fantastic strength of my involvement -- and the utter futility of it all -- to have to have at best only scattered hours stolen from her life, instead, in other circumstances, of a lifetime. After walking by the light of the full moon, glowing low in the southeast and spreading its white light over everything -- gleaming in the eyes of the cattle I walked by, and the little pools of water that lay in low places -- I rode west along 60 and turned back. Mists were forming over the marshes, white under the moon, and the night, when I put out the car lights and rode without them, lent its moonlit magic to the countryside, giving it a face stranger and far more attractive than its face by day. Once at home, again to work on correspondence, and to look into A Hardy Companion, in this day from England. At eleven Kay telephoned to talk for half an hour, warming me for the night.

7 September 1968: Into Madison in late morning with Dennis and the children -- first to Hilldale to shop briefly, then to Kohl's for Hugh, then to the Simon House for lunch. Then with Walden to move about the Square -- for envelopes at Moseley's, to the Perfume Shop, where

I lost my head buying things for Kay -- then to Herman Didriksen to be measured for a new suit in a kind of lustrous dark green, somewhat uncertain of the color, however, even after I had chosen it -- the old conflict between the cautious conservative and the impulsive liberal. Thence home, by way of 14 and 78, so that I could take pleasure in the yellows and rose and blue of fall flowers all along the way, once past Middleton.

Aspects of this day -- trimmed the low-hanging grape vines and hickory trees along the outside fence -- swallows thinned on the wires at the railroad bridge -- a redtail soaring along the river east from Water Street at the railroad crossing near the depot; perhaps the same bird observed while we were swimming off Karberg's bar -- louring clouds and the promise of rain, though the afternoon stayed clear, happily for Kay's sister Pat, who was married at St. Aloysius this afternoon -- the turning leaves of hard maples in the Freie Gemeinde Park, much earlier than usual -- the constant dropping of acorns from the great old white oak west of the house, and the diligence of the grey squirrels foraging there -- fading phlox and burgeoning asters, and, at the house, penstemon and nasturtiums.

Walked late tonight with George Marx in the Genz Pocket, despite the threat of rain and the resurgence of mosquitoes: a fine, aromatic evening, after a little rain which made ever odor and perfume so much the stronger. Crickets churred, some katydids stridulated, owls -- great horned owls -- called out of the bottoms. Turned there in the Pocket and went back home, very tired.

8 September 1968: Woke to louring clouds and went into town for the papers only just in time to escape a downpour, which began immediately after I got home. So to work, desultorily, my powers of concentration made ragged by the constant intrusion of Kay.

Rikki telephoned in late afternoon today to say that he was being moved to Fort Belvoir, near Washington, D. C., and would now have more freedom on his weekends, to say that he expected to be released from training early in November, to make sure that my love for Kay would not affect the bond of affection between us; I assured him it would not, still confident that anything that burned so fiercely as Kay and I could not last, must burn out rapidly.

A day of intermittent rain. In to Lang's for lunch, to the Flamingo for supper -- otherwise at home, and steadily at work -- writing two columns of book reviews, three new poems, reading two books, etc., while over an inch of rain fell outside. Kay telephoned briefly late tonight.

9 September 1968: A day of almost unrelieved rain, adding up to over four inches since Friday night. Worked daylong over a heavy mail -- again orders for 146 books today alone -- but surrendered 3 hours to Kay on the telephone at various times, without protest from me, confident that this affair cannot go on for long -- it burns too fiercely. In the late hours of tonight, while we talked, I stood watching two fireflies glowing in the trees west of the house -- not flickering, but glowing with a steady light, which suggested that they were glowworms rather than fireflies, since they maintained the same position among the leaves and did not fly about.

Kay's experience at Obma's in Dodgeville today occupied most of the time on the telephone. I had persuaded him to get her to sit for a photograph. She came utterly unprepared, wet with rain, all unwitting, unaware that Edgar waited for her, and was so taken aback at his suggestion that he photograph her that she was in position before she began to cerebrate and came to the conclusion that my hand was in this. So she sat furious and grim while he took 30 shots or so, prodding her with, "Don't you ever think happy thoughts?" She, for her part, convinced that her appearance did not warrant photographs, grew increasingly enraged, and when he had done brushed past him and out of the shop, and all the way home promised herself "I'll kill him!" -- with me in mind. As soon as possible she telephoned me, and began to spill her fury; but I would not listen, I was in the midst of supper, and I told her to call me later. "Don't worry, I will!" she cried. And later she did call, considerably calmed down, and now able to appreciate the comedy in the situation, which she now recounted with much laughter at her predicament: in the face of her sisters' wonder at the "strangeness" of it all, she knew who had engineered it and yet could not reveal it, lest it arouse their suspicion about our precise relationship.

10 September 1968: To vote this morning, and then over to Erv Schneller's -- where the glow of his dahlias in superb bloom smote my eye. He bestowed some bittersweet cuttings on me, and then led me up through the pasture into the woods to show me a vine he had asked me to identify. I could not do it. The heart-shaped leaves and the thick cluster of small dark blue to black berries growing from the stem near the crotch of the leaf struck me as some kind of spikenard, but I could not subsequently find it in any nature guide on my shelves. Walking back, came upon thousands of small galls, only slightly larger than linden seeds, which had fallen from the underside of leaves of a black oak -- some still adhered to the leaves overhead. These too, occasioned me some curiosity; I thought them the product of some of the gall-midges, but again, I could not discover them in my references. Paused at the house for a little while to talk with Hilda and Erv, drinking a little wine with them, and hearing all the details of their grandson's return from military service. Observed that the room was filled with decoration from the woods -- bittersweet, aspen catkins, carrion berries, wild crabapples.

Dorothy Litersky stopped by this afternoon. She was visiting Esther Trautmann, and was diligently about gathering "material" for a biography of me, for all that I did not think her really qualified to write such a book, to say nothing of its being unlikely to find a publisher. She intended to persist, whether or not I approved; I could say only that I did not object, but took a dim view of the project. Effie telephoned later to say that she had been at the library -- indeed, I had seen her there when I brought around some books -- and had also come to see her to ask questions.

Into the marshes this evening at 6:15. A west by northwest wind blew, and the Wisconsin was uncommonly high. A lad preceded me; I saw him descend the embankment at the east channel bridge -- perhaps he had a setline there -- and presently come up and return; I passed him on Bergen's Island. Fish rose tonight in the east channel -- bass and some catfish that I could see. Ahead, along the embankment, two young rabbits came running toward me, but when I stopped walking, both stopped running. I marvelled at their protective coloring, one, among the short turning grasses there, being almost impossible to descry; both presently ran off, as I came on. ... At the Spring Slough Trestle I could find no gentian in bloom, though 19 cardinal flower spires still shone in the green, most of them now fading with the advancing season. At the east end eight balmony plants flowered. The sloughs very high tonight, and a muskrat moving in the Spring Slough. Carrion berries and pale green seedpods of climbing false buckwheat could be seen along the embankment toward and past the brook, which was rain swollen too. Many robins were in the vicinity of the brook, querulous, not singing, together with some cedar waxwings. Everywhere osier berries -- dark blue to pale blue and green. I walked to the Mid-Meadow Trestle and turned back. At the Spring Slough Trestle, heard a peeper singing its muted song in the Upper Meadow, and there met Forrest Hartmann who turned to walk back with me. So home and to work.

With Dennis to the Genz Pocket, where we sat for a while in the car to watch the moonrise. Then I walked out, leaving Dennis, to go down the road and back, enjoying the cool night, owl calls, dogs barking, the fragrances and odors of the countryside, the diminishing choir of cricket song. Saturn stood to the right of the moon, and Capella on the left, with the Ram above; while in the west Antares rode low, and Arcturus was lowering westward. So home and, after writing a light poem for Kay, to bed.

11 September 1968: To Heiney's Crossing just after noon and down the tracks, after spending some time watching warblers -- migrants in the aspen tree west of the studio while I was on the telephone with Kay: myrtle, blackburnian, and some others I could not clearly identify. The sun warm in a cloudless sky, though the temperature was a mild and pleasant 70°. Observed an unusual amount of red color in the leaves of prickly ash. In one place along the tracks a little hog-nosed snake lay sunning itself; it moved over to lie along the track when I went by, along the lip of one rail, but was not otherwise disturbed, darting out its tongue to smell me as I passed. I walked not quite to the Heights where they encroached upon the track area -- and turned, uncommonly tired. Managed to write two poems to Kay. Observed the deepening color of more bottled gentians, and the fading taking place in the prairie gayfeather.

At six with Dennis driving, took the children to Dodgeville to sit for a family group

at Obma's Studio. Myself very tired. Much talk of Kay; Ed praised her "elfin beauty, her fine bones, her sylphlike figure," but his pictures of her -- proofs of which he sent along back with me -- would not please her, though I saw five I liked: here she was without artifice, and no less beautiful, though I knew that she saw herself as more essentially a woman prepared with some artifice to face the world. Home swiftly thereafter, Ed having taken some shots of Dennis -- who froze before the camera -- and of me, rather formal. Myself almost directly to bed, once Dennis had gone home.

12 September 1968: Met Kay by arrangement at the Bee-Zee store this morning to give her Obma's proofs; she thought them terrible of her, as I had foreseen that she would, and immediately threatened to destroy them so that I could not have any of them made, only to learn that I had noted the numbers of those I liked -- so that her gesture would have been futile. Did not linger, lest we attract attention seen together, but agreed to meet again at six or thereabouts at Frenchy's, with the children, and dine together there.

To Heiney's Crossing at one this afternoon, and to walk leisurely down the tracks for two miles, taking the sun, for the day was warm enough to justify going shirtless -- a fine wind blowing out of the southwest, no cloud in the sky. Behind me, Alma Walsh and Carol Lang debouched from a car, and began to walk up the tracks in search of cattails, but I was soon out of their sight. I went reading a little, but for the most part turning Kay over in my thoughts, as so often now, and anticipating the day with her tomorrow. Observed yet more bottle gentians blue in the grasses, and the greater fading of blazing star and wild sunflowers. The air very fragrant, of summer still.

In late afternoon with the children to Frenchy's, to wait for Kay and her little Lisa to join us, which they did presently, and thereafter to linger over an excellent dinner before parting, as always, with reluctance. Kay cool, attractive, very beautiful in a little girl dress she wore very well, and Lisa bewitching, though, like most small children, she did not eat very well and was intent upon holding the stage as much as possible. Home by way of 78 and 14, not trusting myself to look back.

Late tonight, after visiting Clara Merkel, to walk the Genz Pocket with ~~George Mark~~ Dennis Mack, and to pause at the Ferry Bluff landing to watch the moon rise, a gibbous moon, dimming the Pleiades.

13 September 1968: Kay all day -- a wonderful, shatteringly beautiful day. She came with dinner prepared; I had laid out the table, prepared tea, a fruit salad, morels (which she only sampled gingerly, manifestly repelled by their spongelike appearance, so that she never obtained a fair taste of them). She had brought, too, an elegant mint-flavored chocolate cake, with some rum and almond flavor also, though more subdued than the mint, as always in any combination including mint. After dinner to the studio, and there we lay together all this lovely afternoon, clothing discarded -- an afternoon stolen from time and set apart forever. She did not leave until almost seven, and it filled me with tears to see her going, and afterward, having no appetite, I took no supper, and went into the village and walked for an hour on air, and came back home to go through the motions of working, but did none, obsessed with Kay's lovely body.

To walk the Genz Pocket with George Mark late tonight, at moonrise, up and down, still on air, still emotionally high -- a fine, aromatic summer night, with Arcturus westering, Antares scarcely visible setting, Aries and Capella up the eastern slopes near the moon and Saturn. Did not sleep until very late.

14 September 1968: Cap Kahn telephoned this morning to say that Norma had died; she had never come back to consciousness after surgery over three weeks ago. She was 59, a fortnight younger than I. He asked me to pallbear, but I could not, for Tuesday, the day of her funeral, Kay had promised to come out. I suggested Hugo, however, but he had already thought of him. Norma's only child, Norman, could not come in time for Monday services as I suggested so that I might serve.

Kay on the telephone today -- and at the house for an hour and a half this afternoon. I am clearly -- and for the first time in my life -- no longer in control. I saw her come with the utmost pleasure, saw her leave with deep regret.

businessmen -- said that he could hardly wait for Labor Day and an end to the crush of tourists to come. From the slide, the children crossed to theGo-Kart entertainment, and filled themselves there with all the driving they wanted, while I sat in the car to read. Thence to another slide, and then to the Del-Bar to eat, reaching home at 6:15. Dennis took the children in and returned for a while before taking his bicycle in.

With George Marx to walk the Genz Pocket road tonight for the first time in over two months, for the mosquito plague -- if not ended -- had at least diminished to the point where vigorous swiping at them kept them off. Stood for a while to talk with Norman Genz's son, who came driving up and stopped, but not long enough for the mosquitoes to call up reinforcements. At this hour, just past sundown, heard whippoorwills, many crickets, a barred owl calling from the bottoms, and the inevitable dogs. The air was wonderfully fragrant -- in part with the musk of bastard toad-flax, in part with that of corn and the bottoms -- a stimulating sweet pungence that pervaded the evening. -- From the Pocket drove out to C and turned, and once again walked in the Pocket -- this time with stars showing among the clouds: Antares and Arcturus, Spica setting, Vega, Altair, the Heavenly Archer. All now was still save for crickets and katydids -- and not as many of them as in former years, but the air was even more fragrant than it had been an hour before. So back to the house to talk until the children came home from a baseball game and fireworks at the ball park.

18 August 1968: Up and to the 7:30 Mass this morning. George Marx was the morning reader, and, as usual, he swallowed some of his words and went a little too fast; however, Msgr. Van Berkel made up for his fleetness by being deliberately slow.

In early afternnon with the children to the ball park to view paintings on exhibit there -- including some acrylics by Marian Enge, which I told her were all essentially phallic. Some talk with the Kappinens, while I observed that Ursula's paintings and watercolors alike lacked contrast, for all that she did a great many of them, and had now varied her work to include some line drawings. Bought a painting by John Patzer -- a purchase award painting Paul Meyer had urged me to buy, since evidently the ubiquitous Paul had more than a hand in the events of the Sommerfest, which today's various activities were bringing to a close.

Late today with Dennis and the children to Frenchy's for dinner, and then to the Dane County Coliseum to listen with as much patience as I could muster to a concert by three groups of modern musicians -- the first called "the underground sunshine" proved to be rausous and overly loud and produced nothing that could be called music; the second, called "the Box-Tops," were an improvement, and did at least two our three numbers that could be listened to with some enjoyment; the third, the "Beach Boys", were more given to melody; but in all three the amplification was distorted and deadly, worst of all being the opening group -- as if all the singers and players had already sustained such severe aural damage that they could not any longer distinguish over-amplification, a possibility I thought extremely likely. The children, however, enjoyed this display; though I noticed that many of the audience -- composed mostly of young people, with an average age, I concluded, of 18, did not applaud very enthusiastically for any of the numbers -- though a comedy trio, the Pickle Brothers, preceding the Beach Boys, aroused a good deal of well-earned laughter. I had to get out and walk around outside the auditorium for part of the time, prior to the Beach Boys, for the noise -- and it was that, certainly not music -- was too much for my eardrums. Afterward, directly home and at once to bed.

19 August 1968: After rain during the night, this morning across the bridges. The weather growing more humid, though the morning was still cool. Crows, killdeers, pewees, chewinks, wrens, robins, grackles and a distant flicker made music in the morning air, borne on the south wind which was rapidly increasing the day's humidity by funnelling Gulf air into Wisconsin. On the west channel bridge Leykauf and Hornung fished, with Walter catching the majority of the fish. Along the horizons lay thunderheads, very beautiful in the morning sun showing pink and bright along their convoluted flanks. I turned reluctantly into Sac Prairie and a mound of morning mail that brought in 140 orders amounting to 140 books with which to begin this week's business.

Scintillant flashes, crescent shaped, continuing in the corner of my right eye, made an appointment with Jim Dollard in Madison tomorrow morning at ten.

To walk tonight with George Marx in the Genz Pocket -- again a rather long walk, following an hour and a half on the telephone with Kay. Two swamp owls kept up a desultory conversation -- one on the hills to the north, the other in the ditch trees east of the road where we walked, quite nearby, though the ventriloquial quality of its voice made his exact whereabouts uncertain. Saw also two opossums --in separate places on the road, about half a mile apart. The night air was very fragrant with the kind of pungence common to late summer or early autumn; no wind stirred. In the east the Pleiades rode just above the treeline of the hill, under Aries to the left; Saturn and Capella were already well up heaven, while in the west Arcturus neared the line of hills there. Walked perhaps forty minutes, and then returned home.

In the course of her visit today Kay told me in confidence the circumstances of Lisa's conception, which disturbed me more than I had thought, for I woke in the night and got up and paced the floor, somewhat agitated, eventually to sit down before the typewriter to write a letter to Rikki and a poem for Kay. To bed again at 3:A:M.

15 September 1968: Into the marshes this morning after seven, after sunrise, the temperature ca. 53°, the air still but not foggy, though low mists lay over the trackbed east of the Wisconsin. Crows cawed, nuthatches, crickets, and cedar waxwings sang, and, near the Spring Slough a lone wood thrush still sang its muted but recognizable songs. The Roxbury bells rang out, deep-toned and resonant, while I walked the Spring Slough Trestle, counting the bottle gentians (two only) and the cardinal flowers (still 17). A little flock of teal flew up the slough into the lake, and to the south a solitary Hyla pickeringii sang its somewhat distorted song. Near the brook two Rana pipiens moved along the tracks to get out of my way, and in the Lower Meadow the larks sang, and redwing conquerees could be heard, together with the mewing sounds of catbirds, and the songs of yellow warblers, robins, and goldfinches. Went only to Brook Trestle II, for the sun was now too high and too warm to warrant further hiking; and there turned. Wild roses in bloom again, and the pungence of willows come upon here and there.

Kay down for an hour this afternoon. She reported a dialogue last night with Lisa. She had said to her daughter, "I love you very much." and her daughter had replied, "I love you very much too." "How much?" "Ten dollars." "Oh, that isn't very much." "What's very much?" "Oh, a hundred dollars." "Well, I love you $100 then." Lisa then asked to be permitted to color instead of going to sleep. Kay would not let her. "Then I only love you $10," said Lisa. Once again thereafter, when Kay returned home, an hour and a half on the telephone. Nevertheless, managed to bring my journal up to date and to resume work on royalties reports, as well as revise a poem Kay had read, and about which she had made an emotional suggestion that turned out to be critically sound. Some curious objections to my writing about her naked loveliness. Observed also in her demeanour a subtle drift toward emasculation.

16 September 1968: An overcast day, with occasional rain. Little sun shone. I spent it all at home, save for a brief visit at the harness shop later in the afternoon. There Hugh complained of his tasks, declaring that "even the canning factory would be better than that damned house" -- referring to the Fuchs house, still under extensive repair. Observed that the badly cut back grape vine over the arbor in back of the house had now fully recovered and covered the frame Hugh had constructed. Completed royalty reports today, at long last, and got them off -- a trivial task much interrupted and strung out by the persistence of the affair with Kay, taking precedence over all else. Over two hours on the telephone today. ... Dennis out to work tonight, as usual, and with him to the Genz Pocket for a half hour's dallying, walking up and down the road there, drinking in the fragrance of the humid evening.

17 September 1968: A day of rain. Kay managed to come down for almost two hours in late afternoon, making a very pleasant interlude in an otherwise grey day.

18 September 1968: Kay down for two hours. Both at the house and over the telephone this evening, the slow process of emasculation continuing -- an interesting phenomenon, and evidently subconsciously motivated. ... Pat and Leah Young in for an hour's visit -- happily just as Kay took her leave, so that we were not deprived of each other for any time she could spend here.

After dinner at the Flamingo with the Rubers and the children, took Peter and Gail around a little to show them some of the Steve/Sim story settings and some of the Walden West houses, ending up at dusk at the Ferry Bluff landing. A whippoorwill called faintly there -- great blue herons knarked at the bars, two wood ducks cried near the mouth of Honey Creek, their cree-ee outlasting both heron calls and the song of the whippoorwill. So presently to the house until 9:30, when I took Peter and Gail back to the motel.

22 September 1968: Astounded early this morning to have a long-distance call from Marcia Masters Schmid, a call that rapidly developed (again!) into a proposal of marriage. "I'm so lonely here in this apartment all by myself. I still love you." -- und so weiter; that she was lonely I could not doubt, that she still loved me I doubted profoundly for she had demonstrated beyond cavil that she was incapable of loving anyone but herself. Indeed, her proposal was couched in all the familiar terms -- expressing her need, thinking not at all of mine: I ought to marry her, I ought to be grateful for her love, I should uproot myself and come down there to occupy her apartment with her -- there was not even the remotest suggestion of any genuine accommodation. Her ardor was considerably chilled, however -- after she had announced that her daughter, Andrea Lee, now 18, had "found out" all about me, and had told her that, "If you don't go up there after him, I'll go for him for myself." -- when, on asking what I now wrote, I told her I was at work on a book of love lyrics -- obviously indicating a current love. The conversation had the effect of underscoring again the essential woman Kay is, the complex but not insular individual possessed of a singular elan not dependent upon anyone else, even myself.

In a drenching rain picked up Rubers, took them to Lang's for breakfast, and, scarcely an hour later, for lunch -- the children electing to stay home -- and then to sit talking with them, all three of us tired, until bus time, after which, exhausted, I came home, th lie down until it was time for the children to go to dinner and then to the movie in Upper Sac Prairie, while I went home to work.

At eight came Kay -- restless and, as she said, "bitchy" -- sans any kind of make-up, wearing a saque that heightened her sexual attraction, expressing her second self -- her "Miss Germ" self. I fell in love with her all over again, could not kiss her enough, had all I could do to keep from making love to her, and only her being in menstruation prevented me. She seemed to me utterly, utterly desirable, completely relaxed, uncaring, loving -- not at all "bitchy" though she might well have seemed so to Greg, whom she had left at home with Lisa -- and her arms around me and her plum-sweet mouth to mine filled me with an ecstasy not known, not experienced for too many years, made me know again, full well, why I had avoided any attachment to a woman for a decade, knowing myself and the way I lose myself in love. She left only when I had to go for the children at the theatre, and, coming back, I went to bed, cradling that wonderful woman in my heart.

23 September 1968: A letter this morning from Jesse Stuart, to whom I had written about Kay: "August, love while you can! Scandal or no scandal! Love while TIME is with you." I had expected more conservative caution.

Kay out for almost two hours this afternoon and we were lost to the world. Telephoning later from her home, she declared herself "madly in love", not knowing what she was about for much of the time, so that I could not keep from saying that now she knew how I had felt ever since the first time I had kissed her a month ago today.

A day of rain -- again. I kept to the house for most of it, save for half an hour spent at the harness shop over a glass of sherry with Hugh.

Me, Ernest Osterfund, showed up in the mail today with the duplicate of a letter he had written to the State Architect. I had seen Ernie on Friday evening when I paid a visit to Carl Lachmund at the hospital, Ernie sitting in the foyer. Ernie was outraged over the changes Dorothy Knowles had wrought in the building. "last year when Mrs-Gov- Knowls - got her- Nuty - streak - to Run the Governers - Repsion room - I wrot A letter to Senator Frank E-Panzer- he send me A letter back .... Why - did you let this - Lunitic- Rune- this- Grandest room in the Capitol-. ... in all theas Years- I took some of the Greatest Artest

Architect- and Geologest- in the World thrue that ROOM -- One time A Lady - Just came from Vinice- she said I was in that - room - last week - and this is Just - Exactely ... But it is A sinch -- Since- she- runed the - Reseption Room -- We cant say that - enney more-- Since This Lunitic - Runed it --. But it will bee like lots of- Laws- that- Nuty Polititions - passed - and in A few years it is - Repealed -. Back to "Normell - So i Predict --in A few years ..."

24 September 1968: A fine sunny day, with the temperature 75°+. At noon I walked down the tracks from Heiney's Crossing, reading and writing (a poem for "Miss Germ", Kay's alter ego), taking pleasure in the flowers still in blossom -- tall, beautiful spires of goldenrod, bottle gentians, the very last of the blazing star (only a few blossoms here and there), wild asters in white and blue, some mullein, horsemint, bouncing Bet, wild sunflowers, smartweed. Observed that cattails were now seeding out, and looked ragged -- milkweed pods opening to spill their feathered seeds to the southwest wind that blew. Everywhere today many yellow pieras and some Monarchs fluttering about and clinging to flowers widely away from the railroad tracks, and here and there a sphinx moth (Deilephelia lineata) at the bouncing Bet. In many places the dried slime-trails of snails on the cross ties of the rail bed. Turning and walking back, I startled up hundreds of redwinged blackbirds from the reeds north of Heiney's Crossing. Gathered a few new bottle gentians before going home.

Kay four hours on the telephone today. In the course of the day's last conversation she told me a "secret" -- that by a year from today we would be married. I was shaken, feeling like a boy who has been reaching for the moon for years and has suddenly been told he would get it -- and beginning to wonder whether he could adequately take care of it. I could not help wondering, too, whether Kay had ever been thwarted in getting anything to which she set her mind or heart.

25 September 1968: Kay out for two hours out of this world in the studio. She brought me -- again -- the sun and moon and stars, flowers and birdsong, and everything beautiful -- and nothing more beautiful exists than her lovely body. I observed today something yet more integral to her inner core, a kind of virginal self, which she desires to keep inviolable, and that inviolability is, curiously, evidently associated with her failure to climax in sexual play or intercourse. This may, indeed, be stronger than her sexual trauma, but the trauma also exists and plays a role in her reactions, and it is in this trauma that the compulsion toward emasculation of the male is rooted. She had today veered away from her decision that we would be married in a year's time, and was entertaining quite another proposition. It seemed to me not beyond the realm of possibility that the novelty of this affair might soon begin to wear off.

26 September 1968: I was not entirely surprised this morning when Kay called to cancel an engagement for early this afternoon. Her excuses were bona fide (indeed, they could not have been more valid), but, since she knew that I had particularly planned on her coming today for an amorous two hours, I could not escape the conviction that this was a ploy in her emasculation game, and instantly determined that if she pressed this much more I would bring this affair -- deeply pleasurable and satisfactory as it has been -- to a rapid end. Far better a clean severing than a protracted agony.

Alice Meise Hawley out this afternoon with a visiting friend, who was curious about the place I lived, and, I suppose, about me. They had really not intended to come in, but catching sight of me in the lawn, picking a puffball, and examining various mushrooms growing there, they drove in, and presently came into the house at my invitation, and went through it. Alice, I thought, though recently widowed, seemed much the most attractive of the Meise girls, and struck me as fresh-looking and younger than her years. Her friend, however, was unimpressive, and much given to making inane comments. They did not stay long.

Worked with Dennis for a while tonight in the studio -- then, before the moon had set, walked the Genz Pocket road with him, watching the moon near Antares, and across the heavens, the rising of Capella and Saturn and Aries. The night cool. Dogs barked, now and then barred owls and horned owls called, but all else was still. Returning, sat for a while in the car, watching the moon grow orange as it settled toward the rim of earth, and then turned and went back to the house to resume the evening's work.

27 September 1968: An apocalyptic day! Promptly at nine this morning Kay appeared -- dispelling all yesterday's doubts and fears -- not Kay, really, but Miss Germ, Kay being carried in the clothing she meant to put on. I had left the bed tidy for tonight, and we were soon in it, lost to loving, and presently I discovered, thanks to her guidance, that her sexual pleasure was primarily clitoral rather than vaginal, and, this discovery made, I managed without difficulty to bring her to climax orally -- her first with me, and, evidently, her first climax in a considerable time. So spent two memorable hours, the beauty of her naked body moving me deeply, the passion of her kisses warming me to my roots. At eleven, at last -- after she had put on Kay and hidden Miss Germ -- off for Chicago in her Mercury. Directly to O'Hare Terminal -- and no journey to Chicago ever went so fast, not because she drove at great speed, but simply because the simpatico that bound us each to each erased all sense of time. O'Hare impressed me in its vast complex of buildings and runways grouped around a central parking lot which held over a thousand cars, perhaps two thousand. By dint of driving around, found a parking space half a mile from the entrance to United's quarters. Once in the building, Kay, who was familiar with it, took me around from the baggage chute to the information desk, where we were told that Flight 322, due in at 2:20 instead of 2:30, had not yet been assigned a runway, and, assuming that it would be late, went over to the Seven Continents restaurant and took a luncheon more leisurely than we intended because of poor service. As a result, ~~~~ we found on reaching the assigned runway, that 322 had long since landed, and hastily returned toward the baggage deck, only to encounter George Marx, about to have me paged a second time, at the information desk, and with him descended to where Mother sat with the baggage, waiting, and worried almost to the point of illness, certain that I lay dead in an automobile accident somewhere. Indeed, her first words were, "This is unlike you!" and indeed it was, but I reminded her of the size of the terminal, the time it took to walk to any one point in it, and of my strangeness in it, and she was mollified. She took in Kay and no doubt assumed that there was some kind of bond between us, though she said nothing about it, and launched, as soon as were in the car, into an account of her visit in California, which was broken only by our having a flat tire -- a snow tire bursting! -- in Rock County, resulting in some delay while we had a new tire put on in place of the inadequate spare which was put on by two state troopers who came up to our parked car. Thence to Frenchy's for dinner, and so home. Once home, with Mother talking to Hildred on the telephone, took Kay out into the moonlit drive to show her some stars, to kiss that lovely mouth again and again, and finally bid her goodnight, grieving to see her go. But, when I got into bed, I found there her fragrance, left from the morning's loving and slept in it, only to get up later and put down what I felt for her.

28 September 1968: Mother's first day at home after her holiday. She busied herself, as always, but particularly today to examine into the condition of the kitchen, the refrigerator, et al, commenting on the cleanliness of the house -- April having cleaned thoroughly last Thursday, the night before we had gone to O'Hare. She was soon settled back into her customary niche, and somewhat more composed after her initial shock at the knowledge that I contemplated marrying Kay if she went to the divorce court in Las Vegas.

A letter from Inez Weaver today, revealing a hidden segment of her life. "Would you be surprised if I told you that I have gone through this. Eric was a switchboard and radio installer, good looking, influential in his line of business, financially well off & attractive. He 'fell' for me. It was a long time before I realized this. The sad fact was I too 'fell' for him. His wife was a wheel-chair invalid, whiney, always dissatisfied, & made home life for him unbearable. He was a fine man. He came openly to see me. A wonderful man. I am not ashamed to say I loved him. He offered to financially make his wife a fine settlement & at last she accepted it. My father who liked him immensely was all for it (he & Dick), mother wasn't. The day he filed for divorce he was taken ill & 3 days later kidney poisoning killed him. He sent for me & I went to the hospital in Chicago. His wife would not go to his bedside. He died while I was there. It almost seems like a dream now. ... I just picked up my life & went on & hardly anyone knew this or was aware of it. To this day I still love Eric. .. Sometimes driving alone to one of my libraries, I would stop along the road, run to a convenient stop & put my head on the steering wheel and cry and cry."

With George Marx tonight to walk the Genz Pocket road -- a night of clouds with occasional glimpses of the moon, a humid, fragrant night. Raccoons and opossums were abroad, and owls called from time to time out of the bottoms along the Wisconsin. Did not walk overly long, being tired.

29 September 1968: In to Mass at 7:30 this morning with the children, an unedifying hour, with Fr. Heitke rambling on in the full flower of churchianity. ... Observed in the aspen this morning from the west window of the studio a large number of myrtle warblers, evidently migrants, foraging.

Took Mother to ride toward Denzer and Leland this afternoon, intending to drive toward Maple Hill in search of colorful maple leaves; but found that color had not yet advanced sufficiently so we circled around to the Irish Valley and came home through Witwen. Here and there a few brilliantly scarlet maple trees, but on the whole far too little color. Saw two redtails and a marsh harrier along the way, as well as the expected flocks of grackles and redwings. En route, Mother held forth on the subject of my attachment to Kay, underscoring the age gap, of which I was only too painfully aware. She found at last that I could not be budged, but took some satisfaction in my conviction that no marriage would take place because Kay would in the end not seek a divorce from Greg, unless put under pressure to break off with me before the fire had had time to subside a little.

In late afternoon to walk down the tracks from Heiney's Crossing, in search of some tranquility and peace of mind, Kay very much in my thoughts; but alas, I was followed by Paul Meyer and his brood, together with their large black dog, all of them on and off the tracks, and stirring up a cloud of mosquitoes that pestered me. I called down a pox on Paul and his clan, but Providenc was evidently and as usual not listening. However, thankfully, Paul had more ambitious plans for his brood than a long walk down the tracks; he turned back when I turned into the meadow and presently I returned to the tracks and resumed my walk south. The day very warm, with the temperature ca. 77°, and little wind to stir the air. Tortoise-shell butterflies danced along the way, and two great horned owls called to each other in the bottoms south of Heiney's Slough Redwing flocks rose up and flew wheeling from one place to another. Gentians were now beginning generally to fade, though some blossoms were still bright blue. Here and there sphinx moths sought the bouncing Bet, but wild asters were still in full bloom, together with some bladder campion and rattlesnake weed. Color here was sparing, but bright -- in bittersweet fruit, poison ivy, Virginia creeper, sumac, prickly ash, maples and oak. Cattails generally were now disintegrating, the seeds dropping to the wind. ... Pausing later at the brook along 78, I saw two wood-chuck burrows in the bank of the hill across from the road, both quite fresh, and evidently intended for the winter.

Kay on the telephone for two hours.

30 September 1968: Chris Meng out briefly this afternoon for a box with which to ship cookies to Rikki. She expected her child this week. I observed that after five minutes she had exhausted her conversation, and seemed utterly unable to communicate. Kay came in and occupied her attention for another five minutes, after which she left and Kay remained for almost two hours, time that sped too fleetly, as always.

After she had gone to pick up Lisa from nursery school, myself to walk up the tracks from Heiney's Crossing. Observed several woolly bear caterpillers, all with wide brown bands, presaging, according to the bucolic weather prophets, a mild winter. Oswald Ballweg came out of the Lower Meadow along the Triangle Lane, pulling some of his machinery, which suggested that he had done haying there; but Werner Mack was at it, cutting his area of the meadow for one last time. Walking along to north of the Mid-Meadow Trestle, I heard peepers cry out now and then, and a Hyla gryllus, katydids, redwings, crickets, and robin plaints.

In the village today watched Betty Meng striding along, her hair in a straggly ponytail. She wore a dark jacket over a pale green skirt. Her expression was unaccountably grim, and she answered greetings almost curtly, making no attempt to smile. She seemed to me to be turning even further inward once more.

With Dennis tonight into the Genz Pocket by moonlight. Sat for a while in the car, then walked the Pocket road, listening to horned owls calling, and the insect stridulations from the roadsides, but did not walk there for more than half an hour, and then turned to go into the Ferry Bluff road, where mosquitoes discourage further walking. So homee

Kay on the telephone for an hour and a half tonight.

1 October 1968: Into the marshes by way of the bridges this morning. The angling team of Leykauf and Hornung were already on the west channel bridge, though they had only just come and had as yet had no response to their bait. The east channel bridge haunted by migrating bluebirds, and the river there with robins, while beyond, from the Spring Slough Trestle south, various warblers, redwings, grackles, bluebirds and robins were in evidence. Below the Spring Slough Trestle three gentians in full bloom, and two cardinal flowers still showing red, though all else was color -- chiefly of Virginia creeper winding up into the trees around the boles, all scarlet and carmine now, together with the mottled red of poison ivy. The sun rose as I walked along, out of a low cloudbank, and set off a few peepers, crying from the southern reaches of the Spring Slough. Turned at the trestle before the brook and went back. Hornung had caught a pike and was in the act of pulling in a large sucker when I went by, and Leykauf complained of his own bad luck.

Took Mother to Plain to spend the day at Hetzels, thus clearing the house for Kay, who came at one, radiant, bringing me Miss Germ; and we were soon abed, making love with singular harmony and the utmost in mutual co-operation, so that Miss Germ achieved multiple climaxes. "I've never been so loved," she declared, and yet I had only begun to let go when it was unhappily necessary for her to leave, after but two hours, leaving me bereft to such an extent that I found it virtually impossible to work. I found it remarkable to be so obsessed with her -- a genuine overruling passion absolutely out of my control for the first time in my life, a troubling fact, one that haunted me for the rest of the day and night.

Dennis out tonight, and with him to ride to the Ferry Bluff and back by moonlight. A warm, pleasant, fragrant night, though with many mosquitoes.

2 October 1968: Into Madison this morning and directly to Hilldale, where I parked and went shopping -- for baked goods for Hugh, and candy for Kay; and then waited upon her arrival soon after eleven. With her up into Madison, to the Dayton Street Parking ramp, from which to walk leisurely to the Simon House, pausing at the Perfume Shop, where Kay kept discreetly behind, unwilling to be identified as the recipient of the jewelry I had been buying for her. So began a halcyon day. At the Simon House, sat against the far wall in a booth, yielding to her unvoiced invitation to be kissed -- which in itself was extraordinary, knowing how I frown upon demonstrations of affection in public; yet it was plain that she desired this symbol of conquest since she was unrecognized and I was not, and it was evidence of a certain triumph of hers that I should be seen openly kissing her, which I did not mind; indeed, it rather amused and touched me. From the Simon House leisurely over to the Capitol Theatre to watch Rachel, Rachel, while we sat in the back row kissing and holding to each other like two high school adolescents. Then to shop a little, and at last to go back to Hilldale, to shop further and, at Rennebohms, to duck down in a booth when Mrs. Ray Schwoegler and her daughter went by unseeing. Waited out a shower at Gimbel's, and then went back to the cars, and drove separately out to the Pines for dinner, under Florence Bennett's watchfully curious eye. Only then, after dinner, did we part, on the edge of sundown, she to drive home on 12, I to go on 14 and 78, to deliver Hugh's bread and coffeecake, then to go home and relive the day, writing a poem -- One October Day -- to commemorate it.

3 October 1968: A day of migrants. Foraging west of the house today saw myrtle and palm warblers, Northern water thrush, pewees -- all busy in the oak, the aspen, and on the ground among the fallen leaves. ... A day of work. I managed at long last to catch up on past correspondence, some of it dating back to July. ... Kay on the telephone. ... Mother in to sit at Ferbers, who were irate because someone had during the night cut off four prize cabbage heads. "Oh, I know who it is, I've got a pretty good idea," said Aunt Gene darkly. Perhaps her habit of "bragging up" her produce had aroused someone's envy -- understandably. .. Dennis out to pack books tonight, working until after ten. Outside, the night slowly cooling toward a first frost.

4 October 1968: First frost in the night, but too light for anything but tomatoes in open places. ... Hugh in the canning factory once more -- taking the place, temporarily, of a sick employee, according to him. ... Kay out this morning with her news stories for the Capital Times and Milwaukee Jounnal. And again this evening, after her work at the World Food Expo at the Colliseum in Madison, to stay three hours, much too tired for much loving. While she was here, Sandy telephoned, and I inadvertently called her "honey" at which Kay went into a jealous rage, which, though flattering, was hardly justified. She left me much disturbed, and I put in a largely sleepless night, in a rage with myself for being so much in love.

5 October 1968: In late morning into Madison with the children, Dennis driving, going directly up town to the parking ramp -- a cool windy day. I went first with Walden to Herman Didriksen's tailoring establishment and tried on my new suit, finding that it was a good fit and made me look trimmer than I had looked in years, in some part due certainly to my loss of weight, for I weighed in at 230 lbs. and meant to go lower. Thence to the Perfume Shop tp pick up two /pr&d/ necklaces -- one of gold and pearls, the other of silver and pearls, with matching ear-rings, for Kay. Rejoined Dennis and April thereafter, and drove on out tothe beltline and to Sandy's home, finding all there, as usual, in some degree of upset -- with Art in bed with a fever and cold, Roberta washing dishes and muttering about getting her own apartment, Sandy intent on taking the baby along, which I thought a lunatic decision, though she was prevailed upon to leave her behind. We were soon off for the Coliseum and the World Food Exposition, finding it aglut with people -- though not overly crowded, thanks to a World Series game being played and a football game in Randall Stadium. Kay had not yet come to work at the egg display -- a Sentry Food Stores exhibition -- but Shirley Franke, who was on duty, thought she would come on soon. Meanwhile, we walked among the exhibits, crossed to the Youth pavilion, ate some sukiyaki -- awkwardly with chopsticks, after which, leaving the rest of them, I went back to where Kay worked and stood there talking with her -- and Louella Mortensen, who came over "to gossip", as she put it, about the lack of stability in both Sandy and Art, Louella having been Sandy's first "boss" at WKOW years ago ("You know, she came up to me one day, and I didn't recognize her!" said Louella.). Came Sandy and the children presently; I introduced the two women, observing with some amusement how each surreptitiously sized the other up -- Kay deciding Sandy was a doll but with a patina of hardness, Sandy later ingenuously asking whether Kay was divorced, and losing interest as soon as I said that she and her husband were building a big house in the village. Thence to take Sandy and her children home, not pausing, and to hasten onward to Middleton and the Pines before the football crowd reached there, for dinner. So home, myself by now very tired, and early to bed despite George Marx's evening visit.

Learned today that Otto Mueller had died of a heart attack, at 73, yesterday morning, and that a daughter, Michelle Anne, had been born to Chris Meng. Rikki telephoned tonight to ask that I send her some roses, which I could not do until Monday. "It's a funny feeling to be a father, said he.

6 October 1968: A vegetating day. So much preoccupied with Kay that I could accomplish very little -- a quartet of letters, four pages of book reviews. Mother in to Ferber's, and April to cycle into the village, leaving Walden to watch football games on television, and myself to cradle my obsession with Kay in the studio. Early to bed, still very tired, though I had kept abed until eight this morning.

7 October 1968: At noon today to the cemetery to join a scant two dozen other mourners at the burial service for Otto Mueller. Dorothy seemed composed, but I could not help thinking of her youthful abhorrence of having a child, and wondered whether she now, in her sixties, did not wish she had overcome that abhorrence. Perhaps not. Her old friend Chud, was there, and Norbert and Pauline Nickel, but not their son, and not Artha, ill at her home, though Artha's children, her daughter Ellen, looking much like her, and her son, who wore his hair long and looked like a hippie, were among the mourners. Fred Buerki was there, evidently one of the pallbearers; observing him, I was astonished at my not having seen his homosexuality long ago, when in the early 1930s he joined Dorothy, Mark, Carl, and myself in putting on plays in Sac Prairie. The service at the cemetery was brief, thankfully, and conducted by a priest from Madison, who looked like a relative of the Littels -- since Ralph Marquardt had spoken in Madison, and Otto was now being buried in the Catholic cemetery, where supposedly no service other than that by a priest was valid. Some talk thereafter with Dorothy, Pauline and Norbert, Artha's children, the priest -- and then to walk back to the house and resume work on the morning mail, electing not to join the gathering at Koenig's for lunch.

Kay in briefly on her way to Madison, bringing a portion of a cake newly baked, and to take a photograph for use with her Milwaukee Journal article, taking two shots of me holding up the jacket drawing, which I did not think would reproduce well, since Ron Clyne's drawing was so detailed. Then she was off to Madison, and I went inside to taste her cake, which was almost as sweet as her lips, which I would far rather have enjoyed this afternoon and ad infinitum.

Kay's comment stayed with me: "I didn't know I could love again like this; I thought I was incapable of it." For my part, I had expected to escape it and decline quietly into old age. I recalled, not without some uneasiness, a fortune-teller's prophecy in 1930 that I would be married three times, she having already correctly foretold that I would suffer some major physical event ca. 56 or 57 -- which I assumed to be my coronary.

Down this afternoon from Heiney's Crossing -- a fine, sunny day, with the mercury at 65°, a light south wind blowing. Gentians, I saw, were untouched by the night's frost, standing a bright almost cobalt blue in some places; nor was goldenrod much affected by the frost, though its greatest brightness had gone, fading with age. Clouds crossed the heavens swiftly from time to time, shutting away the sun. Milkweed seeds floated up from pods opened to the wind all along the embankment and away in the meadows. Deer tracks showed now and then. Far up the tracks, between Heiney's Crossing and the Triangle Lane Crossing, the section crew was at work. In one place a little hog-hosed snake sunned itself; it was not much alarmed at my appearance, though when I nudged it a little it flattened head and neck and hissed, but refused to play possum, and presently slipped away and under the near rail, head and neck still flattened, until it was well away from the rail. Wrote and read a little, but preoccupation with Kay did not permit much of either.

With Dennis to the Genz Pocket, pausing a little while, and walking briefly before returning so that he could finish his work. A night of clouds, with the moon showing infrequently.

8 October 1968: A day of pleasant bread, spent,most of it,at home, at work on correspondence. Kay out briefly on her way to Madison, and again late tonight, on her way back, staying for an hour -- less long than last night, but the day's most pleasant hour. She was much interested tonight in family album pictures, desirous of seeing pictures of me as a child, a baby, a young man -- and so spent the evening, and, seeing pictures of Iris Furman and Eleanor Allen, had to learn all about them, insistently.

9 October 1968: Another mild, pleasant October day, though I was held for the most part of it at my desk. In the course of the evening Kay telephoned. She had decided, she said, that Evening in Spring was too good a book to be allowed to languish, that it was badly jacketed, and that it ought to be priced at $3.95. I agreed with all but the price, which I thought should be $3.50, and was ultimately forced to agree to send the book to Ron Clyne for a rough of a new jacket. "You need me out there," she declared. "You don't promote your books. We'll change all that when we're married." I could well envision it, though I had to concede, however uncomfortably in the long view, that her ideas were sound.

10 October 1968: Kay on the telephone this morning for an hour and a half.

This fine, sunny afternoon to the Breunig Hill, going in by the Roth gate, and climbing slowly to the hilltop field, from which I crossed into Len Breunig's property and to the first of the wild apple trees there, where I stood devouring the yellow-fleshed apples with their faint alum effect on my lips -- a sweet, succulent apple, with flesh of a fine consistency, juicy and soft. Then I went on tothe red apple tree overlooking the Roxbury valley, and sat there looking down on that tranquil scne, eating apples, and listening to the susurrus of the wind in the leaves. The sky clear, cloudless, the sun warm. Far below farmers worked their fields -- some plowing, some picking corn. Though much yellow and some red had begun to appear in the hills, the dominant color was still green, however much the fields were tan in their patchwork from this hill all across the valley to the farther range. The wind blew out of the west today, a little cool, presaging no colder weather. In the alfalfa field at the east edge of which the red apple tree grew, thousands of yellow and white pieras fluttered from blossom to blossom. Made my way finally to the south line and lay there to read some magazines of poetry and to write a little, but I could not concentrate for thinking of Kay. Heard hawk scream, blue jay cries, cricket stridulation, and the tschek of myrtle warblers. Read for two hours before descending the hill the way I had come.

11 October 1968: Witch hazel blossoms began to open south of the house today, and the highbush cranberry leaves began to turn red among the coral berries.

A wonderful eight hours with Kay. She came at four, her family believing she had to work

in Madison, ran her car into my garage, and chose to go for a hike, if we could be sure we would not be seen together. Much to our mutual amusement, she got into the back seat of the Falcon, lay down, and covered herself with the blanket, not to sit up until we reached the Roth gate. We slipped under the fence and rapidly mounted the near slope without anyone's having seen us, and soon we were lost in the woods, away from sight of anyone passing by. Kay's curiosity burgeoned, for she knew little of the woods; taught her self-heal, juniper berries, countless leaves and plants -- took her out of the hilltop field along the promontory reaching south, and back, retreating before the crowding prickly ash -- thence across the hilltop for the view, and into the area of the wild apple trees. She ate wild apples with me at both trees, delightedly, and watched the Gray's Elegy scene below until we retreated to the eastern edge of the hilltop field and lay down on the blanket in the light of the westering sun, and there remained until the sun slipped behind the trees in a blaze of gold. Then only did we give up our talk of love and go back the way we had come, Kay under the blanket once more. .... Reached the house in time to take the children into the village for the Homecoming football game, then shopped for Mother, went around for the papers, and bought some ham salad sandwiches and French fries for Kay. So home, gathered up sherry, locked the doors, and went to the studio where Kay was reading over all my letters to her and entertaining the idea of seeing them published! -- though they were far too poor as letters for that. ... Soon we were abed and making love. Kay achieved, in four hours, many climaxes in the course of our mutual ecstasy and passion. "I never knew what I was missing," she said once, and again, "I didn't know it was possible to love like this." I was much moved by her solicitude, her tenderness, her consideration and the intensity of her affection. My impassioned kissing and laving of her lovely body stirred her, perhaps because of the novelty of it. We lay in each other's arms until it was time for her to go -- 11:30 and after, four wonderful hours of making love in complete abandon having passed, as it were, in but twenty minutes! Saw her to the car and away, with the sadness I always feel at her going from me, kissing her one last time by the light of the gibbous moon.

12 October 1968: Woke to a bed empty of Kay; saddened anew.

Into Madison this morning to find something for Kay as an anniversary gift for tomorrow -- our first month of love -- and back in two hours to face a heavy complement of mail and orders for 141 books, which had to be processed, for a large shipment of books -- Bright Journey and Wisconsin Murders -- first copies of which came in this morning, the jacket eye-catching -- would come in Monday. Worked all afternoon with Dennis.

George Marx out this evening, in time to walk the Genz Pocket road. The night clouded and humid, with a southwest wind blowing lightly. The humidity heightened the odors of the countryside -- dry leaves, alfalfa, cut corn, the barnyard. Did not stay out long, but returned without seeing any animals save a cat.

13 October 1968: Took Mother to ride west of town late today -- after an inquiring visit from Jane Reck and her daughter, Jennifer, Jane coming to talk about buying books for their "service" to parents -- and found the countryside brilliant with color, every possible shade of yellow and red. Even the aspens were crowned with orange, and, the hard maples having colored later than usual, there was more red to be seen than is common at the time the aspens have changed. Saw in two places a redtailed hawk, and in several places migrating bluebirds. Cut maple leaves along the Genz Pocket road, and went to Cassell Prairie, down 60 to C, across through Black Hawk to PF, through Leland and Denzer, and home by way of the Skunk Hollow. Everywhere along the roads parked cars, indicating hunters abroad.

Ron Hering out for the first time in almost two months. With him to dinner at the Flamingo. Seeing Kay's photograph on the desk -- the colorful one taken at Rhinelander -- he said that when he and Donna had visited here on a day she was in the studio, they had left with the conviction that "something was cooking". He had had an adventure of his own, initiated by a young teacher who had not, however, carried through, becoming frightened of her own temerity and hesitant about losing her virginity.

Kay on the telephone to say that the Mulcahy mercury had once again developed car trouble and would be laid up -- as would my Falcon -- through Monday, though my own car would be laid up through Tuesday as well. Worked through the evening.

14 October 1968: A heavy mail kept me at the desk for most of the day -- less those hours when Kay telephoned. A fine day, though a little too warm for the season.

The Capital Times tonight carried Kay's story on my work -- an eight-page spread, with two large pictures, one of the jacket of The Beast in Holger's Woods, the other that of me with Mrs. Turk, showing me in Nehru and with a chain and medallion. The story itself was effective and well balanced.

A conference of blackbirds in the trees around the house today -- migrants gathered for a day or two to forage and compare notes, as it were. Their pleasant conversation rang out through most of the afternoon.

15 October 1968: With Kay this morning to Chicago. She came at a few minutes past eight and we were off through the colorful countryside -- that would not be colorful for long, for a strong wind blew, denuding the trees. The wind challenged the hawks -- saw a quartet of them, three redtails, one marsh harrier -- along the road, though I saw less of the landscape than of Kay, who was sufficiently distracted by my conversation to lose something of her fey quality, for we were flagged down by traffic police and given a warning ticket for going too fast on the highway beyond the toll booth in Illinois, and for once her sense of the impending deserted her. .... Despite having started out late and encountering heavy traffic on the Kennedy expressway, reached the parking lot at Van Buren and Wabash at 11:22, in good time -- and in tribute to Kay's excellent driving for her first time in the city of Chicago. Walked up to Madison, and west to 26 West Madison, where at Stauffer's, the Midland Authors were holding their October luncheon meeting at the Inland Room: a crowded, busy restaurant not far off the busy corner of Madison & State. George Marx followed us in, and was just in time to hear me introduce Kay as "Mrs. Derleth". Kay was surprised -- but not so much so as to lose her aplomb, and promptly carried the ball and played the role, though she had really little choice, for Peggy McPhaul immediately began introducing her to guests. We sat across from Franklin Meine, and next to Mary Jane Ward (The Snake Pit, etc.), and across from the author of The Quarrel, which, he recalled, I had given a highly favorable review when Duell, Sloan & Pearce had published it some years ago. The conversation ranged widely -- from Meine's humor research, to Mark Twain, bibliophily, mental hospitals (in one of which Mary Jane Ward did some kind of work, though I could not be certain just what), writing, etc. Meanwhile, the effervescent Adeline Pynchon came in, and began to ply Kay with questions, coming finally to, "Where did you two meet?" which took Kay slightly aback, so I filled in with, "She was one of my students at a writer's conference," which she then gracefully confirmed. George, meanwhile, was finding it difficult to keep his mirth in; he had been even more astonished to hear my introduction of Kay, and was wrestling with some doubt -- had we in fact somehow got married? unable to realize that such a thing was not possible until Kay had divorced Greg, which clearly could not be done with such dispatch if it were done at all. After luncheon and my introduction to the group en masse, we excused ourselves and withdrew. Told George he had just been a party to the shortest marriage on record.

From the Midland Authors' luncheon, we walked around to the Palmer House, where we took leave of George. There we found the Morton Feilers in 1919. He proved to be a bluff, hearty Jew in middle age -- perhaps a few years younger than I, manifestly an extrovert; she a petite, small woman. Both were greying. Kay, I observed, said no more than the amenities until she had carefully assessed our hosts, and then spoke with confidence, and the two women were soon talking about traveling, for the Feilers were just back from Europe. Morton, meanwhile, went on about Solar Pons -- he was sanguine as ever and was certain that "before the end of the year" he would have "good news" for me, "I promise you -- before the end of the year," and complained to Kay -- whom I had introduced to this Baker & Praed Street Irregular as "my Irene Adler" and explained that we contemplated marriage -- "This fellow's always talking about being 'sanguine' -- 'sanguine' he always says to me, 'I'm not very sanguine' he says." He went on about the merits of Solar Pons and Evening in Spring, and Kay abetted him when it came to the latter -- she had not read any of the Solar Pons tales. I remained not very sanguine. He spoke of the Princess Mdivani -- Denis Conan Doyle's widow -- of Adrian Conan Doyle and his continuing churlishness -- of Barbara Cortland's romantic novels which he had sold in New York -- of Dell's interest in Evening in Spring and a similar interest by the Hutchinson group in London, neither of which, I was reasonably certain, would materialize in publication -- und so weiter, for well over an hour. At 3:15 we took our leave and walked up to Marshall

Field/sto shop -- myself for candy to be sent to Ruth Hansen, George's sister, Effie, and a box of Frango mints for Kay -- Kay for a black dress, at my insistence, since I had promised her this. The candy was the work of but a few moments, but the dress took a little longer; we went from one department to another. In one place Kay passed an attractive red dress on a model, but saw nothing like it in black. At last, however, she found a black dress to her liking, and, while she was trying it on, I went back and surreptitiously bought the red dress. She tried on a grey dress, as well, but decided ultimately in favor of the black, however much she liked the grey; and while she dressed, I instructed the clerk to pack both dresses in the one box, unknown to her. Thence down Michigan Boulevard to the Cliffdwellers for a drink and a pleasant dinner on the balcony. Here, too, I introduced her to Grimes as my wife. Sat at table watching the day draw slowly away from the lake, the last sunlight on the city towers to the north, and presently left the Club and went back to the parking lot. By 6:45 we were on our way out of Chicago. By ten we were at home, and soon after abed for three hours of loving. Her lovely body and her uninhibited affection haunted me all night.

16 October 1968: Up before dawn this mild, mellow morning, and outside to walk up and down the road by the light of the last quarter moon, now high up heaven, and the winter constellations spread across the south from the Pleiades to Canis Major. In the east Jupiter shone, and in the west Saturn. The south wind blew steadily, tearing away leaves, rustling in the corn, sighing in the cedars, spreading fragrance of drying leaves and grasses. The temperature stood at 65°. My thoughts were all of Kay -- and the anguish of parting from her, when that parting must inevitably come, for I found it unlikely that she would seek a divorce, no matter how much the prospect of marrying me attracted her. I walked in that balmy weather until the roseate glow of dawn spread up the eastern slopes, and the stars dimmed, leaving only Sirus and Jupiter at the last, before sunrise. At last I went into the house and wrote Kay a letter.

In today came 71 cartons of books -- half the printing of Bright Journey, all the printing of Wisconsin Murders. Dennis was out in time to help unload, and to pack today's orders for books, together with yesterday's.

Kay telephoned this morning -- and was out briefly this afternoon to pick up her dresses, which she had left last night, an all too brief enchantment.

With Dennis tonight to walk the Genz Pocket road -- another night of summer weather, very warm with a cooling southwest wind. Many owls called, both hoot or horned and barred owls, and principally from the Wisconsin's bottomland.

In many places today the strong musk of maple leaves.

17 October 1968: The mail this morning brought in a copy of the invitation to the Praed Street Irregulars's annual dinner, designed by Luther Norris, and featuring appropriate quotation from the Pons stories. Under the announcement itself -- "Nothing is too trivial to lend it an ear at least," from The Ascot Scandal. Under announcement of Al Germeshausen's being toastmaster -- "What madness drives him to this?" from The Sussex Archers. Under the date -- "There is nothing demanding your presence at home?" from The Trained Cormorant. Under the time -- "A pause for hot lemonade and brandy will not take much time," from The Mazarine Blue. Under the place (The Corsican on La Brea) -- "Dear me! Is that not an unorthodox place for it?" from The Penny Magenta. Under the price($6.50) -- "There are pathetic people in this world to whom the possession of money is everything." from The China Cottage. Under the program, announcing speakers - "We could do with more people of such tastes," from The Mosaic Cylinders. And under Luther's own name, as organizer - "Pray make sure they are all there," from The Spurious 'Tamerlane'. To Luther I sent promptly the first copy of The Adventure of the Unique Dickensians, just in from Banta.

To Heiney's Crossing this afternoon to walk down the tracks into the windy sunlight. The temperature close to 80°, and the air very fragrant with the pungence and musk of leaves not long since wet by this morning's rains. Clouds moved swiftly across the heavens in the wind, white, fragmentary cumuli, collecting in the north, bright in the sunlight. As I reached the tracks the train came down; I would not have seen it and might have walked into it -- thanks to my preoccupation with Kay -- had the engineer not blown the whistle. The wind carried leaves

and tumbleweeds; they sped past high and low. Crows alone defied the wind; their cawing rode the windy air, so fragrant this afternoon. I walked down to the cut and back to the oak grove before I turned homeward.

Later, in late afternoon, I walked across the bridges to beyond the Spring Slough Trestle. The Wisconsin was covered with whitecaps, and the wind was noticeably colder, for all that it still drove in from the southwest. Many myrtle warblers foraged along the embankment between the east channel and the Spring Slough, and some peepers cried out of the bottoms still. Maple leaf musk lay in the windy air. But the increasing coolness turned me back.

Spent this evening at work -- a new poem for Caitlin, a letter to Kay -- correspondence, invoices, etc., while Dennis packed books and the children helped pack and stamp copies of Wisconsin Murders. Early to bed, tired.

18 October 1968: Betty Meng down town this morning looked more worn and old, and certainly more grim than ever. She showed a marked deterioration, and seemed destined to be returned to some institution soon. She was with her "boy friend" -- a wild-looking fellow in early middle age, also not long since released from an institution, a fellow who could neither read nor write. When I greeted her, she did not answer. Her eyes, I saw, were quite wild and distant. In Witwen's Drug Store, Millie Johnson said that Betty had not been taking "her medicine" for some time, she did not know why, but her deterioration, now so marked, had begun from the time she had stopped taking medication. I thought it but a matter of time before she must be sent away again.

Into Madison today after a visit from Kay, a friend from the West coast, and Kay's mother, Emily Price, whom I took around to show the house. Dennis drove to Hilldale, where the children saw Dr. Lange, and then up to the Dayton Street ramp. To Moseley's to deliver copies of the new books, then to the Perfume Shop, where I finally saw a bracelet I liked for Kay and ordered it, in place of the opal bracelet I had wanted, and bought a bracelet-earring set to mark another anniversary. At Hilldale I bought, quixotically, a light suit in a color I fancied, and some belts. Thence to Nelson's to take in more books, and to shop at Kohl's. So home through a landscape now more somberly colored, and denuded of much of its foliage by the wind of the past days.

Talked to Greg Mulcahy tonight, tentatively, about a rough estimate of cost for a warehouse of steel, to be put up west of the house, 25 by 40 feet. Told him there was no hurry, since I would not consider putting up such a building until summer of next year, if then.

19 October 1968: A chill but sunny day. Down town this morning Erna Cunradi said that when she had visited Sophie Meng on the occasion of Sophie's birthday yesterday, she had been amused and disgusted at the sight of Betty and her addled boy-friend sitting on the davenport. "Every little while they'd grab each other and kiss each other," she said. "But they do it right on the street down town, too -- whenever they get the notion they stop walking and do it." As for Sophie: "Betty's not taking care of her mother at all. When we got there she was still in her bathrobe, her hair wasn't combed, and she hadn't had anything to eat. Oh, they'll have to take Betty away again -- somebody ought to tell the welfare people. They send somebody around once a week to bathe Sophie -- you'd think she'd notice what's going on there. Why, before we could eat something -- we brought a nice lunch -- we had to wash some dishes! That Betty's too lazy -- too busy running down town and back -- to even wash dishes."

At noon Barbara Stodden telephoned. The Stoddens had just got in from Mahtomedi, Minnesota, having arranged by letter to hike with me this afternoon, and, after settling down at Larry Eisenring's Black Hawk camping ground south of the Wisconsin Heights, they showed up at 1:30 and off we went -- she and Earl and their two little girls, Gayle and Charlene, to walk the river path at Ferry Bluff, and climb up the Cactus Bluff, where we encountered a young botany instructor and his class from the Richland Center campus of the University of Wisconsin. The day fine, if cool; few clouds crossed the heavens toward the north, and the wind blew out of the southwest; the landscape and the river, aglint with sunlight caught on the waves made by the wind, lay soft and warm in the October sun. Talked briefly with the instructor and yielded to his request for a photograph -- "toadd to the fauna found on this field trip" --

before proceeding up the path to circle the ridge. During all the while we rode or walked, I pointed out settings of the Steve/Sim stories for the children, of the Sac Prairie Saga for their parents. Found in blossom still -- goldenrods, seaside asters, marsh asters, and stiff gentian or agueweed (Gentiana quinquefolia Linnaeus) this latter not too commonly found. Observed no fruit on the hop-hornbeam, and supposed that the blossoms had been frozen in spring, but the buds of the ironwood and hazel -- admirably formed catkins -- were already evident. Down through the pungent woods -- smelling of leaves still a little wet after rain -- in the valley between the bluffs, to the riverside path once more, and so back into Sac Prairie, where showed the Stoddens other places in the books -- the Electric Theatre, the harness shop, houses in Upper and Lower Sac Prairie, the Park Hall and the park, und so weiter. Thence back out to the house to sign some books purchased by them, after which they returned to their tent on the heights.

In the harness shop later sat talking with Hugh when I saw Kay walking past on the other side of the street -- so to the door to call her and Lisa over. They came and met Hugh, and stood for a while talking there, she very beautiful for all that she had no cosmetic at all on her face. "I was just going home to call you," she said -- and now did not need to do so. She had been cool on the telephone earlier in the day, but only because her husband was in the room. I could hardly keep my hands off her, and she was well aware of it, and amused, though her inward response welcomed it.

Walking this evening with George Marx in the Genz Pocket -- he inquiring archly about the homeward journey from Chicago of "the bride and groom" -- I learned for the first time that on one Sunday recently actual petitions had been handed out during Mass at St. Aloysius -- petitions for the faithful to sign, addressed to "the Lord", imploring him to "stop the gossip" in the village and the parish! Presumably the clery have the ear of God on all levels. "Those priests must have flipped their lids," concluded George.

Back home, getting ready for bed, took a collect call from Kay, at Chula Vista with a Lions' Club party, and held her to the telephone for twenty minutes or so, in a delightful and uninhibited conversation that so enlivened me that I could not go to sleep for well over an hour.

20 October 1968: With April Rose and Julie Ehl to the Breunig Hill this sunny cool afternoon, and leisurely to the top along the old roadway. The two girls roamed the hilltop while I went in to the apple tree on Len Breunig's and picked a few apples, some to eat, some to bring to the house for Kay tomorrow. The day stimulating, the hill and the landscape below very beautiful, despite the bareness of trees and the loss of color -- only a claret oak and a yellow birch colored the countryside here and there. The girls joined me presently, and we wandered back to one of the other apple trees on the south slope of the hill, then back and across to that winter apple tree low on the Len Breunig slope, where, despite the presence of curious cattle, I picked a peck of apples to carry home for Mother to preserve. Thence home and to work, revising The Three Straw Men.

Sandy telephoned this afternoon to give me some "sad news". Her husband, Art Kiser, was in Mendota. "We" -- she and another lawyer -- had put him in for his own protection, for his deterioration had progressed to a dangerous point: with four malpractice suits against him, a Federal indictment to fight, illness ("he can't keep food down, and he's always drinking"), the complications of his home life, he had begun to write suicide notes and had bought a gun with which to kill himself. Her situation seemed to me grim, though if some aberration could be found in Art, she would at least not be victimized by malpractise judgments.

To walk this evening with Forrest Hartmann almost to the brook along the railroad tracks, while the sun went down and the saffron afterglow shone among the black trees, and Venus glowed with great brilliance at the treetop level in that evening sky. Robin plaints and junco whisperings were the only sounds to come from the woods.

21 October 1968: A Monday of moderate mail for a change. ... Kay out this afternoon for two hours, very pleasant hours. She brought along a piece of Lisa's birthday cake -- the same kind of cake she had brought out on that memorable 13th of September -- sat reading poems and letters and lying on the bed together, not however in sexual pleasure.

She insisted that I set a trap for the mouse I had seen in the studio, and brought two traps wrapped as a gift.

Dennis out to pack books tonight. With him to the Genz Pocket.

22 October 1968: The mail this morning brought in a manuscript titled The Seventh Day by one Glorietta I. King of St. Charles, Missouri. "This story," she wrote in her covering letter, "is about a lady named Myrtle who was translated from earth to a place called Paradise. There she learns the real purpose of life and finds that souls are being prepared for a life of service and happiness with the Master when He returns to set up His kingdom upon earth. In today's world of lowering moral standards and the high rising crime rate, one needs something stable to reach out and hold on to. 'The Seventh Day' is destined to give a person that feeling that life has a purpose and there is something real to base his life and the life of his chilren upon, so that they will not feel they are left dangling on the edge of a precipice of nothing." I found it, after this letter, unnecessary to look at and returned it unread.

The day cool. Most leaves now down, and the witch hazel in a blaze of yellow blossoms. Kay out and on the telephone today.

23 October 1968: In the morning hours dreamed that I woke and found half a dozen people -- all strangers -- gathered about my desk, some armed with fireplace brooms, some with flyswatters, all directed by Kay standing before the French doors, hunting the studio mouse, which made its appearance abruptly, scampered up the face of the desk, dodging blows, and burrowed under a desk blotter, whereupon someone delivered a blow with the flyswatter -- and at that precise moment the trap I had set and baited with a piece of gumdrop, snapped, and, rising, I found the studio mouse in it.

Kay out this afternoon for three hours -- and ourselves directly to bed for three hours of uninhibited sexual pleasure and variety. Found the 6/9 position particularly exciting, as did she. She to at least a dozen climaxes of varying intensity. Our mutual pleasure undeniably increasing from one occasion to the next, which, if it continues, may well so embroil us that neither of us will ever be able successfuly to escape the other. Neither for the nonce concerned about this intensifying of our affair.

24 October 1968: Wild geese flew over before dawn; lying awake, I heard them go by, listening to their honking -- two skeins, one a few minutes after the other -- and, being awake, rose to write another poem for Kay. The total number of poems now past 30, and the book Caitlin taking sound shape.

Kay on the telephone several times today and this evening.

25 October 1968: With Kay in Madison today. I met her at Hilldale at eleven, and we went directly to the Dayton Street ramp to park, and from there went over to the Simon House for luncheon, finding there Miles McMillin -- so were as decorous as possible, though Miles looked over from time to time in an attempt to add us up. Spoke with him about a possible story Kay might do for the green sheet on Wisconsin Murders, and then joined her to walk over to the Strand to see Belle de Jour with Catherine Deneuve -- a muddy, erotic picture which lacked much definition necessary for ready understanding of it. Myself surprised and excited at the readiness and excitement of Kay's response to kissing, a further testimony of our increasing sexual rapport. From the theatre leisurely back to the car, warmed by the sun atop the ramp, and there sat necking more passionately than the situation allowed. I had slipped into the Perfume Shop to buy her a necklace and earrings of rosewood and ebony, which both pleased and dismayed her -- dismay rising in my apparently incurable compulsion to buy things for her. So, reluctantly, to Hilldale, where we separated, she to go home, I to take dinner at the Pines, alone. Myself out along 14 and 78 in the afterglow, watching the new moon and Venus under a bank of cloud along the western rim, and once again melancholy at the parting -- the inevitable farewell which must some day be final.

Rikki on the telephone tonight for some time, anticipating his homecoming early next month, and curious about the status of the affair with Kay, he still applauding.

26 October 1968: With Dennis this morning to Prairie du Chien after the new Arkham House stocklists -- a rapid drive, made in an hour and fourteen minutes, which satisfied him since it exceeded the limit set by Rikki: a goal he had had always before him and achieved today because there was surprisingly little traffic -- all the way down we passed but two cars. The countryside today serene and autumnal, with here and there patches of yellow still, of late aspens, and some claret, but not much, among the oaks, which this year had gone from green to brown without any other color change. Here and there farmers were at ploughing. Saw three hawks en route -- two redtails, one marsh harrier, flocks of redwings and grackles, bluebirds, and winter birds -- juncos, cardinals, and the like. At Prairie du Chien paused for kolaches and other baked goods at the bakery, then went around for the stocklists; we were no more than a quarter of an hour in Prairie du Chien, and then were away again, so that we reached home at 11:45, having left it at 8:53 -- a record for brevity in making this journey down and back. My intention of starting away at 8:30 had been thwarted by Kay, who came on the telephone before that hour, and held me there. Moreover, in the course of the afternoon she came out, and since the children and Dennis were outside raking leaves, we were soon at making love again with that kind of insatiability that seems to be as strong in the one of us as in the other.

The house and the grounds redolent this afternoon with the smoke of burning leaves, a great mound of them -- chiefly oak and linden leaves --having been fired in the north field. ... Dennis out tonight to pack the books he could not pack in the course of the day. George Marx out also, and with him presently to walk the Genz Pocket road -- a very pleasant evening, the air mild and aromatic, some sounds of geese overhead, owls along the river, dogs barking up the valley. The musk of corn, dry now, came to where we walked now and then, and the pungence of cedar. The waxing moon shone low in the southwest, yellowing now toward setting, with a cloud bank over it, that sky luminous. So home, and presently to bed, tired.

27 October 1968: Dr. Tom Strobel and his wife came in today from Milwaukee, expressly to buy books, and to make some small talk of Sac Prairie as it had been in the days of his youth. He had gone white, but was otherwise little changed. His wife, evidently having suffered a stroke, walked with a cane, and would not climb to the studio, but sat talking with Mother downstairs. .. Kay on the telephone twice, and Ron Hering out -- but other than this, worked without interruption throughout the day at book reviews and correspondence.

28 October 1968: Another halcyon day with Kay. She came out at one and left again at three after two hours abed and multiple climaxes. We were in a world apart, one of almost unbelievable sensuousness and wonder, not achieved with Marcia, Myra, or Sandy. Myself almost distraught at her leaving. ... Observed in myself later an incapacity for creativity, and recalled how Marcia Masters had said, after our indulgence, that she had been drained of the need or the impulse to write. Yet I managed to write a new poem for Kay, revise an older, complete book reviews, etc.

29 October 1968: Yet another memorable afternoon with Kay, again abed for two hours solely devoted to the indulgence in the delights and pleasures of love. We were agreed that sexual pleasure is heightened for both of us on each occasion we make love, however incredible it might be after every indulgence that pleasure could actually be increased.

Later today in to Madison, Dennis driving. I went to deliver books to Moseley's, but also paused at the Perfume Shop to buy a Christmas gift for Kay, and a ring to commemorate the past two days of loving. To dine at Frenchy's, where listened to Jack O'Connell talk about his new apartment, the sale of his farm, et al. So home and to work, save for telephone calls from Kay.

30 October 1968: Met Kay early this afternoon at Ferry Bluff -- since Gatschalls were out to take up the old linoleum from the kitchen floor, where it had been for 29 years, and to lay an avocado green carpet instead -- and with her to walk the riverside path and climb to the top of Cactus Bluff. A southeast wind blew coolly, but the sun shone, and the top of the bluff was pleasant. We sat or lay looking out upon the winding river and all that country below, rolling away toward the Blue Mound, and watching, high above the ridge, a mated pair of hawks -- redtails, presumably, though they were too far way to be identified as more than broadwings, myself formulating a poem as I watched. She delighted with her ring, which I had all along in-

tended to give her at this place, if I could persuade her to come out in lieu of the house this afternoon. The day perfect;though the temperature might have been milder, nevertheless, we were comfortable in this high place -- and alone, for no one fished or hunted here, though the sound of gunshots from the woodland below Laws Landing came from time to time. When it was time to go, we walked back along the promontory, and up the higher slope and down the valley between Cactus and Ferry Bluffs, pausing at the cars at the landing for some passionate kissing totally unaware of the presence of a canoeing pair up Honey Creek -- strangers, fortunately, who were not known to either of us. So parted.

The kitchen completed in one day, contrary to expectations, and looking very handsome and new. Despite her misgivings, Mother much pleased on her return from Ferbers, where she had spent the day to get out of "the mess".

Mrs. Robert Frantz telephoned today to say that an acquaintance had had a fantastically hilarious adventure. Mrs. S., while driving toward Madison, had struck a cat. She had gone on, but finally, disturbed by the thought that the cat might only be wounded, had ~~[illegible]~~ returned. The cat was dead, but now she was struck by the conviction that she ought at least to tell the owner, presumably a farmer nearby. She wrapped the dead cat in a newspaper, put it in the trunk of her car, and started up the driveway; but not far along she had second thoughts, backed out, and decided to dispose of the cat somewhere. She drove on to Westgate Shopping Center, and was about to deposit the dead cat in a trash bin, when she noticed herself under observation, however idle, by a nearby policeman; so she hastily put the dead cat into the bottom of her shopping bag and went into a store to shop. There, at a moment when she put the bag down, she was jostled by a shoplifter who went off with her bag. After a few moments, she went out to find the shoplifter, only to see a knot of people gathered about a woman lying on the pavement not far away. She went over and saw that her bag stood beside the fallen woman, who had evidently felt the dead cat in the bag and promptly fainted. Not knowing whether or not she had had a heart attack, bystanders had already called an ambulance, which came, loaded up the lady, and solicitously put the bag with the dead cat in it on top of her before driving off. That was the last Mrs. S. saw of her problem.

31 October 1968: Ron Clyne's new jacket design for Evening in Spring came in today -- all lettering, with Kay's line -- "The great novel of first love" -- added, in rose, brown and white. It was pleasing to Kay, who saw it this afternoon when she came down; so I sent off instructions to Ron for a new jacket for The Shield of the Valiant as well. The design itself went off to Banta for reproduction.

Down town this morning bought Kay a cameo ring. I had unwisely mentioned that I had got her a Christmas gift, and was immediately besieged with questions -- "Can't you give me a hint?" -- begun yesterday on Cactus Bluff, so that I knew there would be no end to it if I did not produce something -- not the gift itself, certainly; so I had Jim Becker wrap the ring in Christmas packaging, and gave it to her this afternoon with some show of annoyance, certain that her fey gifts would not see through her knowledge that I had not been in Madison since seeing her last, and not divining that I might have picked something up so swiftly down town.

Walked the tracks up and down from Heiney's Crossing this balmy morning, with the temperature close to 70°. Up the tracks, just beyond the Triangle Lane Crossing, the section crew was at work. Saw crows, redwings, a jacksnipe, blue jays, a killdeer -- all in voice. The south wind carried the fragrance of the drying grasses and leaves. I read a little, wrote a poem celebrating sex to Kay -- "We know each other best in bed .." und so weiter, not one, I judged, to be included in Caitlin. She was horrified to hear lines on the telephone later. From the marshes to Ferbers for lunch, and so home.

Late tonight rode west alone, under the moon, much preoccupied with Kay and the growing conviction that I would never, in any sense, escape this mad infatuation, however readily she might be able to. The moonlit landscape far more serene and ordered than I.

1 November 1968: Up at dawn to walk the road outside -- the wind's susurrus in the sycamore leaves, the wing sounds of mourning doves, the aromatic south wind, sweet with the fragrance of dried cornleaves and stalks. The temperature a very mild 60°, unseasonably warm but very pleasant indeed. Myself still occupied with thoughts of Kay -- as every morning from ca. four ~~[illegible]~~ o'clock.

In the course of well over an hour on the telephone this morning Kay told how she had almost starved to death as a baby because she could not keep down the wrong formula she was being fed, how her mother had tried repeatedly to get hold of Dr. Fowler -- but when he and his wife were feuding, they did so over the telephone ("And Delia Schwartz used to plug everybody in so they could hear the fight!") and as a result she would not tell her husband when patients called, and he would frequently take the receiver off the hook so as not to be plagued by her; but that her uncle Ted Diehl, having volunteered to take Kay to Madison, saw Dr. Fowler on the street and told him, whereupon the doctor showed up at the house and announced at once, "Why, this little baby's starving to death," changed the formula and saved her life.

To the Brook Trestle this noon, walking in along the brook, where hunters or minnow seiners had already broken a path. The temperature 65°, and a west wind blowing. The sun shone out of a clear heaven. I sat to write a poem for Kay, and to read a little at the trestle, listening to junco cries and the reedy talk of grackles. Leopard frogs leaped from the brook bank into the water, and water-striders were about on the surface of the brook. Presently I walked to the Spring Slough Trestle and back, putting up a hen pheasant which ran in among the reeds to vanish from sight. The Section Crew worked in the vininity of the Triangle Lane Crossing -- four men -- perhaps five. A cricket stridulated. Spice berries shone red along the brook. At 1:30 the train came up, the diesel pulling only three cars and the caboose. So home.

Kay on the telephone this evening, giving me a hard time about, of all people, Sara Rath -- but she is no more possessive than I -- and all my assurances gave her no surety. I found our conversation disturbing, nevertheless, as a portent of things to come, were we to marry, and in a sense it destroyed my evening for creative work, though she promised to spend Sunday with me in the absence of her husband.

In mid-evening with Forrest Hartmann to walk the Genz Pocket road, and there watch a splendid display of northern lights -- rays of pale green and red light, bright enough despite the light of the moon high up near Saturn, and curtain effects in pale green, together at last with the familiar black light. The clouds of light reached to the zenith, pulling back, rising up again. Walked down the road and back, watching the heavens aglow, while Orion strode into the eastern sky under Taurus and the Pleiades, and the night slowly cooled with a west wind blowing.

2 November 1968: A day of raking leaves, the fragrant smoke of which invaded the house and spread over the grounds before a wind out of the northwest. Dennis and the children at raking for most of the day, though the scope of their accomplishment was diminished by Walden's watching a football game. A chill day. Kay on the telephone for two hours, despite which I managed to all but complete copy for a new listing of my books.

At the harness shop twice today, much exercised at Hugh's being back in the canning factory. .. George Marx out this evening, and with him to [illegible] ride into the Genz Pocket, but not to walk there, for the night was both humid and cold. The moon shone high in the southern sky, with a thin pale, smoky drift of cloud reaching from west to east like a veil of gauze, and the stars -- all but the first magnitude stars and Saturn -- almost invisible in the bright moonlight.

3 November 1968: Kay out for all afternoon, from one o'clock to six-thirty -- to read new poems, letters, a story -- and finally, to make love for three hours, which, though not nearly enough in my opinion, had to be curtailed so that she could keep another engagement. Nevertheless, myself left almost exhausted by the excesses of love, and particularly delighted with cunnilingus with Kay sitting astride, which she too found exquisitely satisfactory. Once again multiple climaxes. ... In mid-afternoon came Jack and Joan Bachhuber, unaware of Kay's presence since she vanished into the bathroom, and had put her car into my garage. Jack to report on their visit to Carroll Coleman in Iowa City in the course of the week. Carroll had shown him his shop in the basement, and had examined Jack's wood-engravings, prints of which he had taken down, rejecting one as too large for Caitlin. Jack had brought along a new engraving intended for the book, of a flower, which I liked, though it needed to be cleaned a little before it could go into print. Mangged to take Jack downstairs, so that Kay could return to the studio, all unseen, and presently rejoined her and got to bed at last for the balance of the afternoon and early evening. A wonderful day, incredibly, Kay as lover eclipsing all others.

In early evening, directly after taking April into the village to see The Odd Couple at the Midway, with Forrest Hartmann to walk the Ferry Bluff road by the light of the full moon, riding serenely aloft not far from Saturn. A fine evening, with the mercury falling from 40°, and a light movement of air up the river. At the Bluff a couple waited in their car -- as they had in the afternoon, said Forrest, he having been down to climb the Cactus Bluff -- for their dog to reappear, it having been led out and having taken off into the woods, and not answering to their calls. The evening crisp and bright with the moon's white light, revealing the striations of the Ferry Bluff among the trees, and lending its witchery to the night. No bird called, no sound broke the night's stillness. Walked to the Moely sugar bush and back to the car. So home, and there I wrote a poem, After Loving, to celebrate Kay, and her marvellously beautiful body. To bed at 10:30.

Discovered late tonight that the afternoon's passionate kissing had left me with a decoration just below my lower lip -- a "hickey"! of all things. It burned to the touch of cologne. I reflected ruefully that I had to reach the age of 59 for such a thing to happen to me, but of course Kay had done it unintentionally. .... Thought long tonight about the admirable mutual appeal that existed between Kay and myself -- on a major plane that between my masculininty and her femininity, on the secondary plane that between a lesser streak of masculinity in her and the pronounced femininity secondary to my nature; so that we are astonishingly complementary as few men and women ever are for lack of some components in their nature that Kay and I appear to share.

4 November 1968: Woke to a heavy rime on the grass. A chill morning, with the sun in a salmon sky. ... In the village at last the yellow leaves of soft maples were beginning to fall, but the trees themselves still stood in thick foliage. No flower shone in any garden but chrysanthemums. ... A heavy mail this morning, with orders for 139 books, to which Curt Mueller added a few more Wisconsin Murders, having sold two copies of the three I had originally brought to Mueller Drugs -- now called Sac Prairie Prescriptions!

Kay on the telephone this morning -- and down for two hours this afternoon -- and on both occasions talked at some length of the changes that must be made here if we were married, changes that would cost many thousands of dollars -- so that, by the day's end, regardless of her assurances that all such changes must and would be measured to our income, I was as much alarmed that our marriage would take place as I had previously been anguished that it would not! -- for fear of the involvement of myself in another conflict of love and responsibility, the desire to do and the financial inability to accomplish such goals! -- not for any lessening of love or desire for her.

Dennis out to pack books tonight -- in haste, as usual, and bothered by April -- so that he did his work not well, and left some of it undone when he went home. Myself thereafter, ca. 10:30 out to ride through the moonlit countryside, much troubled, much occupied with Kay and the intensity of the affair; and, once home again, read the manuscript of Caitlin, and thought it held together well, and its poems made a progression and a pleasing whole, if on the main a melancholy one. Made some revisions, but saw no need to make many more; in effect, the manuscript is ready for publication. To bed at midnight.

5 November 1968: To vote this morning -- for Hubert Humphrey, Gaylord Nelson, Sheila Roznos, Warren Knowles, voting in every column on the ballot. ... A chill day, but with rain impending, though none fell until evening. Kay came out at one o'clock, and we were soon abed, abandoned to love. Kay achieved a new high in climax and proved herself a lover absolutely without peer; the two hours sped past with the speed, seemingly, of light -- she left, legs trembling, and laughing at this new experience -- and I trembled inside as never before. She telephoned in a little while again -- and again this evening, twice. She brought along this afternoon a poem she had written to me -- only her third work in this form, which, though it was freighted with class-inspired information about strophes and cadence, was not at all bad and needed but minimal changing to strengthen it. ... Dennis out to work tonight, though there were but few books to pack; spent some time in the basement, beginning to make room for the December shipment of Mr. Fairlie's Final Journey. ... Rain outside most of the night.

Permitted the children to stay up until eleven to watch the television count of the voting, a fascinating experience for them. Though Humphrey took an early lead, Nixon country was yet to be heard from, and it seemed likely that the Vice-President's lead would not be large enough to overcome the Nixon votes from the west. Cautioned the children not to count on Humphrey's election, their enthusiasm notwithstanding.

6 November 1968: Yet another incredible afternoon with Kay -- so voluptuously sensual that I lost all objectivity. Both of us ended shaking and trembling with the ecstasy of it -- and after it was done, ending again in her aggressive sitting astride me for oral loving, which excited us both almost to madness -- I could hardly believe -- as every afternoon of such sexuality -- that it had taken place, and in a little while I was prey to the most profoundly disturbing conflict -- again, as always, torn apart, and utterly incapable of anything other than battling this tortuous conflict that left me suspended in a void somewhere between my principles and my desires, between the impulse to take flight and the urge to plunge ahead, knowing I would not turn back from so wonderful a woman regardless of the inevitable consequences -- scandal or marriage or both, though I saw no tranquility and no assurance before us. Yet, after but three months of intimacy, I already felt that I could not contemplate life without her.

Whatever else took place this day I do not know -- two hours with Kay erased all else.

7 November 1968: A day of cold with the first light snow falling and melting, and rain -- a typical November day in this latitude, grey with lowering clouds, and the fitful rain, with a slowly dropping temperature, and colder weather impending. Kay on the telephone for over two hours today, at different times -- both of us today depressed -- perhaps at not seeing each other, perhaps at the enforced separation, perhaps as the inevitable aftermath of such indulgence.

Sat for a while with Hugh this morning -- and again this afternoon -- in the harness shop, making small talk -- of a table in black walnut for Kay and a jewel-chest in similar wood -- of Carl and Dyvie Lachmund's impending trip to Florida for the winter months -- drinking a glass of sherry. ... To have my hair cut by Pete at noon -- he suffering from gout and some edema of the foot, though he thought it all gout, for which colchicine did not seem to be doing much. Curiously enough, he did not speak of the election of Nixon -- perhaps he could not bear to, knowing that once again the liberals fighting among themselves had helped a reactionary, as usual.

8 November 1968: To meet Kay at Hilldale this morning, after I had shopped a little -- buying her a "make-up gift" -- a gay but subdued bracelet, for I had to take issue with her bleeding heart that leads her inevitably to involvement with troubled people who in the main lack all understanding. To the Simon House for lunch, and thereafter, leaving the car in the lot there, to the Majestic to watch Love for Life, a murky, unsatisfactory film from France, carrying some message the producer and director had forgotten to put into the film. Nevertheless, divided our time between the screen and kisses, and the two hours passed all too swiftly. Then directly to the car, and to Kohl's, where Kay took her enchantment home, and I went about the prosaic business of shopping and then walked across to where the car was parked and sped home. Snow fell throughout the day -- fitfully and not accumulating.

Rikki in today, finished with his basic training. He had brought some records he left here, and played a Lou Rawls, which I rather liked, though not as well as the Otis Redding recordings I had brought from Madison. He returned in mid-evening, after I had done with the mail, and with him went to ride west of town, pausing briefly in the Genz Pocket, through the Babington Pocket and back. He having read Caitlin, preparatory to typing a manuscript copy for Kay and Carroll Coleman, much talk of Kay and the affair, he delighted for me. Found, not to my surprise, that my love for him ~~was~~ is as intense as ever, however platonic now. Saw no animal of any kind abroad for all that, as Chuck Riches had said a day or so ago down town, "the deer are moving around." The night quiet, windless, the sky overcast, though a kind of iridescence from the moon behind the clouds was evident on the countryside, and now and then a random flake of snow riding down. ... Some talk of Chris, of the obvious failure of his marriage, of Kay's description of Chris as "a little girl imprisoned in a woman's body," of his attachment to the situation here and his reluctance to move out into the wider world, a move he had chosen of his own volition. So home.

9 November 1968: Rikki out to work today -- at invoices, at typing a final copy of the manuscript of Caitlin to send to Prairie Press, so that Carroll Coleman could estimate its possible cost of production and order paper etc. for 500 copies. Decided that the $3.75 price ought to be abandoned in favor of $5.00 per copy, ... Reread Caitlin today as a unit, and found myself favoring Nocturne, Moonlight, After Loving even over the direct experience poems like One October Day and Hill Magic, with all their mnemonic connotations. Felt that the book -- though of minor poems, certainly -- had an effective unity. .... Kay out for an hour or so this afternoon, while Lisa was at a birthday party. I realize more and more inescapably that with her I lose all perspective, and it is only afterward -- when she has gone for some time, that this troubles me profoundly, for the lack of judgment implicit in that situation only crowds me alone, and raises, as today and yesterday, some profound doubts even more disturbing. But the book is done -- and indeed, a new poem, Rain, came out tonight. .... Sat with Hugh in the harness shop in late afternoon, taking a glass of sherry and discussing, among other things, the furniture Kay wished him to make for her -- of black walnut: a table, an endtable, a jewel chest and perhaps chairs, though so far she has not said so. He advised me again, from all his insularity, to "get out from under" my affair with Kay, forcing me to admit at last, openly, that I could not, I was involved in a grand passion from which I had neither the will nor desire to escape.th ... George Marx out this evening, but I was very tired, so that, once I had got Walden and Joe Ehl from the theatre, and taken George home, I came home and went to bed, the hour scarcely ten o'clock.

10 November 1968: Kay on the telephone for two hours this morning. And again in the afternoon and yet again this evening -- for a total of six hours! I concluded that if I were ever again to resume my full writing schedule I would have no recourse but to marry her as soon as possible. As it was, I accomplished very little today, though there were no visitors, and for a good part of the afternoon I was alone, with Mother visiting Ferbers, and April in the village, and only Walden at home -- and he to watch the Packers play, disappointingly, and then to summon two of his friends so that the three of them could play at football in the lawn area. A day of sun and clouds, but chill.

11 November 1968: Another chill day, but with considerable sunshine. Rikki out to work this morning, completing the typescript of Caitlin, and making a copy also for Kay, so that she could look upon the book for the first time as a progressive and unified work. .... Kay out this afternoon for two hours -- two hours so exciting and so sexually satisfying for both of us that we were both unsteady when at last we rose from bed, and my pulse did not subside until three hours later. Such uninhibited sexuality growing out of a deep mutual love moved both of us profoundly, and the sight of her beautiful body, and her lovely face in ecstasy stirred me as I have never been stirred by any other woman before. Took every position again today, moving from one to another with little relaxation. I grieved at her going.

With Dennis to ride through the Genz Pocket tonight under the stars -- the winter constellations pulling up into the eastern sky: the Twins, Orion, Taurus, the Pleiades -- all ranged against a cloudless sky. The temperature in the 20's, and the night still and cold. No animal was to be seen along the verges.

12 November 1968: Kay again today for two hours. Afternoons at One occurred to me, wryly, as a title for an account of this love affair. Once again today every form of sexual indulgence, and again, as before, myself profoundly disturbed, recognizing that even rudimentary ability to be objective and to think clearly vanish with her appearance in the studio, and do not return until long after she has gone. I am not sure I like what I see objectively, since no two people can ever interpret even the most casual detail in quite the same light, and the background of Kay's participation -- it's raison d'etre -- may not in fact be as she conceives it to be -- over and beyond love, of which there can be no doubt -- and yet uncertainty is ever present in both of us, in her quick jealousy as much as in my dubeity about her softheartedness, her wayward and erratic directions under the guise of humanitarianism and the like. "I can take care of myself," she insists, and yet she manages to become involved in little over a month in a passionate affair like this -- however much it is clear that her interest in just such an affair with me had its inception well over a year ago, and in less than two accept it as a fact of life, and accommodate her existence to it with every indication that it is to go on until it is discovered and ended or until it wears out or until it ends in marriage, and pursued with the knowledge that our compatability goes far beyond sex.

With Rikki tonight to ride west of town -- through the Genz Pocket, around through the Diehl-Von Behren Pocket, over the Mosemann ridge, along Badger Valley and back along Highway 60 -- seeing in the course of our ride an opossum, four rabbits, and -- at the very last, as we came up the Lower Mill Road -- three deer, which crossed the road ahead of the car from the north, bound for the marshes along the river south. A chill night. We sat for some time in the car in the garage before parting, talking of the status of his marriage -- which he seemed fixed upon ending in three years or so, and would listen to nothing to the contrary, no advice, no reasoning, and of his "secret hope" for the future, and of the bond between us.

13 November 1968: Into Madison with Rikki -- to shop at Kohl's, to lunch at the Simon House, to watch Benjamin at the Majestic, another much-overrated French film, pleasantly amusing but with no surprises in it, and nothing more, really, than Catherine Deneuve's beauty. Thence to separate -- Rikki to get sealing tape, myself to go to Victor Records and to the Perfume Shop where I bought -- far too headily -- Christmas gifts for Kay: an even dozen, one for every drawer of her jewel box, each separately wrapped. Thence down State Street to Anderes, the University Bookstore, and the Perfume Shop there, to chat with Josie and pick out a little anniversary gift for Kay -- this day being the second anniversary of our first nakedness together. Met Rikki and with him to Frenchy's for dinner -- so home.

Kay on the telephone this morning, and at length this evening.

14 November 1968: Aspects of this warming day -- a killdeer crying while the moon yet shone before dawn -- a brown creeper exploring the aspen tree west of the house while Kay was on the telephone -- the witch hazel a burst of yellow in the sun, now in full blossom south of the house -- the spill of yellow maple leaves from the soft maples in the village, as a result of the low temperatures of the past two nights -- many juncos foraging around the house and some white-crowned sparrows -- the activity of blue jays and grey squirrels east of the kitchen wing suggested some inquiry for winter food.

With Rikki to walk into the marshes early this afternoon, going in along the brook and down the tracks. The mercury stood at 46°, and a light southwest wind blew. A paucity of birds was immediately evident. In one place still, a blossoming goldenrod, untouched by frost. On the brook algae, and in it, flourishing, watercress -- both above and below the trestle. In along the Triangle Lane and up the lane to the old barn on the Lower Meadow. Observed that the bobolink observation posts were still up, and both were now placarded, warning trespassers away, by the U. S. Biological Survey, lest trespassers interfere, in season, with the netting and banding of the birds. Up along the brook and out the way we had come. The sun now being hazed over by a rising nimbus from the west and southwest, and the promise of rain rose with the clouds.

To ride with Dennis tonight, pausing for a while in the Genz Pocket, but not getting out to walk, for a light rain had begun to fall, and promised to fall so intermittently all during the night. The temperature moderate --in the 40s -- and the sky heavily overcast, no glimmer of starlight showing through...Dennis brought out his class picture, a studio portrait somewhat "improved" by Morrison, signed for me; it made him look very handsome. He left it on my desk tonight.

15 November 1968: Considering Jack Bachhuber's penchant for "reworking" his woodcuts, I thought it best to suggest to Frank Utpatel, when he came in this morning, that he sketch drawings to be made into wood-engravings for Caitlin, should Jack -- as I more than half expected -- fail to produce cuts I could use, in time. I could always use Jack's cuts in the next book of nature poems. ... In mid-afternoon Frank appeared again, in record time, with a trio of drawings -- of moonlight in the room, two hawks above a bluff, a single rose in a vase, all illustrating poems in Caitlin.

Kay ill today, with a sudden attack of influenza. I missed her on the telephone, though I spoke to her this morning and again this afternoon -- and found myself by evening distraught and unable to write. In mid-evening came Kay and Karl Ganzlin to sit and talk -- of Mark Schorer's dramatic refusal to "surrender" his daughter Suki when he had flown to New York to "give her away" for her wedding, now ending in divorce; of Erna Gunradi's slow fading into old age; of a new book by Donleavy; of Vern Meyer's Dorf Haus in Roxbury, und so weiter, for almost two hours.

16 November 1968: A day of slow rain, begun in mid-morning and continuing into the night, raw, and with a little west wind, and a promise of snow to come, though none fell in the course of this day. Kay somewhat better today; on the telephone several times, inducing me -- nay, daring me -- to bring up the books she had neglected to take from here, so that I did it; finding her in her rose bathrobe, covered from head to foot, and, despite her illness, looking so desirable and so beautiful I could hardly resist the compulsion to take her into my arms, and lost no time getting away, lest I lose all constraint.

Minnie Meyer died today, at 93, in hospital in Baraboo. She had been ailing for some time, and "out of her mind" -- i. e., in an advanced stage of arteriosclerosis. Living close to the bone had kept her alive, as it had Minnie Truckenbrodt even longer. Mother still speculated about who would get "all her money" without realizing that any savings Minnie might have had must long since have been eaten up by hospital care, for she has been gone from the streets and byways of Sac Prairie for almost three years.

George Marx out tonight, but he did not stay long. He had promised to visit Fr. Heidtke after "the box social" -- i. e., confessions -- and help him with some small task, and I would not deny him this pleasure; so I took him in shortly after nine. So home, and soon after, to bed.

17 November 1968: The sky still overcast, and rain threatening, though none fell. At Mass this morning, Fr. Van Berkel promised -- nay, threatened -- to give his "annual money sermon" soon, as if he did not make a plea for money in virtually every sermon throughout the year!

Made up a listing of the outstanding books of the year -- the annual chore for the column in the Capital Times -- and this took up most of the day, though I found time to go through half a dozen collections of poetry, keeping but one, and putting the rest out to be shipped to Edna Meudt for use as prizes in poetry contests. The book list uncommonly short this year by the standards of previous years.

Kay telephoned this afternoon, late. She was manifestly upset, because her failure to achieve some sort of communication last night with Greg had caused her to say bluntly, "If it's this way between us a year from now, I'm leaving and taking Lisa -- I won't ask anything of you, either." had resulted first in his complete silence, he being engaged watching the late film, then later in his tears, he well aware that she is too soft and sentimental to be able to fight this tactic, and thus escaping the frank talk she asked. I was both wryly amused and saddened to her her tell of it, of her helplessness in the face of it, hearing her say, "I just can't hurt him like that but I want you, too!" to which I could reply only that the liaison as at present seemed to be the only answer, knowing full well that the longer this situation was maintained, the less likely she was to strike out for a divorce. I said firmly, however, that if he had to make the choice of hurting one or the other of us, I could take it much more easily than he, being used to it. Yet she could "hardly wait" until she could be with me tomorrow. I sympathized with her, being so torn, being so helpless to take any decisive action, but I woul not push her in either direction.

George Marx telephoned to say that he had noticed that Hester Duff (Minnie Meyer) had died -- recalling Village Year.

18 November 1968: Another afternoon with Kay -- abed, both of us as if we had been sexually starved for decades! Time, as usual, melted away. Once again a singular variety of positions, and both of us taking especial pleasure in her sitting astride for cunnilingus. While we were at loving, Rikki up to Ski-Hi for winter banana and golden delicious apples, though he was well aware of what went on -- just as I had always been aware of what he did with Mary Ellen and other girls. Much teasing from him at the condition of the bed, its "musk", and the like, on his return, after Kay had gone to pick up Lisa at nursery school -- i. e. "The girl goes to a nursery school, and Kay takes instructions in sex from a sex maniac!" -- parrotting the common reference. Myself as usual so shaken by our indulgence, and in such euphoria that I could do no more work for the day, though I spent some time at it with Dennis in the studio and the packing room -- between telephone calls from Kay. Rikki out until early evening, then reluctantly home.

Snow fell from time to time today, but little accumulated.

19 November 1968: A cold, grey day, though occasionally the sun shone briefly. Myself on the telephone now and then with Kay -- both of us argumentative about her modelling, of which I disapproved. She could not come down this afternoon, lacking a car, but used her mother's car to go into Madison to deliver some papers for her father, home and too tired to go in himself in the company car. ... Rikki out to work for most of the day, save for two hours in early afternoon. I accomplished little this day.

20 November 1968: To Chicago today, with Rikki driving, Kay coming along. She persuaded her husband to believe that she had to go to Chicago with a models group to substitute for one of the girls who had been taken ill. She remained hidden on the back seat until we were off Highway 12, then sat up to ride so the rest of the way. The day cool, but not cold. Here and there a light dusting of snow, none of it on the highway. Despite heavy traffic, particularly of truc we reached down town Chicago in under three hours. Kay and I left the Falcon at Randolph and Michigan, and made our way to the candy counter at Marshall Fields, where I bought Frango mints and had some sent about. Rikki joined us there, and we went up to the English Room for lunch, having to wait there for a while -- a quarter of an hour -- before being seated; and then had a most satisfactory lunch at a surprisingly modest price. Then to send Rikki for tickets to Funny Girl -- Kay's reason for coming along -- while Kay and I went to the dress department and I bought her three dresses, all on sale, at but half the cost of the ~~previous~~ dresses bought previously. She was as delighted as a child, and I could not fail to recognize this acquisitiveness as integral to her nature. Thence to the United Artists theatre where Rikki waited, and there sat through Funny Girl, which was less tiring than I had thought, though I got out of the theatre twice to walk briefly in the foyer. After the movie down Wabash to Kroch's & Brentano's -- going part of the way along State Street to look at the Christmas windows at Marshall Fields, at one of which Kay walked into the glass, unseeing, much to our amusement. From the book store to the Cliff Dwellers Club, where George Marx waited, ready to regale us with his account of how he had insisted upon a deep dish cherry pie, when the manager had attempted to put him off. "I called the girl at the desk and I said, 'How long has this fellow been the manager?' and she said, 'Nine months,' and I said, 'And how long has Mr. Derleth been a member?' and she said, 'Twenty-five years,' and I said, 'Well, then, he wants a deepdish cherry pie.'" The manager explained that now he had had to buy thirty pounds of cherries and the members would have to eat cherry pie for some time to come, at which George scoffed, "Do you mean to say you can't walk down to the store and buy two cans?" A very pleasant dinner at the Club, and thereafter directly home -- Kay and myself wrestling and necking in the back seat all the way home. Once there, she tried on her new dresses in the studio, and in an hour left for home.

21 November 1968: A warming day, with sunshine. The mercury climbed out of the 20s into the 50s, reaching 51° at its afternoon peak. Kay out with Lisa for two hours this afternoon, utterly desirable, as always, but with a coolness between us, and with her agreement to model for Simpson's a challenge to my respect for her. "Love," reflected Rikki later, "is like a mirror and once there's nick in it it isn't perfect any more." ... Spent the day at home and desultorily at work. ... A fine saffron and old rose sunset, very strong behind the trees of the woodlot, and southwest, and Venus brilliant above.

22 November 1968: A beautiful old rose sunrise among clouds, with the sky clearing rapidly, and the mercury moving up.

This afternoon, with the mercury at 55°, into the marshes with Rikki, by way of the brook. A southwest wind blew, and clouds were hazing over the sun, darkening out of the northwest and thickening: a nimbus presaging rain or snow, if it were but more solid. Walked past waterstriders still active on the brook, a mass of water cress flourishing still, and, on the rail bed up toward the Spring Slough Trestle, dandelions in bloom, newly so. Under the small trestle, a muskrat in a trap disturbed me. I wanted to free it, but lacked anything with which to do it, and hesitated to risk being bitten by the unhappy creature; so I went on, feeling depressed and guilty. Walked to the east end of the second bridge over the east channel of the Wisconsin, and there turned, for, having observed the seeds of carrion berries, wild wisteria, bittersweet, climbing false buckwheat, I wondered whether winter berries glowed in the dark woods; and retraced our course to the Brook Trestle, and went in along the brook and down along the Lower Meadow -- past many fresh deer tracks, past ninebark bushes heavy with seeds -- to where the winter berry bushes stood, and found them carrying but a few red berries, so few that I had to search for them among the twigs and branches. A few redwings still called, but did not sing.

Backtracked from here. Going out along the brook, met Norman Niederklopfer coming in -- grim, taciturn -- the trapper on the way to kill the muskrat I had not freed. Given at that moment the choice of saving either life, I would have given Norman's for the muskrat's.

Worked on book reviews and correspondence for as much of the afternoon that remained after hiking and talking with Kay on the telephone. She at last suggested -- after having given me an excellent idea for a story-line for the second Rick-Banny-Dody book for Crowell -- that we need to limit our talking on the telephone in favor of more work, however much she protested subsequently when I proposed only relatively brief conversations morning and evening, thus freeing our afternoons for work.

A magnificent and attenuated sunset, begun with mother-of-pearl, ended with smouldering cerise and old rose on clouds above the sunset, where the new moon and Venus shone above that afterglow, and dusk deepened all around. The day ~~began~~ ended as it began, in a glory of color.

Rikki came in after supper tonight to say that the chasm between him and Chris was at last out in the open -- and at her instigation. He was still atonished that she, who had retreated into silence almost from the day of their marriage, had indulged her moods in tears and a refusal to talk, should now suddenly have brought the issue up between them. He had told her that divorce seemed to be the only answer. She had shed no tears, recognizing the extent of her failure, and he admitting his own. They had not yet done more than admit the apparent need for a divorce. Told him that, now he was on the threshold of going to work in January for General Electric in Milwaukee, he and she must decide whether she is to continue here in the apartment, while he takes a room in the city, or whether she is to join him in an apartment there -- the expense being approximately the same, save only for the saving of moving costs.

Spent the evening writing a poem, a books column, beginning Notes on the Margin for The Author Speaks. To bed ca. midnight.

23 November 1968: Into Madison with Rikki this morning. The first day of the deer hunting season, and hunters' cars parked in many places along the roads. Some hunters -- all clad in red jackets and caps -- were to be seen -- and at least one hearty buck, making his escape down the fields with a hunter in awkward pursuit, crossing the highway, and heading for the hills on the other side; our thoughts for the hunter were not kind. ... In Madison to Manchester's, after shopping at Kohl's, then to the Perfume Shop, to Victor Music, and then down State Street to meet Rikki at the Lake Street parking ramp. To Hilldale briefly and then home. ... The countryside the epitome of November, despite the sun: sere, dun and grey and fuscous; and the sun low in the sky. Home by 11:20.

Dennis Mack finally to level the driveway, badly in need of it. ... Rikki to say that his wife and he had concluded that for the time being she had decided to retain the apartment and he had already signed the lease to July of next year, while he took a room -- or roomed with Johnny Voll (of whom, I was reasonably certain, he would soon tire) -- in Milwaukee while he was at his work.

With George Marx to walk the marsh road by the light of the setting moon, waxing in the southwest -- a singularly beautiful night, with a west wind blowing, warm for November, and stars among the dark trees arboring the road there. Walked for over a mile along that road and back, talking of Kay -- who had telephoned not long before, -- as well as of the day (Wednesday last) in Chicago, which Mother had celebrated by having the Beck sisters in for luncheon and the afternoon. High in the east the Pleiades and Taurus, the Twins and Capella, with Orion moving up that slope; Venus at this hour behind clouds low on the western rim. But presently clouds rose on the wind from the west, light and dark, and spread over the sky.

24 November 1968: Completed Notes on the Margin for The Author Speaks this morning, wrote a new poem, and read four books of poetry in the course of the early afternoon. ... In mid-afternoon to the Park Hall to deliver my Life Among My Characters lecture. Leah Ziemke and Bobby already there -- she looking gaunt after her hospital ordeal, he to say that while hunting in the Diehl-Von Behren Pocket he had come upon scores of pileated woodpeckers as well as some red-headed woodpeckers, though I assumed some exaggeration in his report. Leah unusually pleasant and loquacious. I thought at once that not nearly enough chairs had been put up, and told Ralph Marquardt that since the speaker was notorious, and not merely intellectual or professorial, he could expect that the hall would be crowded. He did order more chairs at once, but the crowd

pushed in faster than chairs could be put up, and presently all the chairs in the building -- from downstairs and from the balcony, too -- were up, all were filled, some latecomers had to stand. Kay and her mother were in the audience, Cousin Mary Volk Hutter and her grand-daughter, Chris Meng, Pye Gingras, Ed and Leah Gruber, the Henry Felixes, Elsa Kellersberger, Clara Merkel, Dave Barry and his wife with Felix Ferber, Karl and Kay Ganzlin, et al -- over 200 people in all. I made some deletions in the copy as I went along, and altered some names to spare the feelings of some people present. Questions were slow to start, but once the ice was broken, they came fast enough -- primarily, I observed, not from oldtime local residents, but from comparative newcomers and from teachers on the high school staff. Afterward, with Karl and Kay to the Flamingo, to have a drink on the occasion of her birthday; so home. A telephone call from Kay had just come in; so I returned it -- and was on the telephone for almost two hours thereafter, listening to her reaction to the lecture, her first such experience. "If we're married I expect to go to all of them with you," she said -- but I thought marriage unlikely for her lack of courage, and said so.

In mid-evening with Rikki to ride through the Genz and Babington Pockets and back. Near the Kleinert farm came upon an opossum crossing the road and paused to watch it. It went up the verge to a fence-line, but could not work its way through; so it ran along, slowly at first, pausing twice to look back at the car with its pulsing motor, then faster, as perhaps it dimly conceived some danger threatening, until it found an opening and crawled through. Later, returning, came upon what was very likely the same opossum -- since it was at the same place -- attempting to recross the road; it scurried back at our approach, and vanished beyond the fence. In the eastern heaven now Sirius rising, and across the heavens Vega and the Northern Cross approaching the horizon. The sky clear of clouds, and much starred. Home and to bed, very tired.

25 November 1968: Kay down for two hours abed this afternoon -- and, having had her sexual appetite sated in the variety of ways in which she and I take pleasure -- she went home, and, on the telephone, set forth her goals in marriage -- among them a husband who shaved and bathed daily, a sunken bathtub, etc., etc., so that it seemed to me she demanded far more than she was prepared to pay for. By the day's end, I was convinced that marriage to her was not only unlikely but unwise -- to her, it would mean sacrifices too great for her to bear; to me, the loss of peace of mind. That this conclusion would also dawn upon her in the year of grace that looms ahead seemed to me inevitable.

A thick-flaked snow fell briefly this evening, glowing around the garage light, and briefly whitening the earth -- but it faded before freezing.

26 November 1968: Woke early in the day -- ca. 4:30 -- and lay pondering the affair with Kay -- or rather, not so much the affair, as the potential marriage, which seemed to me in these small hours a threatening prospect what with Kay's visions of change not only in the house, some part of which is certainly overdue, but in my way of life. The prospect of marriage did not seem too promising, and later in the morning I communicated my doubts to her -- which aroused her, as I had foreseen, so that she came down this afternoon armed and ready to do battle -- and somewhat scared, in addition, that her plans might not mature; and in no time had me to bed and supine beneath her, arousing me almost to fever pitch and washing away my resistance and my doubts. All she really felt must be done, once the north gable room had been readied, was the reupholstering of the living-room furniture, with which I could not quarrel, since it had grown shabby in three decades. ... She on the telephone three times thereafter.

Letters in today -- from Gollancz to ask for a biography of Lovecraft -- from Writer, Inc., asking to see Becoming a Writer when I had finished with the manuscript -- proofs of the fourth issue of The Arkham Collector &c ... und so weiter. .... A grey day, though no rain or snow fell here, and in late afternoon the wind veered into the northwest.

Kay reported today that her cousin Nancy Diehl Wipperfurth had telephoned her to gossip and in the course of her talk had said, "Did you know Augie's got a girl?" Kay was immediately apprehensive, afraid someone "had found us out" but had asked, cautiously, "Who?" "Oh, it's Effie Bachhuber," said Nancy. "They were carrying on years ago. Oh, there's no doubt about it -- I saw him the other day and talked with him, he smelled nice and he had such a gleam in his eye." Kay's reactions could be imagined, being that "girl" and listening to another being given credit -- or blame.

27 November 1968: A pleasant day. In mid-morning with Rikki into Madison to shop, and to go to lunch at the Simon House. Thence out along 18, so that Rikki could pick up his car. I drove home from there at some speed, knowing that Rikki was convinced he could -- despite my five minute lead -- make it to Sac Prairie before me. He failed. Once home, telephoned Kay to say that I was returning to Madison with her, and would take in an order of 22 books for Moseley's. She came down at two o'clock to pick me up and I rode well out of town lying down in the back seat, much to her amusement. While she went to Simpson's to try on clothes, I went to Moseley's and signed books there, then around to Karsten's and finally to the// Boutique shop, there found two small pieces I wanted for Christmas -- from the children, and so had them wrapped, while I waited for Kay to join me. With her presently to shop -- then to the Simon House for dinner -- and on out to Hilldale and Treasure Island to continue shopping. At Treasure Island Kay lost her cart, taking another instead -- but fortunately the cart with her bag in it remained undisturbed until she found it again. So home through the moonlit countryside -- by way of highways 14 and 78. Kay in briefly.

28 November 1968: Erv Schneller died this morning at seven. He had been hospitalized for two or three weeks, following a fall from a stepladder, and had sustained some internal injuries that complicated a continuing illness. Hilda called to tell us of his death. She said he had started to gain until about a week ago, and then began a decline from which he did not recover.

A grey day for Thanksgiving. Home for most of the day, working at/ trivial tasks, finishing the introduction to Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos, etc. To sit with Hugh for an hour or so in the harness shop, waiting for the one mail late this afternoon. While I was there Carl Lachmund came in with Gary, and Gary's current girl, Linda Cook of Madison; they too were waiting for the mail, though Carl had been fishing at the dam, and was now cold enough to want soon to go home. Hugh reminiscing -- of the days in the 1930s when we had used to sit in the shop windows looking down toward the Post Office, waiting for the evening mail. A quiet day -- sans company, save for a brief appearance by Rikki in mid-morning, and Dennis this evening to work desultorily, he eager to get away.

29 November 1968: Another grey day, but, thankfully, without rain or snow, with the temperature hovering ca. 34°. Chill and rather unpleasant, but not bitterly so. Kay telephoned at 7:15 this morning, and again later in the day -- Greg's 29th birthday, spending not too much time on the wire, assuring me several times that I would not "get away" from her -- as if I meant to. Small talk of Thanksgiving. ... Spent this afternoon with Rikki and April at cleaning windows in the studio and re-waxing windowsills -- a greater task than it ought to have been, thanks to the books etc. occupying the sills.

With Forrest Hartmann to walk the Ferry Bluff road by the iridescent light of the waxing moon among thin clouds passing over -- a cool but not cold night, not unpleasant, with a very light west wind moving among the leafless trees, and no bird call, no sound to interrupt the silence. Walked to the Morley Sugar Bush and back. Forrest told that he had been appointed -- "You'll never guess!" -- by Judge Gollmar to be the defending counsel for Freddi Schaefer, who had been brought back from San Francisco on a charge of violating parole. Freddi had been arrested there for car theft. He had been in trouble in Mundelein, in Chicago, in New Orleans. "He's just irresponsible," he said. "He feigned illness -- said he'd had some kind of stroke -- said some jig had run into him in New Orleans -- but I told him there was nothing I could do for him and Judge Gollmar gave him the maximum term of five years in Waupun. He'd told him last time when he held up his sentence and freed him on parole that next time -- if he ever got into trouble with the law again, no matter how trivial/ the offense, he would give him the maximum term and he did. I asked him whether he'd like me to notify his friends in Sac Prairie, but he said no, he'd caused enough trouble in Sac Prairie --but perhaps I could say hello to Pete Blankenheim. Oh, he can be out in a year on parole -- but he brings his troubles on to himself," concluded Forrest. Drove on through the Genz Pocket and back home once more, and there I got to work finishing the copyright page for the Cthulhu anthology, and reading poetry.

30 November 1968: A day of "house repair". Dennis and Rikki this afternoon to wax windowsills, after April had washed the windows, and the stairs, and the floor of the downstairs hall, and the door to the little hall adjacent. ... Ruth and Bill Strelow and Carol Lang at Lang's Restaurant this noon. I stood talking with them, learning that Ruth had again been in hospital -- "They found a bed big enough! -- and in a room with a fireplace."

Kay on the telephone several times this evening -- and at 11:15 I paused at her home to deliver some books, whereupon Lisa came pushing out the door to discover that it was "Uncle" Derleth! -- Kay called for the last time past midnight!

1 December 1968: Lil Laughnan died during the morning hours today. She had not been ill. Indeed, in the past week I had walked across Water Street toward the Post Office with her. But in the course of last night she had evidently had a coronary attack, and had been taken to the local hospital where she died between 4:30 and 5 o'clock this morning. At Lang's, Stub came up to talk about her death, and commented upon the fortunate decision Don had made to spend this Thanksgiving at home with his mother. He would now have to come back for her funeral, and perhaps Laura with him.

Spent this day at home, catching up on correspondence going back to September and taking care of several other tasks. Kay on the telephone 2½ hours in the course of the day. Rikki out this evening, after snow had ceased to fall, leaving a light coat on the ground; but he did not stay more than an hour, being restless. He had spent the day with Chris, and his parents in La Crosse, visiting his grandfather, Bruce Babington, in the hospital there, suffering a terminal illness. He was as "sharp as ever," said Rikki, but knew that he was dying.

2 December 1968: A chill, wet day, with snow and drizzle, but fortunately no frost or ice. At one o'clock came Kay for two hours of love, she looking as dazzling as ever, sans any kind of cosmetics, and we were soon abed at loving. She repeatedly today took the superior position, insistently, and I was amazed and somewhat disconcerted at my decidedly unmasculine liking -- nay, ardent desire -- for such possession. Her climaxes today were exciting and somewhat more demonstrative and violent than previously, though long before we could achieve maximum satisfaction it was necessary for her to go.

Dennis out to pack the 75 books ordered today, after supper. Worked briefly in the studio with him, but he was done with his work by hine. At that hour I went out into the drizzly evening to drive to Upper Sac Prairie where -- said Kay on the telephone earlier -- I would find a piece of cake she had baked in her mailbox, as indeed I did, and to drop a letter for her in the post office box. So home, to resume work, to write a poem for Kay, and at last to bed.

3 December 1968: Another grey, louring day, but without rainfall of any kind. The humidity very high, and the chill air penetrating. ... In mid-morning with Rikki to Madison to shop -- at the Design Boutique, at the Perfume Shop -- and then to lunch at the Simon House, after which home. Observed all the way along Highway 12 the frequency of ploughed fields; it seemed to me that almost half the fields had been turned for spring planting, though most of them still needed to be leveled for seeding. Of leaves, only oak still clung to branches -- all others were now down, and the landscape wore the face of early winter, snowless as yet, but ready for the blanket of white -- if indeed it came to last. Of birds -- crows, blue jays, starlings, juncos, and in one place a duck hawk, the peregrine falcon. Along the river gulls.

Edna Koenig, pausing on her way from viewing Lil Laughnan, said that she had "hundreds of purple finches" and had seen "my second evening grosbeak." But there were no juncos and no goldfinches at her feeder thus far. "I can't understand it -- but they must prefer the country. Still, they're in Madison." ... In Madison today Bill Evjue finally held his book, A Fighting Editor, in his hands. As I had foreseen, he had published it himself, for no publishing house would have taken on the long, rambling account he turned out. The Times today featured a three-column picture of Bill, two of the printers, Frank Custer, who had helped shape the book (at very probably no more than his regular salary), and Miles McMillin.

Following a stint at modelling in Madison, Kay telephoned to say she would stop in after nine on her way home ("I've met most of the important men of Madison, and I still love you, and I'm more than ever sure I'm going to marry you!") -- and come she did at 9:10, having not even stopped to eat, though she brought sandwiches from MacDonald's: hamburgers, a trifle too raw for me, though I sampled one: and drank chartreuse. Sat -- on the floor against the bed! -- arms around each other, like a pair of adolescents, for almost two hours. Outside, when I walked to the car with her, the sky was beginning at last to clear, clouds broken and stars looking through.

4 December 1968: A day with some sunlight through the morning hours, but a chill wind blew out of the southwest. I went around to Zimmerman's Funeral Parlor this morning to sign my name in the visitors' book for Lil Laughnan, and after 11 went across to the cemetery for the brief interment ceremony -- a dull, prayerful conventional thing performed by Fr. Van Berkel. Laura Nolden Laughnan came over immediately afterward to speak a few words, she now almost all white but still, in her 50th year, trim and attractive. Gerry Laughnan, who followed, looked the most worn and torn of all the boys, with deep lines in his face. Their daughter Linda and her husband accompanied Gerry and Cynthia Laughnan, and Don and Laura's daughter Karen had come from Seattle with them. After a brief visit with Bob Meracle and Norm, up from Whitewater to buy books, went to the Riverview to lunch with the mourners, sitting next to Stub and Carol Lang, and thus learning that Ruth Strelow was not well, and was not responding to treatment. More talk with the Laughnan boys and Laura, and then home. I observed that Don had gone around to invite all the remote in-laws to the luncheon -- including Lynette's mother, Emma Schaefer, as well as Maurie and Cleo, Clara Binger, et al.

Helen Hari was found dead in her room by her sister, Lillian, yesterday afternoon, said Zimmy today. He "had her" in the undertaking establishment. She had come home from work and, perhaps not feeling good, had lain down, and had evidently then died of a heart attack. She was 59, a large, coarse woman, much given to Moody Bible Institutism.

To Baraboo with Rikki this afternoon -- to deliver books to Taylor's, and to stop at Ski-Hi for some russets and golden delicious apples. As usual, the apple cellar was redolent, and I drank in its fragrance with pleasure, and stood briefly to look out over that attractive rolling landscape down and away from the hill where Ski-Hi stood. A snow flurry briefly this afternoon, but the mercury remained at 36° and none held to the ground.

5 December 1968: A cold day, with a northwest wind blowing. Despite sunlight for most of the day, the mercury did not get out of the 20s, and with darkness, slipped lower. The night after the full moon, and the snowless ground laved by the bright light of the moon which still appeared full to the naked eye. ... Worked all day at the house -- reading Lovecraft letters, going over Sonia Davis's papers, finding nothing of value in them, and setting Rikki to type three pieces she wanted retyped, evidently for her daughter to see, since she had directed that typescripts be forwarded to her. Sonia herself wrote: "I will probably not reach another birthday."

In mid-afternoon came Carroll and Jennie Coleman with 200 copies of Walden Pond, a handsome little book indeed -- though I could not be sure that its contents merited its dress. They would not stay even for a glass of sherry, he explaining that he disliked driving by night, and even at best would have an hour or so of it. Assured him that 200 copies would be ample through the holiday season. He sold me some 900 copies of the book at $1.50, leaving me a maximum margin of $2.00 and a minimum of $.60 the copy. Set to work after the Colemans had gone to sign 65 copies, in readiness for Frank Utpatel's coming tomorrow morning to sign the same number of copies -- or more, so that orders could be filled.

Two brief calls from Kay today.

6 December 1968: Kay almost three hours on the telephone today -- morning, noon, and night. The extraordinary effect of her pheasant voice and laughter. She still went on about wanting a child -- specifically, my child, without any indication that she was aware of the complications involved if we were not married. The prospect filled me with decidedly mixed feelings.

Spent this day largely with Walden Pond -- signing more copies, with Frank Utpatel up to sign 100 copies, Rikki invoicing and packing the store orders, delivering books to the drug stores, und so weiter. Forrest Hartmann out this evening to buy a copy for himself, together with another of Evening in Spring, which made me to compare the innocence and sweet pain of first love with such an affair as this passion for Kay, with all its wild longing and anguish.

In mid-evening to ride to the Ferry Bluff by moonlight with Rikki, after visiting Hugh in the harness shop. A young couple necking at the Bluff. We turned around, gliding past the moonlit ice of Honey Creek, and went back through the marshes, only to have a county cop follow us until a call to check the car's license evidently put him off, and he turned back. Rikki fumed at the time and money-wasting police.

7 December 1968: Another cold day, with the mercury at 11° this morning. But the sun shone, and little wind blew, and the mercury climbed to 25° by mid-afternoon. In late morning with Rikki driving, took the children Christmas shopping in Madison -- at first at Hilldale, then up town, following lunch at the Simon House. Walden had some difficulty fitting a parka -- a 14 was right in sleeve-length, too tight across his chest, which promised to duplicate my own barrel-chest; a 16 was too long in the sleeves, but in the end we chose it, expecting him to grow into it. April proved to be a persnickety shopper, refusing to buy anything that seemed to her too costly, and ultimately saving three or four dollars on what she bought. I detached myself from the children presently and went around to Moseley's to deliver books and pick up an order for 21 more -- to Karsten's to buy some dickies for Walden -- to the Perfume Shop for a little imported music box that tinkled Lara's Song to be wrapped as a Christmas gift -- to find some cards, not for Christmas -- and finally to the car to wait for the children and Rikki to come, which they did at 2:20. So to Nelson's to leave copies of Walden Pond, then home.

Kay pleasantly on the telephone two or three times in the course of the day and evening. Ron Hering out to visit -- on his way back from a "presentation" at Wisconsin Rapids -- and George in for the evening. With George presently to ride west of town by the light of the moon. Venus now long set, after glowing with singular brilliance throughout the evening, and, high in the southern sky, ranged vertically from near earth's rim toward the zenith, shone Sirius, Orion, Taurus and the Pleiades -- bright despite the moon in the crisp night, for the mercury stood close to 12°, the air was windless, and a faint drift of transparent cloud lay athwart the eastern heavens from the north into the southeast. ... At 11:30 to pick up April at the Eagle's Nest, she looking somewhat disgruntled, and so at last to bed.

8 December 1968: To Mass this morning. When we emerged, saw Msgr. Van Berkel taking films of the audience coming from St. Aloysius. Jested with him, charging him with taking my picture coming out of church to prove that I did sometimes attend Mass, at which he laughed and explained that he was but completing a film he had been making on the building of the church with pictures showing people coming to and leaving St. Aloysius -- obviously for a lecture at other parishes, where the faithful sheep have no recourse but to listen at the behest of their pastors to the visiting priest, no other speaker but another priest ever being considered by pastors of the small Catholic parishes in the American midland.

At the harness shop this morning, Hugh mourned the sale of the Lachmund Lumber Company -- the oldest continuing business in Sac Prairie -- over 125 years in the same family, handed down through four generations. Gary, of course, would have nothing to do with it. Presumably, as he had once told children urging him too to play, he was "too intelligent" for it. In any case, he need not work at this, since he as an only child would inherit his parents' considerable wealth. In common with the changing status of lumber companies, the new owner -- a man from Dane -- intended to get out of the business of building houses to sell, meant to sell only lumber. The removal of the Lachmund name from Water Street in Sac Prairie removed also a tangible link to our childhood, mine as well as Hugh's, though more patently his, since he had lived within a block of the company all his life, and was intimately associated with the Lachmund boys in his early years, as playmates and neighbors. He was somewhat upset because Carl had not informed him of the sale -- I had learned of it from George Marx who in turn had had it from Roman Breunig, his brother-in-law, who would now presumably be without work, having been employed by Lachmund's as a carpenter, which must, in view of the work Roman had done for me, have left in many cases a good deal to be desired.

Kay out for an hour this afternoon -- one all the more delightful because it was so unexpected, an hour of kissing and banter, all very delightful as between two people in love. She had, as always, a powerfully stimulating effect on me. She brought out some coffeecake she had made, but it seemed too rich for me, though I sampled it. Mother said later that she thought it needed salt, but I did not think so. Kay left soon after 4:30 and I returned to work.

Signed books intended for Christmas at the shops, worked at writing letters, book reviews, this journal, and began the revision and expansion of H.P.L.: A Memoir. In mid-evening came Rikki, and with him to ride east of the village, along Crystal Lake -- now lightly iced over and reflecting the light of the moon high up the eastern sky, just under Castor and Pollux -- then through Roxbury and to the top of Minette's Hill, where we looked down upon the prairie, aglitter with lights of many colors, making a far fantstic land to the eye, and so on through Dunlap's Hollow and home.

The Sunday bulletin at St. Aloysius today announced that contributions were needed -- this time for a new Christmas creche. The old, which had served the parish for so many years: a splendid example of the creche, in rough-hewn wood, skillfully sculpted figures, and pine boughs, was deemed "too old-fashioned" for the new St. Aloysius. Adding to the already high debt the parish had incurred in the building of the church was manifestly unwise -- so contributions from the faithful, ever ready to help buy their way to a mythical heaven, were solicited. And would no doubt be given.

9 December 1968: Another grey day, but with some modification in temperature -- a gradual warming, accompanied, however, with a brisk and chilling south wind, which penetrated because of the high humidity, so that by afternoon, and at 31°, the day seemed colder than yesterday morning's 10° sans wind. ..... A heavy mail this morning, so that the week began with orders for 106 books.

Kay on the telephone three times today -- and the morning mail brought in a letter from her. In her letter for the first time she conceded that she "might find it in her heart not to marry me" -- by which she meant to say, as I had been convinced all along, that she was too soft, too sentimental, to do Greg the further wrong of leaving him; and on the telephone she said, in one breath, "Is there any reason we can't go on like this for ten years?" and in another: "This thing will have to be settled one way or the other by a year from now -- I couldn't stand the intensity and the tension."

10 December 1968: A slowly warming day, continuing the warming trend of yesterday. Kay out for two hours this afternoon, very lovable, as always. Spent our time equally abroad in the studio and abed, very pleasantly.

The mail today singularly varied. Jesse Stuart wrote that David Brandenburg, after successfully establishing his Harvest Press, had committed suicide -- and asked "What about love? How are you and the young lady? Will it be marriage?" Joseph Payne Brennan wrote to say he had suffered a coronary but was now on the mend. Russell Ferrall formally proposed that I edit the new Wisconsin poets anthology, which I agreed to do subject to such terms as I laid down.

11 December 1968: A difficult day, begun with Mother's bitter complaint about difficulties with April -- and, for a change, Walden. Found it necessary to counsel April to have patience, but the day was badly begun nevertheless. ... In early afternoon came Kay, bubbling over with plans. When she came to live here, she said confidently, she would make some changes in the studio -- the hangings must be changed, the books must go, the bed be covered, und so weiter. I was exhausted just listening to her catalog of projected changes, so much so that I lost all desire to take her to bed. This took up the entire two hours she spent here, leaving me so exhausted I had to lie down for an hour!

In late afternoon to Baraboo, taking books to Taylor's, and then to shop for Kay at the bakery, and to look for a Nehru shirt for Walden, until it developed that, though plenty of such shirts in solid colors were available, he wanted a print. Disgusted, set out for home, and to desultory work throughout the evening.

12 December 1968: Mother 82 today. Took her to Mass this morning at 8 -- one for Dad, coincidentally -- and found myself distracted by the incredibly bad words of some of the hymns in English; in Latin, the sound alone carried the repetition, however monotonous it was, but in English, an entire hymn that consisted of nothing but "Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" is so mawkishly silly as to bring one to the point of nausea. Escaped at last, and down town for the mail.

At 9:10 with Rikki off for Prairie du Chien, the temperature now 50° and a strong southwest wind blowing. The sky was grey, but from time to time a shaft of sunlight streamed out and over the landscape, briefly warming it. Of birds, saw principally crows black against clouds and countryside. In many places the pale pink of broom-sedge, along the roadside, on the hill slopes, but along the Wisconsin and its sloughs, sometimes great areas of broken ice, with shelves of it along the shores of the sloughs. Managed in passing to write a brief poem.

Reached Prairie du Chien in an hour and twenty minutes, and found that Jack Howe had already picked up the kolaches and doughnuts I had ordered from the bakery; so to the Courier office, where the fourth issue of The Arkham Collector and a folder announcing my own coming books were ready, standing at the door to be loaded. Rikki directly to loading, while I talked with Jack. Presently off once more, on 18 this time, across the Wisconsin, bound for Madison. Observed in many places along that highway the very large cornfields, the mounds of uncovered corn in farmyards, the vistas that rolled away in successive hills and deep valleys toward the horizon, surprisingly far despite the louring clouds and the radio's promise of imminent rain that did not come. In to Kohl's at Hilldale to shop for a birthday cake for Mother, and so to Sac Prairie, where lunched at the Flamingo. Thence home to work.

Effie Bachhuber out for Mother's birthday dinner tonight, and staying to visit with Mother while the children and Rikki stuffed envelopes with copies of the House magazine, ready for shipment in the morning. Outside the wind blew violently, occasional rain beat against the panes, and the temperature held to 48° until mid-evening, when it began slowly to fall.

13 December 1968: Despite a blizzard blowing up, Kay came down in late morning, hid her car in the garage here, and left with Rikki and me for Madison and a day of shopping. Directly to the Simon House. A cold day, and windy, with snow blowing, but no longer falling so thickly by the time we reached Madison; yet enough had been deposited when we drove over to make the landscape wear the face of winter -- all white, with the dark woods struck out against snowy fields and slopes. In Madison directly after lunch, with Rikki going shopping, to the Majestic to watch an old Laurel & Hardy comedy and a new British film, a satire on the machine age in England titled Work is a Four-Letter Word, which was but fair; thence to shop ourselves -- to Moseley's particularly, for a globe Greg wanted for Christmas; to Manchester's, to the Army Store -- where one of the Litscher girls -- Rose Meyer's niece -- came effusively up and introduced me to her boss and his wife. At Moseley's one of Bill Meyer's daughters worked; so it was necessary not to be obviously seen together. Some artful dodging took place, including my leaving the shop alone to go to Victor Music, and return in time to carry Kay's purchases from Moseley's. Thence to the Emporium and to wait to be picked up by Rikki, after which with him over Bascom Hill and around to the Pines for dinner. There Mrs. Bennett up to our table to talk of Sac Prairie gossip, which I gave little credence --that Eileen Hill and Hap Lang were planning to be married. So home, where I spent the evening not abed with Kay -- but rather comforting her as best I might, she in a sudden upsurge of guilt, hurt, and the self-pity rising from her initial rejection by Greg (two years of married life!) and her parents' censure, triggered by, of all things, reading some objective passages in my journal -- which I promised to change, thereby admitting to myself that she had become more important to me than my work, an admission never hitherto made or acted upon, and one that sent a tremor of alarm through me. She left for home at 9:15.

14 December 1968: A day of cold weather, with the mercury reaching a high of only 21°. Snow covered the ground, but not in a depth over two inches anywhere. Spent a large part of the morning processing a heavy mail and shopping with the children. The morning mail brought in the first two copies of Mr. Fairlie's Final Journey, a week or more late. Dennis to work this morning -- and again this evening, wanting to go hunting this afternoon. Rikki gone to training at Dodgeville's army headquarters. In late afternoon into the village, where met Kay at Hugh's harness shop, persuading him to take her upstairs and show her some of his better work. She in turn persuaded him to agree to do a dining-room table in black walnut for her, though he would not promise chairs to match it, and would give her no delivery date. I assured her it would first be necessary to burn down the canning factory in order to free him from his enslavement to that institution. She seemed to me today positively electric with charm and sex-appeal -- small wonder he could not put down her request for a table!

George Marx out this evening, coming just as Rikki came in from the first day of his weekend at Dodgeville, though he did not stay long. Kay on the telephone, promising me a slice of torte if I cared to pick it up in her mailbox, which I did in mid-evening, when I drove into the village to mail letters and cards at both post offices -- finding it to be a delicious confection of cranberry, lime, and whipped cream -- far too rich for me, though I devoured it, save for trifles for April and Walden, though later, on the telephone, Kay said it had nothing in it that "would hurt" me -- which sounded precisely like Mother, when she puts down before me some confection I ought not, for the sake of my weight, to eat. She again on the telephone just before I slept for, again, a fun-making conversation.

15 December 1968: Yet another very cold morning, with the mercury at 6°. But the day was windless, and for part of it the sun shone. Retyped a page of the journal -- talked for half an hour or more with Kay on the telephone -- visited for twenty minutes or so with Frank Utpatel, up from Mazomanie. He said a Village Board member had approached him with the suggestion that the creek bank flowing along his property be "beautified" and promptly proposed to cut down some trees -- a fatheaded scheme offered by someone who had no idea at all what "beauty" meant; Frank indignantly rejected the proposal. "And the damned fool wanted to put up benches on our property so people could picnic there and litter the place with their junk!" he finished. I reflected that it was rather the rule than the opposite that dunderheads and imbeciles were elected to office in midwestern villages. The sky clouded over in large part at noon, but the mercury had risen by this time to 20°. Downstairs the children lit a fire on the hearth; I could smell cedar smoke as I worked.

Marian Enge out for an hour this afternoon. She had buried her father, Engelbert Kraus, only yesterday, and she was glad "the old bastard's gone." She assured me that "nobody knows what an evil man he was -- every woman whose life he touched came to grief." She regaled me again with an account of his seduction of her schoolmates whenever she brought one home for a weekend, and told me for the first time that he had had an affair with Helen Ceasar Dresen, but did not make clear whether it was before or after her marriage to Nestor Dresen, or whether that affair or Nes's philandering had caused Helen to hang herself. She had visited him frequently in the hospital while he lay dying of cancer. "He hated me," she said. "He always favored Winnie." I knew this to be the truth, for I had often seen him with his younger daughter in a restaurant booth, holding her hand under the table, and had suspected an incestuous relation. "He was nasty to me even when he was dying. He didn't change. I stood there one day and said to him, 'Why don't you die!' And I meant it. I'm glad he's gone -- I feel free at last."

In evening came Bobby Ziemke with the mail; Maurie Schaefer had been trying to reach me on the telephone, but April had been on it and was still on it; so Bobby had volunteered to bring it out. He talked for a while about the building of his new house. Among the letters he brought was one from one Mary Kisielewski which read, in toto: "Dear Sir, I am writing a book on my grandma and the lady that she pays her rent from. Give me some advised and how I should mail it."

Rikki climbed up the balcony in late evening and stayed for an hour before finally going home. To bed at 11:15.

16 December 1968: A quiet morning with a fine, spreading saffron dawn. The mercury at 14°. A heavy mail, with orders for 75 books. ... Frank Utpatel up. I observed how he paced the floor -- sat down for a minute -- got to his feet to walk around -- sat down again, und so weiter. Asked about it, he said he had "always" done it, but he had not, as I well knew. He had not done any further drawings for Caitlin, but said he was at work on two cuts for that book. He promised more drawings "any day" -- but he seemed even less enthusiastic about work than he has been in the past. ... Kay on the telephone for an enjoyable hour, promising to come out -- with Lisa -- and bring me some Christmas cookies, which she did at noon, to remain for two hours, while Rikki from time to time entertained Lisa, permitting no more than some passionate kisses, which only heightened our mutual desire and frustration. Told her that her coming when the time was inopportune for sexual pleasure was like putting a feast before a dog on a chain, just out of reach. How beautiful she is! How desirable! She is indeed far more beautiful than she was but six months ago, as a woman loved is always more beautiful. I cannot understand why Greg sees no change in his wife. "I feel radiant when your name is mentioned," she said. "It must show in my face." But if he sees anything, he says nothing, and how could he not, if he saw? When she leaves this room, it is as if a light went out of it.

Dale Coenen said today at J&T Supermarket that he had taken two rabbits out of my woodlot, but that there weren't "many around". I thought that the presence of a den of red foxes accounted for the shortage of rabbits, and was surprised to learn that he had taken as many as two, concluding that the foxes had finally moved out, perhaps into the marshes where the hunting might be more to their needs.

Kay on the telephone, intimately, for a happy hour tonight. Took a letter to the post office in Upper Sac Prairie late tonight, to warm the car before putting it in for the night.

17 December 1968: A day of slow warming to 30°. Down town this morning Les Hicks came over to say that pileated woodpeckers had increased in numbers. "Good Gosh!" he said, "down there where I hunt -- around Charlie Kleinert's -- you could hear 'em all over. I never heard so many." I recalled that Bobby Ziemke had made a similar report not long ago. "They're all over. I saw some hawks, too, but I was too far away to tell what they were." ... Ramona Kundert sewed up some gayly colored Christmas stockings for me today, I bought a card "for my wife", and took them home to prepare the card -- by writing several livelier definitions of happiness to supplement the banal sentiments on the card -- and fill the stockings -- stapling them shut against Kay's inevitable curiosity -- and ranged them at the Christmas tree on the windowsill to titillate her curiosity when she came tomorrow. ... The shipment of Mr. Fairlie's Final Journey came in this afternoon - 58 cartons, which Rikki helped unload. Dennis came out after school to transfer the cartons from the garage to the basement and the packing room, and returned after supper -- as did Rikki -- to pack books. ... Kay on the telephone this morning for an hour of banter and teasing. And again this evening, both of us aglow with anticipation of tomorrow.

18 December 1968: Kay out this afternoon for two wonderful hours. Though we spent most of our time abed, indulging in the most exciting and pleasurable sexual experiments, Kay could not keep herself from beginning to tear open one of her Christmas stockings -- impelled by that curiosity so integral to her -- until I saw and repaired the stocking. Abed, as usual, her lovely body, the quality of her affection and sexual co-operation, her inescapable charm combined to wash away any qualm, scruple or principle -- and when at last she had gone, I was as always astonished at my complete submission to this passion. She on the telephone three times before bedtime -- "I've got it worse than you have," she said, which I doubted.

To the harness shop for a while this evening, while April shopped and Dennis waited in the car, a haven from the outside. Sat talking in the pool of yellow light cast by the green-shaded north-wall bench light -- about Hugh's repair of my desk chair and the facing of the desk drawers: I assured him I would not interrupt his love-affair with the canning factory to bring them in: and about Mrs. Norma Noller's death, which upset him because he, too, like her, lived alone. She and her husband had built a home opposite the new creamery, on the Wisconsin's shore, but after his death in 1964, she had sold the house and moved farther up into Sac Prairie, buying at last the old Marquardt real-estate building in which to live. She had had a slow leukemia, and got around very well despite it, showing little sign of it; I used to talk with her from time to time -- a heavy, rather awkward-appearing woman -- for she knew few people, having come to the village from Chicago a decade or more ago. She had not made an appearance in the village for some days, and her home had been entered yesterday to disclose her lying dead -- and for some time -- at least ten days, said Coroner Pawlisch. She was 71, and had evidently died of a heart attack. Hugh was depressed by the occurrence. "Think of it!" he cried. "Knowing so few people that nobody missed her. Lying dead there for ten days, and nobody missed her!" But he is in precisely the same position -- were it not for Louella Cork, Carl Lachmund, Joe Matousek, and myself, no one would miss him. He dicided forthwith that I must be given a key to the shop, so that, in the event he did not show up, I could get in.

Freezing rain tonight when I took Dennis home -- the kind of weather I loathe, and the kind to be expected at this time of the year, certain to be followed with cold and dooming us to icy roads for perhaps weeks thereafter.

19 December 1968: The streets this morning covered with slippery slush, making it very difficult for cars to be backed away from the curb on Water Street, much to the indignation of drivers, who had every right to expect that the village street department would have had the streets cleared before six this morning. Zimmy went angrily to Hugh Heiney at the Village Hall to demand that his street be cleaned for a funeral he had later today, and Ray Schwoegler did likewise. Those streets were then cleaned, but it was not until late afternoon that Water Street was cleared, and then only with the help of the police department to keep away the cars. Snow and sleet fell desultorily all day, and snow into the evening.

Kay out for two hours again this afternoon, most of that time spent abed enjoying the pleasures of sex. Some further experimentation today, intensifying her pleasure and bringing her to repeated ecstasy, in the course of which her beautiful face became even more radiant and lovely.

The two hours passed too swiftly -- we need an afternoon, not just two hours, for the fullest expression of sexual love between us. Nevertheless, an indefinable melancholy followed our indulgence, as were it because of the feeling that love had been vitiated by too much passion, and as if in this lay its possible dissolution. Of this Kay did not seem to feel anything, for no hint of it lay behind her telephone conversation later this evening.

20 December 1968: Rikki back to work in late afternoon, his fever of yesterday having subsided into a cold, no more. The influenza currently sweeping the country had evidently not reached him. ... The mail now beginning to fall off, with fewer Christmas cards cluttering it, and fewer book orders coming in from the shops, though orders had already passed 300 for this week, and were thus more than I had believed they would be at the week's beginning. Some response to the new catalog and The Arkham Collector 4 showing up. ... Kay on the telephone several times today.

This evening to shop, while the children went to school with Rikki to watch the school wrestling matches. Paused in the harness shop and sat talking, while the street outside teemed with people, walking and riding, flowing steadily in and out of the Farmers & Citizens Bank across the street -- affording such contrast to that same scene 35 years ago that it seemed incredible. The shop as usual filled with the mellow warmth of the north-wall light, hung low over the bench -- an oasis in the bustle outside.

Home at eight, determined to complete the writing of book reviews for the first four Thursdays of January -- but Kay came on to the telephone soon after, and held it for almost two hours, by which time I was far too tired to work. So to bed.

21 December 1968: Winter's first day, with a high of 30° at the hour -- two o'clock this afternoon -- of the solstice. Some snow late in the day and into the night. Managed in the course of the day to finish book reviews for January. ... This morning took down to the harness shop the first of the eight drawers of my desk so that Hugh could remove the facing -- like the rest of the desk, simply plywood, and restore it in wild cherry, a task he had finished very early, though he had no way to letting me know that I ought to bring in another drawer and did not think of coming out with the finished drawer. Sat in the harness shop late this afternoon, waiting for a mail that never came, talking with Hugh and with Carl Lachmund, who was slated to fly to Florida for the winter tomorrow, Gary and Evvie having already driven south some days ago. Snow in the forecast dismayed him, though he would not have to drive to Madison, Les Steinbrink having offered to take him over. "I won't come back until April -- but if I do, it'll be in a box," he said, not without a wry smile. I was made to think of his father, Ed Lachmund, Grandfather Derleth, and Hugh's father sitting here in the shop four decades ago, all gone almost a quarter of a century now, and of how the generations repeat patterns in the small towns. Some talk about the now oldest business on Water Street, since Lachmund Lumber Company would become Thompson Lumber Company next year, deciding that only the Witwen Drug Store -- formerly Cunradi's, Marquardt's, etc. -- still remained within the same family, now that Lachmund's in Lower Sac Prairie and Schoephoerster's in Upper Sac Prairie, both over a century in the same family, had closed doors.

Dennis out to work this morning and Rikki into the evening. Kay on the telephone twice, and George Marx out with Christmas packages this evening, taking his own back with him, Rikki taking him home. Forrest Hartmann out also in the course of the afternoon, Rikki taking the opportunity to talk with him about separation and divorce procedures. As I had done, Forrest told him that he had no grounds for any divorce action against Chris; indeed, whereas her flaws were negative, his were positive -- they had proved incompatible, but while she accepted that situation, he did not.

Snow blossomed around the garage light tonight, making beautiful patterns against the dark, until the light was put out when I went to bed ca. 10:30. Snow sifted against the pane, but no wind blew.

In Madison today another classmate died -- the third, Leon Greiber, at 60. Their ranks may be expected to thin more rapidly now. His heart had been troubling him for some time, said his brother Foxy, and he had been in and out of hospital for some time. His death was not entirely unexpected, yet it affected me disagreeable -- I suppose in that it reminded me anew of my own mortality.

22 December 1968: A day of weather -- of sleet, slippery wet snow, rain -- even of thunder and lightning briefly -- and finally of lowering temperature and blizzard, though this diminished relatively soon. I called for Dennis to bring out the papers later in the morning, and this he did -- but with the misfortune of driving too close to the garage and being unable to keep himself from sliding into it, with the result that he buckled the fender and broke one headlamp on his sister's car, the significance of which he fully realized, knowing that his parents would use this as a further excuse not to permit him to own a car. He was depressed, but nevertheless worked diligently, abetted by Walden, who went out to shovel snow, too. .... Worked daylong -- finishing the reworking of H. P. Lovecraft: A Memoir, proofing part of The Wind Leans West, writing a new Caitlin poem, reading three books, and finally getting at the evening mail, after sitting for a while with Hugh in the hamness shop. ... Kay on the telephone twice today, neither time too long. .. She called once more late tonight, getting me frm bed where I lay reading; she and her husband were at his annual Christmas party for employees and friends, and she was disgusted with the noisy drinking, the typical entertainment of men and women too illiterate to converse and think. It disgusted me as well to think of her among them, knowing that the party would only get more raucous and brawling as the night went on.

23 December 1968: After processing a heavy mail this morning, into Madison with Rikki and the children to shop. The landscape now lovely in its sharp contrasts and beautiful lines of dark trees and woods, rounded wooded hills and fence-lines standing out in the snow covered countryside. The highway not as slippery as I had feared it might be, however icy the streets of Madison. Directly to the Dayton Street ramp, where Walden and I parted company from April and Rikki, to go down State Street to Wolf Kubly & Hirsig in search of some casein paint, then across to the Chocolate Shop to buy a card for Kay and some licorice for the children, then on up State Street to the Square, and directly to the Perfume Shop, where bought a bracelet for April, and Walden bought cologne for her. So to the Victor Music shop for a Schubert record, then to Manchester's to pick up Rikki's gift for April. The streets cold and blustery. Found for Kay a duo of Greek masks -- imports, made to look ancient -- of comedy and tragedy, and thought them fitting to be put on the wall above her desk, to remind her that though all life is made up of comedy and tragedy, they do not come to everyone in equal parts, nor even leavened, and that women by and large bear the greater share of tragedy. Thence to the car to wait for Rikki and April, who came in an hour. From uptown out to the beltline so that Rikki could buy something for Chris, and then back to Hilldale, where I could buy candy for Ferbers and some Elan cologne for after-shaving. Thence home through a landscape dreaming in the roseate glow of the setting sun, very beautiful to look upon. Passing the Ballweg house. I thought of Beth, dead over a year now by her own hand, and the essential tragedy of her life, and set down the first draft of a poem titled Suicide.

At home, Rikki out to work for the evening at the revised Lovecraft biography; he brought with him a small Christmas tree Kay had ordered to be brought to the studio for our private Christmas party tomorrow afternoon, and somewhat to his amusement I passed within a foot of it, set up in the adjacent room, without noticing it; indeed, he had to call my attention to it, before I saw it, though I recognized Kay's hand in this at once. .... Paul Meyer out to bring me his professional gift -- a night-light (with far too dim a light to have any practical value) on which he had had imprinted that absurd dog drawn for him by Frank Utpatel at his request, and the Meyer Insurance Agency legend beneath it. He was quite pleased with the result and after looking at prints of the illustrations planned for Return to Walden West, he determined to have Frank make him a large Breughel-like wood-engraving of an old-time Sac Prairie school picnic for his 1970 calendar. .... In going through old photographs of a typical picnic -- more than a quarter of a century old -- I came upon one of Betty Meng as a grade-school girl, perhaps no more than a fifth-grader -- a happy, smiling girl, standing against a background of picnic benches and other school children, and the contrast to what she had become -- a bitter, mentally disturbed spinster in her late thirties, perhaps forty, I felt painfully again the essential tragedy of life for so many people, who, through no voluntary act of their own, slip into difficulties which alter their lives too drastically for recovery, so that life for many of them becomes a kind of trauma from which there is no escape. This happy little girl was transformed into a village character whose condition excites the cruel laughter of her townsmen, who have forgotten the happy girl she once was.

A cold night with stars. Rikki lingered, depressed at having to go home. Chris had told him as he lay on the edge of sleep that she still loved him, and he could hardly bear his own coldness.

24 December 1968: Down town this morning an eagle flew slowly upriver, a mature American bald eagle, but the villagers were involved instead with the events of space -- the astronauts orbiting the moon.

The morning lost to a flurry of preparations for Christmas Eve and Day -- shopping, getting Dennis, preparing the studio for Kay's coming this afternoon, Rikki laying a fire on the hearth for the first time in years. At 1:15 Kay came, after Rikki had taken the children to shop in Baraboo -- she carried some Christmas gifts, and immediately presented me with her Christmas "card" -- an elaborate 24-page creation of her own, ingenious and imaginative, and wholly delightful -- she had labored long on it, had cut out words, lines, pictures, had added here and there some words of her own -- and it filled me with warmth and admiration. It began with "It's Christmas in Wisconnsin" and "Merry Christmas" -- and went on with "To a Special Man! All Mine. This Man is spoiled. now! to give you a brand new slant on the crucial facts about WHY -- He began to Eye the friendly legs of"(here a portrait of a young lady's legs, presumably her own) "1969 The Carefree girl was extra cool ... & socked it to him" (a sock marked: size 7½)) "a simple idea. (Then competition started) You never know when you'll get caught in a sudden sun. The warm, rich, romantic look -- ah! the world famous pro won a prize but ... What you should know -- the prescription was Love. You've come a long way (to) The Edge of Peace. Lost his Peace of Mind ... what a way to go! Ever fall in love and it wasn't even Spring? No wonder .. The excitement .. It's everywhere .. is Amazing with SEX there's always something new. This little body beautiful needs your love. Isn't that nice? Just a minute!" (here a clock face) "Is there any way out? There is only one joy that Makes the cold cruel world a little warmer this winter. The Original Crush-Proof You. Between wild and mild THE odd couple lead a double life. it sounds funny, but until you're ready to have your next baby .. The exciting, igniting world of a year with you IS TABU sorry." (here a picture of a weeping bride) "But miles apart all I do is think of you The Nut. I love you one heck of a lot! Guess who loves you lots and lots -- Guess who thinks you're fun! You don't have to guess -- You know that I'm the one! How do you handle a hungry man? /food/ Food goes better with you. Please remember DON'T GULP. up to now: I love you. Guess who is dying to give YOU a BIG wet juicy Christmas Kiss! ME." -- encircling the impression of her lips in lipstick. I thought it utterly charming, but no more so than the decorations for the tree that she next presented to me to be unwrapped. These she had made herself -- green balls the size of golfballs, with glittering stars, etc. attached -- stars and other forms on cardboard with pasted colors to simulate crocheted or knitted pieces, in red and green designs -- each with the name of one of my books affixed -- and one large star for the top of the tree, appropriately designated Caitlin. The hours spent on this preparation were considerable and were testimony to her love for me; I was moved. Once the tree had been decorated, we sat down before the fire and began to open gifts -- Kay had got an electric clock for me and had made an elaborate package of a pair of spread legs in the shape of a clothes-hanger, with red panties like her own, decorating them -- this too ultimately went on to the tree; she opened one package after another of her 15 with all the delight of a child. She had also brought her "journal" -- actually a diary of our affair -- under the title of The Pleasures of the Season, but forbade me to read it until later, after she had gone. In this way we spent an hour and then, at last, after all the gifts had been unwrapped and the fire had begun to die down, we began to make love; I had left the bed ready for us, Kay had locked the door as she came in; and so spent another two hours until she left at 4:30 for Christmas again at home, and then at her parents' home, having made mine one of my most memorable Christmases.

The diary was left for my reading early this evening. She had not wanted me to read it until six -- when she was sure I could not telephone her in reaction, but she rather under-rated me in thinking I might find in its pages something to stimulate my anger or violent reaction, or something to tell me about herself I did not already know. The whole came to 53 pages, beginning with an entry for August 31, ending with today's. It was a charming, relatively open and uninhibited account of her reactions, though it was not entirely candid, nor did I expect it to be in view of her decision that I should have it to read for Christmas. The theme of her initial entry was "What will my grandchildren think of me?" though at that point we had not progressed beyond a few innocent kisses. She already here admits to love ("Would they judge me harshly for my love?"), however much she hedges later. "I must be more naive than I realize to let this last a day longer. .. He should know better too. Doesn't he know from experience?" -- to which I might have answered in the affirmative, adding that hope continues to spring to life in spite of it. By September 2 she became convinced that I loved her and con-

fessed her amazement at "the whole thing", and concluded that my only basis for falling in love was her body and her attractiveness, which saddened her. Of course, it is true that her beauty always attracted me -- I've had for some years what the teen-agers call a "thing" about her, having watched her as an adolescent at St. Aloysius, going down and coming up the aisle at communion, etc. -- but even a few conversations with her at Rhinelander disclosed an alert, imaginative mind, a challenging, vital personality that transcended her physical beauty and were a key to an inner beauty as great as her physical attractiveness, to say nothing of the provocativeness of her approach, the subtle aggressiveness, the multi-facetted inner self that presents its constant challenge to me and to the world. Falling in love with her was far too easy; I cannot recognize or foresee the possibility of falling out again. Her naivete is balanced by a kind of intuition that only a fully functioning woman could possess. ... Though the word "love", as she puts it, "sticks in my throat," by September 2 she wants "to be with him every moment of every day and the empty longing is making me unbearably restless and edgy," but "wanting him" is held in check by the conviction that "having him" means the sacrifice of family, friends, reputation, and child -- a grossly exaggerated feeling grown straight out of her Catholic brain-washed background. "If I live for the moment and take what I can, while I can, what will I think of myself?" Of the memorable 13th of September she wrote: "His approach was carefully planned as I had anticipated it would be. He was clever enough to reach me through my emotional make-up. .. He knew my emotions would not let me be cold and withdrawn when he laid his wide open at my feet. He knows me well and it makes me smile that he does, since few people have ever seen into my real self. Yet it was not his wise approach that made me shed my clothes, but rather the look in his eyes, the love I saw there moved me more than I have ever been moved before. I knew then that sex could no longer divide, but unify us." Of it as experience she wrote: "The day was lovely, so lovely I am still floating at least as high as the table .." Next day she wrote of his love as "the most unbelievable kind of love. .. I do not know what my future will bring, but I do know I will never find a more warm and giving love, a more thoughtful man." Of September 20, the day I suggested she go to Las Vegas for a quick divorce: "He .. shut his studio door, which means sex, from previous observation." After I had made my proposal -- "I was so completely unprepared .. that I could not think of a thing to say. .. The impact of his statement hit me about five or ten minutes later, after the initial shock had worn off ... a dazed mood prevailed for the rest of the evening for me. The shock and scare and realization of the decision before me made it impossible to function normally." -- and made me realize with some clarity that she would very probably in the end be unable to take that step. An expression on September 21 -- "we have certainly done more than play kissy face" -- that "kissy face" is new to me. On September 23: "I was informed that today was the anniversary of our first kiss -- one month ago today! He remembered and I didn't. ... He makes me feel so alive, so special, so much the woman I always hoped to be to a man .." By October 26th, looking back, summing up her thoughts before the affair began, she concludes: "His whole appearance delights me and his kisses make BED a hopeful dream; I must be just as mad as he is." She could now "no longer imagine life without him," and hoped that "it all works out until I can see my way clear to marry him. .. I need his warmth, his love, his understanding and his encouragement just as he needs mine." ... Of the Chicago day, November 20th, she wrote that it was "a lovely day full of laughter and deep longing for one another." And, of course, it was. Her comments were often penetrating and perceptive. Thus, in marriage, "He is afraid that I will want many things he cannot afford to get me and he would thus feel that he was not satisfying me. This is a threat to his masculine ego, of course." She affected to see in me "feelings of inadequacy, no doubt a result of his age." and adds, "His pride must not be wounded at any cost." She reminds herself constantly to take care, to handle "him" cautiously because, "I do not want to lose this man. .. I intend to keep him." She observed that I "felt threatened" when she talks about changes to be made in the house, in my way of life. "I love him more every day and I find that things that would normally bother me do not when he is concerned." She observed also in one place that I "had to be reassured of my love by making love to me." She sets down how "completely relaxed and content" she feels "in his arms, in his bed." She notes several times in different words that "He doesn't fit into predictable" patterns for men" By December 19th she is "still in love with him" but "sort of worried about the whole relationship." The vacillation evident in the diary is only to be expected; that she is in love can hardly be questioned; that her complete abandonment to that love is not likely to take place seems also evident, not because of any lack of desire, but simply of the lack of strength necessary to take the steps toward marriage to me -- her fear of hurting Greg (a very real and viable and just fear, considering all he has done for her, whatever his lack of knowledge in the matter), her fear of scandal, of the reactions of her parents and friends, and, too, a certain fear of living with me on a

day-to-day basis far more intimate than the hours we spend in bed together in that it is on such a basis that points of friction, if any are to develop, will first be revealed; and at a time when it will be impossible to back out and away from the relationship. But our marriage clearly depends not on her resolution or on mine as long as the status quo is maintained, but upon a growing intolerable situation in her home and/or pressure on her to abandon seeing me; it continues to be at this point that some decisive action will be taken, not before, and such action can be put off as long as we are not discovered, which, with care, can be a considerable time -- at the end of which she might be quite content to settle back into an essentially unsatisfactory marriage on the cushion of her memories. It warmed me to read her diary, though it was not in any sense a comprehensive account, for she exercised her prerogative to say nothing of her sexual pleasure, nor did she actually set down a daily account of her vacillations, as they occurred.

Hugh finished facing the drawers of the desk today. He had forehandedly done all the facings, when he was prevented from coming out for the last of the drawers, only to discover, when he did come this morning, that the drawers on the north side -- the left side -- of the desk, were slightly narrower than those on the right; he was vexed, but he acknowledged that the fault was his, through haste and eagerness to finish his task. I picked up the last of the drawers in late morning, coming from Eileen's Flower Shop for a few roses for the vase along the south wall.

John Bogni telephoned this evening to wish us all a Merry Christmas. He asked about Caitlin, and was eager to know all, though it was evident in what he did not say that his reaction was Catholic -- i. e., he disapproved on Catholic principle. He said my account sounded like " a novel" -- presumably a Romantic novel.

To Midnight Mass for the first time in some years -- the first in the new St. Aloysius. We came in time for most of the pre-Mass vigil service -- with Mildred Marzolf playing the organ and Ruth Straub directing the senior chorus in song, some Christmas carols, fitting to be sung in church, some hymns suitable for the season, some readings -- by Dale Kelly -- and a brief epistle by Msgr. Van Berkel. The creche had been put up on the left of the altar, and did not show up well, since that area was not raised; nor would any other crib show there any better. The lights had been strung not around the creche, but on two conventional trees flanking the altar at some distance. I watched people come in -- until Kay came, and then watched no one else, observing what an ill-assorted couple she and Greg made, he shorter than she, which was no reflection on his character. Lima was with them, still alert and wide awake, and indeed, the entire Price family were there -- some on the one side of the church, the rest on the other. The Mass began presently, and dragged on while almost everyone in the crowded church took communion, so that it was 1:30 before I got to bed. The night very cold, with the temperature -10°.

25 December 1968: Up at 7:45, and by 8:30 around the tree, opening Christmas gifts -- and by nine-thirty myself at work, though feeling little like it for lack of adequate sleep in the night. Some desultory work throughout the day. Christmas dinner of roast beef, squash, wax beans, a jello vegetable salad, a cream-pineapple-marshmallow dessert. The day quiet. Rikki out for a while in early afternoon -- myself in for the late mail, which brought the last of the proofs of The Wind Leans West -- and Ron Hering came for two hours in the evening. All else was quiet. The cold held, the mercury moving not far above zero. Outside this evening the moon, waxing, and Venus, brilliant in the west --and somewhere between the moon and earth, the astronauts in Apollo 8, invisible to the naked eye, were beginning to move back toward the planet from the satellite. I listened now and then to the Italian music box playing Lara's Theme, and enjoyed its tinkling music.

26 December 1968: The cold in the night began to lessen, and the mercury crept to 15° early today, and into the twenties in the day's course. The mail brought in a handsome desk thermometer, made in France, sent by Edna Hobbs from Florida. Rikki to work on H. P. L.: A Memoir, and myself on the telephone to Kay twice in the course of the day, and again in the evening. The weather mellowing, so that the late afternoon air was pleasant and stimulating; but now clouds covered the heavens, and early this evening a thin, freezing rain began to fall, unpleasantly. Read Kay's journal (Diary) over again.

Outside this evening briefly a long-eared swamp owl called for the first time in months. I listened to him with pleasure, inviting his soft, dulcet cries -- but I heard him for only five minutes or so, and then he was done -- or moved on out of my range.

27 December 1968: One of the year's most miserable days. Rain had begun to fall in the night, and now all was ice -- and worse, ice with rain on top of it, making walk and roads extremely hazardous for walking or driving. Nevertheless, after spreading rock salt on the walk and part of the parking area, I undertook to drive into town for the mail. The road outside was like watered glass, but the highway, happily, was not icy because of salt laid down last night, and the moderate temperature -- 32°. However, down town I walked in the road, where the ice was worn away, to shop and buy a morning paper.

Kay telephoned this morning, depressed, "lonesome for you". Couldn't I come over -- whatever the pretext? Perhaps to see her new electric Olympia -- to bring her the manuscript of The Three Straw Men to type. And if I came, I ought to bring April, so that we would not have Lisa constantly at our elbows. I smiled at her careful planning and promised to come, April agreeing to go along; and at two o'clock -- after pausing down town for an aluminum tea-bag, for she had asked me to bring one and brew her some tea -- I went up to 632 Ray Street with April, Rikki driving, and then going on about his errands before returning home to help Walden set up the new racing game that Rikki had brought from his own apartment for Walden's use in the coming months, during Rikki's absence at work in Milwaukee. Kay was prepared for me, having baked a doffeecake to be served with the tea, and Lisa, as expected, soon took April to her room, giving Kay and myself ample time for some passionate necking. Tried her new typewriter, but found, as I had suspected, that in order to work efficiently on it I would have to learn to type all over again and develop a lighter touch. Had tea -- Darjeeling and Jasmine blended -- and coffeecake, but in the hour and a half spent there, I spent most of it with Kay in my arms.

Found on returning home that the new jackets for Evening in Spring had come in -- a dusky rose with black and white printing on it, which added considerably to the appearance of the book -- and $1 to its selling price!

Kay on the telephone two or three times this evening, and Rikki in late, having failed to find his friend Bob on the airfield in Madison, and fearful that he might have been among the injured in a crash at O'Hare Field. Outside rain still fell, and the temperature fell, too, making for more ice through the night.

28 December 1968: Woke to a blizzard raging. Four inches of snow had already been dropped, and the prospect outside was not encouraging, what with drifts forming in the northwest wind. The mercury, however, had dropped only to 23°, went down a little more in the morning hours, and then rose again, not beyond 23°. Dennis out to shovel snow, with Rikki, who went around and got the morning mail so that I would not have to venture out into this uncertain weather, but Francis Klingenheimer did not come with theplough until mid-afternoon, while Kay Ganzlin was here for more books to read, driven from her home, she said, by football games on television, which she could not abide. She did not stay long, but left when Francis came and she needed to move her car so that he could plough through.

Kay on the telephone several times today, and Greg came on early in the evening to discuss the warehouse projected to hold Arkham House books, proposing a wooden-frame building instead of a Butler warehouse because of condensation in the latter. Despite the bad weather, George Marx came up from Chicago and out -- even though he would have to return on Sunday and come back on Monday for the New Year's Eve celebration.

After writing several more poems and the last January book review, closed my books today on 1968 -- having written 131 titles in 402,100 words, and sold 16,412 books, or an average of 317- books per week throughout the year, though I placed no more titles than last year -- 41, in seven new markets, among others.

Outside this evening, April, Walden and Rikki finished clearing snow from the driveway and the walkway, leaving the path to the front gate until tomorrow. The sky cleared at last, and when I rode in with Rikki and George, the moon shone and the landscape was bright and the air windless, with the mercury falling.

29 December 1968: The temperature this morning 10°, and hard upon the sunrise a heavy fog rolled in from the river, though it did not last long -- an hour, no more, and then was gone before the sun. The day promised to stay cold, and now that the drifts were revealed, the country wore the face of mid-winter. The trees wore a thick coating of hoar-frost, left by the brief morning fog, scintillant in the sunlight that came through and replaced the dense fog. ... Worked daylong at various tasks and pleasures -- letters, journal, new poems, a book review -- read several books of verse, und so weiter. ... Rikki and Ron Hering came in during the course of the day, but neither interfered particularly with such work as I did at the time. .. Did not stir from the house all day, since Dennis brought the Sunday papers and there was no need for me to go out.

30 December 1968: Snow began to fall early this morning, at first fitfully, then more heavily, and soon a steady fall set in, so that by evening almost four inches more snow had fallen. A heavy mail this morning, but relatively few orders for books -- and many of them long delayed in the mails. Dennis out to work all day, beginning preparations for the annual New Year's Eve party, and Rikki into Madison in my car in mid-afternoon to pick up a college room-mate, now teaching in Niagara Falls, and not coming home until early evening, and then bringing along a shrimp cocktail from the Pines. Worked throughout the day and evening. Kay telephoned several times, still undecided as to whether she and Greg were coming to the party tomorrow night, but unlikely to. Told her she would nevertheless have to bake her spumoni cake for that event, or I would be without any cake at all.

31 December 1968: Preparations for the party tonight went forward throughout the day -- April, Walden, Dennis and Rikki lending hands to make things ready for that event, though I did not look forward to it with much enthusiasm. Outside a steadily falling mercury, so that zero was reached by nightfall. In mid-afternoon, after completing the last shopping, went around to Kay's home just in time to watch the final stages of the spumoni cake -- two 8-inch chocolate layers, sliced in half, then filled with peppermint, lime, and almond flavor in whipped cream and topped with fudge -- a very rich but very tasty cake. Stole a little time for amorous dalliance, but not much. Outside the Mulcahy home snow had drifted to a stiff drift of well over a foot in depth, on a brisk west wind, which, happily, my woodlot cut off from my driveways, though Francis was out in late afternoon to plough the snow away, and the boys had cleared the parking lot earlier in the day.

The party began with Hugh's telephoning a lame excuse for not coming -- he might not be able to start his car, he said, but I reflected that he had not permitted that fear to keep him from going to work at the canning factory; he clearly meant not to come, however much Louella and I wanted him here, and he used this lame excuse, in the face of my assurance that many people would be here to help him start his car, not to come. "Don't count on me," he said; I assured him that I had never counted on him in my life, and knew better than to begin now. ... While I revised new poems for Kay, and wrote a letter to her to mark the year's ending, Rikki, Bob, and Chris came, Rikki to start fires in both fireplaces. Then came the Oehrleins, with Tom and Gloria, Pat at his best behavior and well-dressed, then George Marx, who immediately set about to help with the preparation of the table, and to mix drinks, then Ron and Donna Hering, Kay and Greg Mulcahy -- come after all because Greg didn't want to drive to Madison in such harsh weather and such bitter cold, though the drifting wind had begun to subside, and, at last, Forrest Hartmann. Kay, as usual, utterly desirable, but I paid far more attention to Greg than to her, feigning an indifference I did not feel and could not discard except for a few moments late in the party, when Greg went out to start the car, and I called Kay upstairs to show her my small Italian music box -- and then there was time for only a few passionate kisses, all the more passionate for having been so repressed throughout the evening. Walden provided ample entertainment, being about with his camera, and finally had his picuture taken beigg kissed by Donna Hering, Ron obliging, though Walden was disappointed because there was no general kissing at midnight. I observed, as much as I could in my surreptitious way, that Kay gave no one any indication that there might be any coolness between her and Greg, never in any way showed any impatience with him, or revealed any dissociation or ennui. I wished in the course of the evening that I could have said as much of April Rose and Rikki, who managed to be together -- if not alone together -- frequently enough to arouse Chris's suspicions, which I saw clearly on her attractive face. The evening leisurely and very pleasant, with guests moving upstairs or down, at will, and as usual, at table from 11:30 to 2:30, much animated conversation. Kay and Greg were last to leave. The mercury at -15°, a bright moon shining outside. To bed at 3:00 in the morning of the first of January.

1 January 1969: Still at dawn this morning -15°, but the air windless. Little goldfinches huddled against the building near to the chimney, taking the chimney's warmth. I had put out bird-seed for them and Rikki had filled the feeder against their need today. Myself up at 8:15, and presently to work.

A very cold day -- a three-pants day, according to Clara Binger, who, said Bernice Karberg Zauft, habitually measured the cold as "two-pants" or "three-pants" days. Mrs. Sirny had told Clara to come for New Year's dinner today -- and "even if you have to wear four pants!"

Kay down unexpectedly today. She had been weeping, I saw at once. "I hate all men," she said at once, throwing herself down on the bed. I said calmly that since I was a god, her hatred hardly troubled me. Presently, little by little, her story came out, though I did not ask for it, apprehending what it would be. When Greg had last made love to her -- "I had my eyes on the clock the whole time; it took six minutes," she said. Last night -- or in the early morning hours, possibly due to the liquor he had imbibed, which had not been enough to inebriate him, he had awakened her after four this morning, and presented an erect pinus with the request that she "play with" him. Disgusted, she said she was too tired, and well she might have been. "How is it whenever I want to mess around, you're too tired?" he demanded. What with one thing and another, she left him with the correct impression that he was a "lousy lover", in his own words, and he gave her the unmistakable charge that she was "cold" and "frigid". She tried in vain to explain that his approach was wrong, but he would not listen. This is the customary course of their trouble -- he will not be told, not even in the gentlest, most patient way, perhaps because he fears the threat to his vanity more than the dissolution of his marriage. So she had come out here -- and here she stayed, talking for the most part, softening a little, taking supper presently, until 8:15, when at last she departed. Outside, the night was brilliant with the light of the moon. In the west Venus was setting, in the east Orion and the Dogs rode high.

Rikki out to help start the car today, but at this he failed. He left it stand out while he went home, coming later to bring the mail, and depart again. .. George Marx telephoned late tonight. Myself early to bed, tired.

2 January 1969: Hugh out this morning with the repaired desk chair, originally made by Chris Anderson and Dad. It was now more sturdy, with a new piece in it, and newly glued, but his primary purpose in bringing it, I thought, was to mitigate somehow the sheepishness and guilt he felt at once more avoiding my New Year's Eve party. All his timidity came to the fore in the excuses he made, none of which concealed his real motive -- his dislike of being among people, a certain ill-at-ease that has marked his entire life.

With Rikki and the children off to Madison this afternoon, Kay came down, not particularly in a mood for love -- though in less than an hour we were abed, and for an hour made love, she climaxing at least a dozen times, and with some violence, amid phenomenal kissing, of such passion that it proved to be some of the subject of three subsequent telephone calls. She recounted her conversation with Greg -- and they had had that, on her return, when he demanded last night to know where she had been, and she had answered coolly, "Out!" but at last they sat down to talk quietly and sensibly together, and she was able at last, without any dodges on his part, to point out to him that her feeling for him was rather sisterly than loverly, and to elucidate the differances between their needs, and their equal inability to serve each other. They talked about divorce, though Greg thought the new house would "make a difference," and said once again, "All I ever wanted in life was a wife and a kid and a new house." "Yes," she cried quickly, "you've got the first two and now you're getting the third! And that's all there is to it. Your wife is something you own, you can put her on the shelf, pat her head now and then, and then go on about what you want to do more." They agreed, as before, to go on trying, but not for too long a time. A wonderfully exciting afternoon, for all the indifference of its beginning.

Rikki brought out a shrimp cocktail for my dinner and remained for the evening to work at the typescript of H. P. Lovecraft: A Memoir, while April Rose sat moon-eyed across the desk from him, much to her grandmother's ire, for Mother sat up playing solitaire downstairs until the house "was empty". Outside continuing cold, with the moon shining brightly on the snow-covered fields.

3 January 1969: Again a bitterly cold day. ... I sat for a while in the harness shop this morning, talking with Hugh, who once more asserted that he would soon finish with the canning factory "for good" -- which I would not listen to, knowing his psychotic dependence upon the factory, which must somehow satisfy an inner need nothing else -- certainly not his independence -- will satisfy. Observed the plethora of cars and people still, though neither was as numerous as in the week before Christmas. ... Later today, after the bank had closed, sat watching people trying in vain to get in. "It just shows how dumb people are," said Hugh. "There's the sign with the banking hours on it right in the doorway; they can read it; they try the door & pound on it just the same." In the half hour I sat there this late afternoon, no less than five people tried the door of the bank.

At the house today cardinals and blue jays came to the feeder, while juncos and goldfinches found the feed spread for them along the wall of the house in the southwest corner. Saw one goldfinch huddled against the warming stones of the chimney, evidently intending to spend the night there.

Kay on the telephone several times today, saying all the familiar words never too often heard, but admitting also in evening to a temperature of 101°, which alarmed me. I offered to bring her some aspirin, but she would not hear of it.

Marian Enge out in mid-evening with John Connor, a college student from Upper Sac Prairie, not ill-favored in looks and now just beginning to feel his way into the world of creativity, learning about music and writing. He was taking a course in journalism, and beginning to dabble at writing, nothing more: essays and some poetry, and at least one short story, though he had already decided that fiction was not his medium. Marian talked almost constantly. She looked through Kay's Christmas card, signed "Caitlin", and said, "You'd be a fool to let this woman get away from you."

4 January 1969: The mercury at -12° this morning. Low in the west the full moon shone in diminishing splendor, spilling its light over the white snow while in the east the dawn began to show old rose along the rim of the earth, with the smoke spirals of many chimneys moving across it. This day eight minutes longer than the year's shortest. ... Sat for half an hour with Hugh in the harness shop this morning, making small talk. The morning sun shone brightly into the shop, revealing the "dirt and dust" on the windows, which dismayed Hugh, though I assured him it was invisible at other times.

Kay telephoned several times today, at first to assure me that she felt better, had lost her fever, etc., etc., then to threaten to come down or to demand that I come up if Betty Weynand came out to see me in re some insect identifications for her course in etymology, making a show of jealousy that was only half-feigned; but Betty came and left in ten minutes, taking my references along with her; and Kay was on the telephone immediately after, again feigning relief, amid some laughter at what she fancied was my disappointment to find that Betty was not the "doll" she had described out of her fecund imagination.

George Marx did not show up tonight; he had not come to Sac Prairie for the weekend, but had gone visiting elsewhere; so I spent the evening at work, managing to clear my desk of all correspondence before going to bed late.

5 January 1969: The cold slowly softening today, but not overmuch -- to about 15° by nightfall. Once I had got the morning papers I stayed home all day and evening, and before I had gone to bed at midnight, I had written a new poem, begun The Woman in Cabin Nine, and written also the tentative opening page of Afternoons at One. ... Kay on the telephone twice, amid difficulties, and Rikki out to bid us farewell, for he was on his way to Milwaukee to work for the General Electric Company. I was depressed to see him go at last, after almost eight and a half years with me. I would miss him sorely, not only his effective assistance, but also his companionship, which was of that rare kind I know I will not live long enough to find its equal -- just as I will not live long enough to find another woman like Kay; these two together just precisely satisfy my needs on every plane. ... Snow began to fall late today -- after a prediction of light flurries, but heavy snow for the north; I suspected at sight of its slow steady falling that the prediction was in error, and that we here in south central Wisconsin would get the heavier fall predicted for the north. Snow still fell at midnight, when I went to bed, after having read three books.

6 January 1969: Woke to four inches of snow -- the precise amount predicted for upstate Wisconsin, which announced this morning that up to two inches had fallen there -- that predicted for this area -- a not uncommon happening in meteorological circles in Wisconsin. I managed to reach the village post office, finding once again that the street crew had not come out until seven, instead of at four when the central streets might have been cleared with ease. Hugh stuck in his own driveway; I ventured to push him a little, but thought it unwise to exert myself too much; so stuck he remained, until he walked down th the canning factory -- evidently too chary to use a telephone -- and persuaded three of the men from the crew to help him out, after which he laid up the car at the Co-Op station and returned home to work at the Fuchs house. ... Blue jays and squirrels fed on the balcony and at the feeder today, and juncos along the house walls where I had thrown feed for them. Snow on the ground now measured ten inches. By mid-afternoon the northwest wind rose sufficiently to begin drifting markedly. Francis but at noon to clear the driveway, making it as wide as possible, in case the wind blew in too much snow. He said that while all last winter he could not make enough at plowing snow to sustain him for a fortnight, this winter he had far more work than he could handle comfortably.

Kay out for an hour and a half or a trifle more. She kept her clothes on until she was thoroughly warmed; then both of us undressed and lost ourselves in each other's arms, eschewing sexual pleasure today, though the sight of that lovely body was quite heady enough to satisfy me. She was pensive this afternoon, thinking forward to the time when I would be "gone" and she alone would cradle "these memories" -- which included, in addition to our love, and these stolen hours, the wind in the trees outside, the snow on the branches, etc. A modicum of teasing me for having been unaware of all her moves and gambits in the game of "making" me fall in love with her, which delighted me and filled me with unbounded admiration for so skilfully planned and executed a campaign, however unnecessary it was, in view of the fact that all I needed was the opening she had already provided for my love to flower.

With Hugh for a while in the harness shop this afternoon, drinking a glass of sherry. He complained of the weather, recounted his adventure with his car of the morning hours, his tiredness after shoveling away at it for an hour, his stiff neck after working at the ceiling of one of the rooms in the Fuchs house, und so weiter. I took him around to the Co-Op station for his car on my way home.

Dennis out to shovel snow -- with Walden -- after school, and then again this evening to pack books, while the temperature, which had reached 25° today, slowly went down again toward 10°.

7 January 1969: Another cold day, with the sun rising on a temperature of 5°. But the northwest wind had gone down -- after having drifted shut Eileen Hill's driveway, during one night she had not had some man out to spend the night with her, so that she herself had to shovel out her driveway this morning. The extent of my sympathy had to be confined to a wave of the hand as I went by; she grinned and waved back, having almost finished her task.

Saw in the course of the day a pair of redtailed hawks -- presumably the pair that wintered in the hemlock tree northeast of the kitchen wing of the house. Both were soaring over the woodlot, one well above the other, and a little forward, in the familiar pattern of these hawks. I was delighted to see them, having for weeks seen nothing other of such size but crows. A mourning dove sat on the utility wires in front of the house, quite alone; I saw no other, but knew that at least half a dozen of them wintered in the cedars of the woodlot.

To deliver a copy of Evening in Spring to Paul Bishop at the clinic, in exchange for a recent Merck Manual, and had my blood pressure taken at 170/96, which was not bad considering the cold and its challenge to the body, though the afternoon temperature stood at 15°.

In late afternoon came Kay briefly -- for little more than half an hour. She confessed herself more wildly, more passionately in love than ever, but so was I -- to an alarming extent, negating all objective judgment, which troubled me. That any woman should seem so desirable to me seemed to me utterly incomprehensible -- even so magnificent a woman as Kay.

Dennis out this evening to pack books -- in haste, since his father might need the dar. "The old man," he said, "needs a kick in the ass." I agreed.

8 January 1969: Again snow today, and some wind out of the southeast -- fortunately not strong enough to shut my driveway -- but it fell all day, steadily, topping a foot on the level, finally, and continued to fall after dark. With school dismissing at 1:30, both Walden and Dennis were available to shovel snow, and with funerals impending, the road outside was kept ploughed, so that it was possible to move into town and out without too much difficulty apart from the annoyance of continuing snowfall and cold. The gathering ice on the roof, melting under 22° today and the heat of the house, began to drip through along the window in the upper hall, making some further waste of time inevitable until the water was caught.

Eddie Somerau died yesterday, quite unexpectedly. He had had some form of influenza, and had wanted to go into the hospital. Since he was a veteran of World War I, Mary, his sister, with whom he lived, telephoned Shimmel Coenen to make arrangements for his hoppitalization; after having done so, he drove down the street to report to Mary that everything was in readiness, the ambulance had been arranged for, and Eddie would be taken to hospital. "That'll make him feel good," said Mary. "Why don't you just go in and tell him." Shimmel went into the bedroom only to find that in the interval Eddie had had a heart attack and quietly died. He was 76, and the last male member of his generation of the Somerau (Segallah) family in the village, entitled, if he were still on the Continent, to bear a title! Mary, his unmarried sister, her son, and Meta Somerau Blum, his older sister, remain. -- At the harness shop this afternoon Hugh complained about the family's holding the services on Friday. He had been asked to serve as pallbearer and was unhappy about the long delay. "Another of the old shop visitors gone," he reflected. "Soon there won't be anybody left."

Learned this morning, too, that Jim Fasking had killed himself, and he but 32. He had been withdrawing into himself for some time. The only unmarried son of Syl and Meta Accola Fasking, he was a "loner", and associated most with his brothers -- to go fishing, canoeing, hunting, or just hiking; but now they were all married, and he was more alone than ever. Moreover, with his parents removed to Arizona, he had no one to come to in Sac Prairie; so he remained in Madison at work, though one of his sisters lived there and he was not entirely cut off from his family. Nevertheless, his mental condition had been deteriorating for some years. Long ago I had suspected a repressed homosexual neurosis, which he would fight, under the conviction that it was "unnatural" or "unmanly", for he never seemed to go very long with any girl -- a month or two, and it was over, and this appeared to be a confirmed pattern of behavior for him; and I had attempted to draw him out on one of his visits here, on which occasion, as I probed deeper and deeper into his mind, he withdrew with suspicion and alarm, and thereafter never came back. Syl Fasking had admitted to his and Meta's concern about him. "We can't get him alone to talk to him," he had said. "He won't talk. He avoids being alone with us. We can't get through to him." Their worries -- and his -- had ended yesterday when he had driven out, sometime in the night evidently, to the medical center, and in his car there had shot himself. Seen down town, his uncle, Cap Kahn, said that Syl and Meta had flown up, having arrived yesterday; Jim's body had been brought to Zimmerman's -- the old Dresen & Littel funeral parlors -- and would be buried Friday.

Kay separated very largely from the telephone today, because Greg was unwell; but when he went to the doctor briefly, she managed to call; and I in turn, pretending some concern about the manuscript of The Three Straw Men, called tonight, to conduct a brief conversation on two planes, since Greg was still in the house and about.

While sitting in the harness shop with a glass of sherry late this afternoon, I saw going up the street young Barto, and, half a block or so behind him, his mother, Regina Roerich Barto, and presently, the two came back in the same order, with the same distance between them, like an Indian and his squaw, and so they will walk all the way down the Mazomanie road to their home, unless they find a ride. Weather does not deter them from coming into Sac Prairie, day after day, but now and then there is a complication in that he will drink too much and she will endeavor to "rescue" him from a tavern -- a comic but also pathetic pair, among the last of the village characters. I asked him, when I saw him subsequently on Water Street, what impelled him to town, but got nothing satisfactory in the way of answer -- he had to come for something or other, and "she, too."

Hank Knectges -- and other shovellers of snow -- were busy all day -- and all week. I saw Hank at Luella Cork's today, shoveling in his slow way, steadily -- and at Lili Schnieder's.

Up this morning to visit the Gingras's briefly -- Henry and Sherry and their new baby, which they had named Martha Emily -- perhaps not a name she will thank them for when she reaches her teens. Their announcement had been modeled on a play program -- Henry fancying himself a director in the little theatre groups -- "Gingras Productions proudly presents THE ANNOUNCEMENT starring MARTHA EMILY GINGRAS - First Show December 23, 1968 -- Curtain 10:08 P.M. At The Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital - For An Unlimited Engagement - Directed by Dr. Haakon P. Carlson - Produced by Sharon & J. Henry Gingras .." und so weiter. Sat at tea with them, discussing plays, people, etc. I signed an old (1928) Derleth-Littel-Shhorer playbill Henry had found at Lloyd Pansing's antiques "Loft" on Highway 12 on the upper prairie. Meanwhile, snow pelted down outside, so that when I took my leave the highway was rather more difficult to drive than it had been an hour previously.

9 January 1969: Up at 2 A. M. to sop up water at the hall window, where some seepage had developed because of the snow above, and fought this for almost three-quarters of an hour. .. Dennis Mack out after school -- he had walked out because his lazy father would neither permit him to use the family car nor drive him out, though the temperature was ca 10°, failing to call me to pick him up -- to work at taking off the dormer roofs as much of the snow as he could, before he came in to pack books and hasten home in my car so that he might get to an intramural contest at the high school this evening.

Kay out for two hours early this afternoon -- ironically, to celebrate her wedding anniversary, her fourth, since Greg had begged off going in to Madison with her and Lisa later this afternoon, for dinner and a show. She was nevertheless beset by guilt -- she felt keenly conscious today that she was engaged in a liaison she would condemn in anyone else -- but so was I, without any feeling of guilt whatsoever, however much it violated principles to which I strove always to adhere; this took some time to wear off, but once worn off she was extremely passionate with a wildness that delighted me and communicated to me. Unhappily, the two hours were over just as we reached the threshold of a peak of ecstasy that would have transcended all previous experience together.

Sat for a while in the harness shop with Hugh late this afternoon. He was somewhat downcast because he could not ascertain the cause for attacks of hives that beset him from time to time, and now made show in his left right cheek, swelling it a little, though without either itching or pain, which left me in some doubt that the manifestation was actually hives. But so he called it, though the wheal on his cheek was rather more a swelling than anything other.

Home for most of the evening. Forrest Hartmann visited briefly, to pick up two legal books to review. Otherwise spent most of the evening setting down a long letter to Caitlin, trying to put her into perspective -- and myself as well. Outside, the night extremely cold.

Purple finches appeared at the bird-feeder for the first time today in two years, at least a dozen of them, among which hens prevailed, for I saw no more than four cocks.

10 January 1969: The morning mail brought in a card from Kay -- signed "Caitlin" -- "A good man nowadays is hard to find! especially if you're a good woman!" to which she had added: "I've found mine!! YOU." It was written scarcely four hours after we had parted. "I can't get you out of my mind for one whole second!" Und so weiter. But her reaction only paralleled my own.

Jupiter shone within two degrees of the waning moon high up the southern sky before dawn this morning -- and to the left Spica glowed, and farther away, Mars, while Arcturus rode high in the east. Another cold day, with the mercury at -5° at dawn, and rising to no more than 10° this afternoon.

Kay on the telephone today, twice. Of our affair she said, rather plaintively, "You at least knew what you were getting into -- I didn't." I assured her that she had certainly pretended very capably that she did. Oh, man's infinite capacity for self-deception!

Hugh in the harness shop today. I spent an hour there, divided between morning and afternoon, not much inclined to work today, perhaps as yesterday's aftermath. No previous love affair interfered so with my creative life.

11 January 1969: Aspects of this cold winter day: -- The worsening condition of the village streets -- ice in many places, pitted snow in others, but the streets in Upper Sac Prairie are infinitely worse than in lower town -- Dennis Mack trying with indifferent success to pull down snow from the roof, without however actually stepping on to the shingles lest they crack in the cold, for the temperature did not go above 15° all day, sunlight notwithstanding -- birds at the feeder, and beneath it, included 2 cardinals, 2 blue jays, half a dozen juncos, nuthatches and chickadees, a dozen purple finches; several grey squirrels fed also at the windowsills strewn with dry bread -- a screech owl glimpsed in the early evening darkness flying across the balcony close to the house -- George Marx recounting trouble in the Nachreiner family ("She' gone off again -- this is the second time -- to live in Baraboo. You know her sister had that affair with Romie Reuter, Rita Brickl. They say" -- the ubiquitous "they" again! ~~it~~ that her boys wouldn't listen to her and he wouldn't listen to her complaints."). He naturally thought there was "another man" in the picture, an unwarranted conclusion. -- George and I sitting in the harness shop after ten this evening, talking with Hugh, who had come down from upstairs briefly before going to bed. George twitted Hugh at the first opportunity for the thinness of his excuse for not attending my New Year's Eve party, with Hugh protesting about "the cold'2 and adding "If it had been anything else," until Icut him short by saying that he would find one excuse or another, it hardly mattered which, to keep from exposing himself to any part of the public. ... Kay on the telephone for three hours today.

Jim Fasking was buried today. Though he had shot himself in the chest, and his head and face were therefore unblemished, the family had decided against showing him; so I did not go to the funeral parlor this morning, having previously sent flowers.

12 January 1969: Woke before dawn and went to look at the moon, now at last quarter, high in the southern heavens. Some faint, hazy clouds in the sky, and the mercury at -8°. The air very humid, and hoar-frost on the deciduous trees.

Kay telephoned this morning to say that she had been out to dinner with her mother and Lilah Accola Murphy. Lilah had surprised her by asking whether she saw "much ofAugust Derleth." Kay had told her she was typing a manuscript for me, and had forced Lilah into a reluctant admission that she "rather liked" me; nevertheless, Lilah warned her not to become too friendly or I might "wreck your happy home." The reputation as a "home-wrecker" is so new in the long list of social sins ascribed to me, and so utterly without foundation, that I had to realize presently that her saying so meant only that Lilah herself found me so interesting that she could easily cast me in~~/~~ that role in her imagination.

To work at various lesser tasks this morning before turning to The Woman in Cabin Nine this afternoon, but this went so slowly and seemed to me such a bore, that I abandoned it in favor of the retyping of H. P. Lovecraft: A Memoir -- but in truth, it was not the subject matter of the junior novel, which differed little from any of the previous novels, but my preoccupation with Kay and the desire for her that roweled me and kept me from doing any creative work today.

Walden chose to demonstrate what he had learned in school this morning. He took a graham cracker, halved two marshmallows, crowned them with four squares of Hershey's milk chocolate, and put them in to broil, presently adding another graham cracker to make a sandwich of sorts which he called "S'mores" -- i. e., "some more". It gave him a pleasant sense of achievement, to say nothing of some little-needed calories, and made the house to smell fragrantly. ... Mother to spend the afternoon at Ferbers, April to Kohlmann's to go tobogganing. I took her up at one, and they brought her back at six or thereabouts.

13 January 1969: Kay on the telephone this morning -- this late afternoon -- and twice this evening, for a total of three hours -- and she came down despite a headache to spend two hours with me this afternoon, displaying a true lover's madness to meet my own. She was her usual self, headache or no -- charming, teasing, fascinating, tempting -- all woman, irrational and erratic, but wholly desirable -- to one as mad as I .

The air mellowing a little today, with the mercury to 22° -- and at once the cawing of the crows rang more vibrantly over the countryside, presaging days of thaw and spring beyond.

Rikki telephoned tonight and talked for half an hour, well pleased with his work.

He had already received a $30 raise, owing to the curve in rise of living costs -- without having done a moment's work! He expected to be home for the weekend, so that he could fulfil his military service obligation in Dodgeville.

Aspects of this day -- Vallie Block on Water Street assuring me -- for perhaps the tenth time -- that he was again reading Walden West, and that he did not mind at all being referred to in it as a "tub of a boy" -- Hugh in the harness shop complaining of the ceiling work he was occupied with at the Fuchs house -- the crows flying westward over the prairie, though their food in this relatively deep snow must be little.

14 January 1969: Woke to an overcast sky and a temperature of 14°, with a rise in temperature coming -- and possibly more snow and freezing rain! The prospect seemed to me the bleakest in many winters, just as this winter weather is the worst in decades.

In the harness shop today Hugh held out on the Derleths' singular trait of stealing, having heard that Cousin Peck had been accused of taking things from property where he worked at his plumbing. I recalled Uncle Joe Derleth's stealing of lumber from Grandfather's shed, the lumber being Dad's -- but most especially Aunt Gene Ferber's stealing $7,000 from Grandfather's safety-deposit box in the Farmers & Citizens Bank before his death in 1943 -- none of them, save in Aunt Gene's case, having stolen things of much moment or great value. I recalled to him how Aunt Gene, when she worked at Mrs. Tilley's restaurant in Chicago, had tried to induce Hildred, who had gone to Chicago to work, also to steal from Mrs.Tilley, saying, "Oh, she tells me to take what I want," by which, if Mrs. Tilley had said it at all, she meant some ice cream or candy, but which Aunt Gene generously and wilfully took to mean literally anything in the store, including the week's profits. Peck's father, Uncle Charlie, who had died when I was but nine, said Mother, "had a mind of his own; he was more stubborn than most of the Derleths." Aunt Gene, in addition -- whom I had long ago nicknamed Aunt Arsenic -- had the despicable habit of gossiping maliciously, which in the long run did more damage than her stealing.

Decided in the early hours of the morning, once I had got Kay out of mind, however briefly, that I could improve The Adventure of the Benin Bronze by reversing the roles of murderer and victim.

Kay down for two hours this afternoon, most of that time spent in her sexual pleasure. Much talk of marriage, divorce, the conditions of living, myself urging her to live for a while in their new home before she made any ultimate decision to leave Greg to live here as my wife. Emphasized again the age gap between us. ... She on the telephone three times today, in spite of which I managed to do such work as I had laid out to do.

Two bald eagles flew up river this morning while I sat in the harness shop.

15 January 1969: Another idyllic two hours with Kay abed this afternoon. She left me so shaken that I found it necessary to take a second aldomet in order to bring down my blood pressure -- not so much for anything more than the haste necessary in so short a time as two hours, added to the intensity of her passion and the totality of her conquest. In consequence, I was unable to do much work for the rest of the day.

A foul day, weatherwise, begun with a wet snow -- an inch of it falling by noon, making the roads very slippery, and continuing with a steady rain that put a firm glaze over all the snow and increased the slipperiness of the roads, in addition. Remained home after coming out with the morning mail.

16 January 1969: A grey squirrel came up along the west window of the studio this morning while I stood there listening to the radio. It evidently heard the music, and sat listening, moving a little now and then, forward and back, cocking its head, defecating, scratching one ear, and so occupied fully five minutes before, during a break in the music, it scrambled off and leaped to the arbor vitae at the near corner.

Dennis Mack out with the mail -- for the walk and the roads and the entire snowscape were sheeted with ice, and I did not care to go into the village for the mail; and in it was a

letter to Mother from Helen Ochsner Ferber, telling us that Cousin Mary Helen Ferber had got married at Thanksgiving. Though Uncle Lou and Aunt Gene Ferber had gone to their grand-daughter's wedding, neither had said a word about it to Mother; so that Mother could not wait to get on to the telephone and report to Aunt Gene that she had learned of it. Aunt Gene's first reaction was, predictably, "That's a lie!" for, being so pathological a liar herself, she naturally assumed that everyone else was, too; but, learning that Helen herself had written, she then fell back upon, "They forbid me to say anything about it," a prohibition to which she would not have paid the slightest heed had she not followed her own inclination in the matter. I could well imagine Aunt Gene's rage -- and, too, its effect on Uncle Lou, who would suffer its full impact, since there was no one else about upon whom she could vent it.

Into town in late morning with Dennis driving. The mercury was now rising, the highway was clear of ice, and melting was making some progress, though there is so much ice on the side-roads that there was little cutting through even with the temperature at 38°. Slush prevailed everywhere. Thereafter home for the rest of the day, Dennis bringing out the evening papers.

Kay on the telephone several times today, this evening spending some time needling me, to little avail, though she succeeded at last in upsetting me for the night.

The eaves dripped for most of the night, though the mercury fell steadily if slowly. The wind finally left the southeast and went into the west-northwest.

17 January 1969: Another day of thaw, less warm than yesterday, before an advancing front presaging more snow or rain. I rose at 4:45, after lying for some time sleepless, and finished compiling a listing of deductible expenses -- eight pages, before going into the village for the morning mail.

In afternoon came Adele Beck Hetzel and her sister, Clara Beck, to visit with Mother -- and Kay with Lisa to pick up a set of Childcraft books April wished to dispose of, Kay managing to get lightly stuck in a snowbank along the parking area. April and Walden came, and Lisa trooped off with them to watch television, leaving Kay and myself an uninterrupted half hour of necking in the studio. Snow had begun to fall by the time she took her leave with Lisa ca five o'clock -- a wet, slippery snow that changed my mind about going into the village for dinner.

Resumed typing of the Lovecraft Memoir revision this evening, while snow still fell outside, promising four to five inches by morning, and still further underscoring the loathsomeness of the weather.

Rikki in at 9:30, carrying a shrimp cocktail from the Pines. He had had an arduous drive from Milwaukee in the worst possible driving weather -- of wet snow, making the highways very hazardous. He was not unhappy about his position with General Electric, where hewas at "the opposite end of what I was at here" -- receiving invoices instead of sending them out, and from at least one of the same businesses to which we had sent invoices -- Harry Schwartz's Bookshop. He seemed very tired, and was not looking forward either to going home, though he was interested in my visiting Chris on Wednesday and talking with her, or to military exercises in Dodgeville tomorrow. He stayed until 12:15.

18 January 1969: Learned today that Liberty (Lee) Cross had died at long last -- at 88, in the county home at Reedsburg -- a rugged individualist and a colorful loner who had yet managed to outlive two wives, though he had separated from the second of them, the widow Adank, a "real hell-raiser". His first wife, Ellen Millard, had died in 1914 after but 11 years of marriage; not long after, he had married the Kessler girl, old Emil's daughter, now Mrs. Adank, but he had not lived with her long before discovering how intractable she was, how much she gave in to her temper, and such a life was obviously not for him. Of his children, only Mrs. Walter (Feede) Elsing survived him -- but so did 38 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Home daylong, largely at work on the mail, which was heavy today. Dennis failed to finish his work, and had to return after supper for an hour. Surprisingly, only half an inch of snow fell in the night -- as against five that had been forecast, and today's occasional sunlight, with the temperature ca. 34° at its height, melted much of that from roofs and walks.

George Marx, in tonight, said that earlier in the week he had been listening to the radio in his Chicago quarters, when he heard of the murder of one Mrs. Lydia Meyer, and the subsequent suicide of her son, Vernon -- and instantly recalled Lyda Meyer, one of the three Hoffmann sisters, the others being Mrs. Minnie Sladek and Mrs. Julia Fasking; and indeed, it was she, now 88. Her mind had been failing in the quarters she shared at the Marina off Michigan Boulevard in Chicago, and Vernon had been despondent over the loss of his sight, or the impending loss of it, while his wife worked to support the three of them; so he had made up his mind to end an increasingly painful situation, had shot his mother, then called the police to say he had killed her, and that he was now killing himself. Both were found dead in the apartment when the police arrived.

Rikki out for two hours -- in time to get Walden from the basketball game, and to sit with George and myself talking of his new job and George's old one.

19 January 1969: A day spent -- after Mass at 7:30, where once again heard an appeal from the bishop for money, this time for the South Americans, whose bishops will very likely find a good place for it, not all of it in the mouths or pockets of the poor -- at home, working industriously and without interruption, save for telephone calls from Kay, which provided a welcome relief, at the revision and retyping of H. P. Lovecraft: A Memoir, completing it against shipment by air to Livia Gollancz in London tomorrow.

20 January 1969: Kay out for a hurried hour plus this afternoon, most of it spent abed in sexual pleasure. A singularly beautiful hour, emphasizing anew my inability to be objective when Kay is in my arms.

Paul Meyer telephoned today, saying that Dorothy Littel Mueller had first caught sight of the news story about Vernon Meyer's murder of Lyda and his suicide, had then telephoned him to suggest that he "break" the story to Lorene Meyer, his mother and Lyda's sister-in-law -- quite as if she thought indeed that Lorene, who has lived all her life singularly for herself, would indeed be shocked.

Kay on the telephone three or four times today. Managed in spite of the lengthy dialogues to finish the morning mail. To bed ca. 11:30, having risen at 5:30.

21 January 1969: In Witwen's Drug Store today Kay Ganzlin and Erne Cunradi, setting out to do Erne's wash. They spoke of Dr. Tom Walsh's affair with a local married woman; I could not imagine any woman so distrait as to attach herself to him; of Alma Walsh's estrangement from him; of the adoption of Tom's son Jim by, presumably, Darlene Meyer -- gone to California to have him. Erne said that Lorene Meyer had passed on the information that her sister-in-law, Lyda Meyer, had been unconscious for weeks before Vernon had killed her, that Vernon himself had got blind enough to need to walk with a white cane. "Oh, it was a terrible thing," said Erne. "But it was the best way out. He could have done it with pills rather than a gun, though."

Aspects of this day of January thaw -- the roads beginning to break up, with still so much frozen snow and ice on them as to make it possible to get stuck in the middle of well-traveled streets in Sac Prairie -- a kind of haze, almost a fog, over the village throughout the day -- the mellow cawing of crows flying westward -- the soaring of my redtail hawk high over the grounds -- the noise of Zeman's snowmobile in the field east -- the growing fatness of the grey squirrels, swollen with the food they have been eating almost constantly since it was first put out.

Dennis out tonight to pack books -- ironically, twice as many as on Monday, usually the best day for orders. Worked with him for a while in the studio. ... Kay on the telephone for a little while, she having been unable to escape her mother and a family guest for long enough to come out, which distressed us both immeasurably -- somewhat to my surprise and shock, being as yet reluctant to admit even to myself the depth of my possessive love for her. Wrote two new poems for her, revised four others -- and counted now no less than 57 written to her.

Outside tonight a fog closing in -- one ranging from the Gulf of Mexico almost to Lake Superior.

22 January 1969: On the telephone this morning Kay imparted the most recent subject of village talk -- Alma Walsh's attempt at suicide. Distraught at her husband's flagrant adulteries with Margaret Hellum (who had also attracted Ken Meyer long ago), Alma had two days ago slashed her wrists and was quietly bleeding to death when Alice Conger walked into her house, having evidently come to get her for some occasion or other; she came in time to save Alma's life. The village reacted predictably. Alma had been going out more -- sans/ Tom, of course, since he was otherwise entertained -- she had been, as Erna Cunradi put it, "living it up" within the limits she thought permissable, which did not involve another man -- but, evidently, after going along with the adoption of the boy, Jim -- Tom's son by the Meyer girl, she had gone as far as she could go in adjusting to Tom's infidelities. Telephoned Alice to ask about it, for confirmation; she said only, "I hoped it wouldn't get out." But since Alma was in a Madison hospital, recovering, there was no hope of keeping the affair quiet. Indeed, in some places in the village, it had been bruited about that Alma was dead. Of Tom's reaction, no word, understandably.

At noon came Ed Gruber to pick me up and take me to the Riverside to deliver part of my Life Among My Characters address. Sixty members and guests were present, and, apart from a too lengthy report by Paul Wilkinson and a rambling and pointless account by Dean Caflisch, the meeting proceeded with dispatch after a minimal lunch. I delivered only the highlights of the address, one eye on my watch, knowing that Kay waited for me at the house, to which I returned at 1:25, and literally fell upon her as if I were starved! -- like a wild man too long denied his needs. To bed without delay for an hour and a half of incessant sexual pleasure, achieving new delights and even more variety in an incredible harmony of response I had never thought to attain with any woman, and much less any man. I saw her leave with a rage of grief, not assuaged by two subsequent hours on the telephone.

In the harness shop late today Hugh was depressed. "I've never put through such a day," he said. But indeed, it was a depressing day, for rain had fallen intermittently all day, and at the moment a steady downpour was beginning. I invited him to come out for an hour or two this evening, but knew that he had become so accustomed to people stopping in at the shop that he would not move, but would rather suffer the loneliness that clearly beset him, out of which very probably rises the compulsion to return to work in the canning factory, where he is among people on a reasonably comradely basis.

Kay said today that she loved me more than "clothes" -- which was revealing, as she herself now saw: that her frequent need to buy new clothing was a substitute for love and a satisfying sex life. ... The exaltation of our sexual pleasure this afternoon lasted into the night.

23 January 1969: A miserable day for weather, with the temperature ca 40° and a steady rain falling for most of the day, making the icy sideroads and my driveway uncommonly slippery, so that I drove on it with increasing tension. Sat for a while with Hugh in the harness shop, both this morning and late this afternoon, but spent the day writing book reviews into mid-February, which required some reading, particularly of new poetry. But I could work only after mid-afternoon, for it was not until then that yesterday's feverish exaltation had passed. ... Kay on the telephone several times today and evening, and Rick called from Milwaukee late tonight. ... Outside this evening the wind turned suddenly into the northwest, a rapid drop in temperature followed, the falling rain changed abruptly to snow, and something over half an inch fell, freezing -- and the fog-cloud of the last two or three days was soon dissipated.

Aspects of this day -- Joe Matousek smarting under my criticism of the new starch-laden canned corn product of the local canning factory, while he was in the harness shop with Louella Cork late this afternoon — Adela Reuter astonished to learn the facts of the Lyda and Vernon Meyer deaths; she had been told by Lorene only that they were dead, no more, quite as if by this reticence she could offset the newspaper accounts of their deaths -- the sound of ice sliding off the roof now and then in the course of the day.

24 January 1969: Greg Mulcahy came down this afternoon to lay before me plans for the projected warehouse, which would cost just short of $10,000 -- or two-thirds of what my entire house had cost in 1939! We spent almost an hour talking of it, of Kay and Kay's friends, as well as of other matters. When, later, Kay was on the telephone, and wanted to know what

we were talking about, I told her, whereupon she grew so irate that she hung up -- at which I removed the telephone from its cradle so that she could not call back, and went on about work needing to be done -- the mail, the reading of six Romney Pringle stories so that I could do an introduction to a collection projected by Oswald Train, etc. -- and when, an hour later she called, more mollified, she accused me of being "a blabbermouth". I said, "I prefer to call it psychology." She retorted: "Maybe that's how you keep yourself from going crazy -- by talking!" I told her that she ought not to think that, having brought me down, she must therefore assume that I no longer had my wits about me -- at least not to the extent of her acting on that assumption. A good deal of good-natured raillery followed thereupon. Meanwhile, Dennis Mack out, and he, starting the car to warm it up, had, as is his needless habit, put on the emergency brake, with the result that he could barely move the car when he essayed to drive into town for the paper, having already forgotten that he had put on the brake. .. Kay having gone into Madison with Greg to see a movie tonight, my line was free -- a spate of long-distance calls resulted -- first from Marcia Masters Schmid, to talk about her coming books, about her daughter Andrea Lee, her proposed month-long holiday in Tucson, her Tribune poetry column, etc. -- then from Russell Ferrall to talk about my editing New Poetry Out of Wisconsin, und so weiter. Outside snow, wind, drifting, and Walden off to go roller-skating. And sub-zero cold. ... Late, Kay called. She had not, after all, gone to Madison with Greg; once again, as so often before, though she had got ready, he had simply not come home in time for them to go.

25 January 1969: A day of bitter weather once again, complicated by bad roads. Fortunately, at 3:30 this morning, a snow plow went through to clear the road north of the cemetery, which had all but drifted shut when I went to get Walden at the roller-skating rink at 10:45 last night -- as had Madison Street also -- so that I could get into the village for the mail. Dennis Mack walked down to where I sat with Hugh in the harness shop, making it unnecessary to drive up for him; so with him to Mueller's Sac Prairie Prescriptions for some marshmallow hearts for Kay and Dennis. Thence to the mail, while Dennis packed yesterday's orders.

Kay out this afternoon to bring me the typescript of The Three Straw Men. She brought Lisa, who immediately went coloring with April, leaving Kay and me in the studio, relatively undisturbed for a "fun" hour or so, though Kay was disturbed when Alice came to work in the adjoining room, feeling guilty, no doubt, a certain primitive reaction she cannot seem to control -- quite as if we were about something we ought not to be doing. On going, Lisa said she wished April could be her sister. With reckless unwisdom Kay said, "Do you know what would have to happen before she could be your sister? Mummy would have to marry Mr. Derleth." I thought this nothing short of hilarious, after her concern about my conversation with Greg yesterday, and I could readily imagine the talkative child walking up to her father and saying, "Daddy, Mummy's going to marry Mr.Derleth so I can have April for my sister." "Blabbermouth" indeed!

Spent this evening proofing the manuscript Kay had typed for me, finding neither more nor less errors than I myself would have made; then packed it to be sent off Monday. George Marx out and with him sat talking over the week's events and hearing again about one or two of George's little triumphs, he forgetting that he had told them to me before, and I not reminding him and thus depriving him of the pleasure of telling them again. ... To bed ca. 10:30.

Betty Meng down town. Neither cold nor heat keeps her from her rounds -- three or four times a day down town from the Meng home near the western edge of the village, across the road from the old Buchanau home, two doors down from Minna Schwenker's little house. I asked her whether she had received the picture of her taken at a school picnic almost thirty years ago, if not more; she had, and was pleased to have it; her face lit up with her wide smile as she spoke of it -- "such a cute picture!" .. Later I saw her plodding home, in the middle of the road past old St. Aloysius -- her face grim, as it so customarily is, her manner alienated, walking in her private world.

26 January 1969: Another cold day, begun with zero temperatures, and climbing but slowly toward 15°, alternating between sunlight and cloud cover. I wasted much of it -- compiling 40 poems for possible inclusion in another collection of nature poems, for the illustration of which Jack Bachhuber happily exchanged Caitlin, much to my relief, for Frank could better

catch its spirit in his wood-engravings.. Kay telephoned several times. In the course of one of her calls, she asked me to "wait" for her, which certainly I would do -- but I thought it implicit in her request that she could no longer foresee a time for her divorce, and concluded not unreasonably that the longer it was put off, the less likely was it to happen. ... Dennis out to finish invoices left over from yesterday, working almost two hours on a dozen invoices -- misspellings and all, of which he ought not to have been guilty.

Kay had been off to a movie in Madison last night with Greg, and on the way home had stopped for a beer at the Cutter Inn. Bobby Dahl and his wife and another couple were there. "I had nothing to say," said Kay. "There was nothing I wanted to say. Why do I have to be like that? -- und so weiter. "How can they be satisfied with an evening like that? Just go out to a bar and sit around and drink and talk and maybe play pool. I can't do it. I didn't have anything to say to Greg, either. I never have had. It's not just since you were on the scene. Oh, it's sad. If only he were mean to me -- if he beat me, or something, then I wouldn't feel so about leaving him. But he isn't -- he does everything for me, he'd do anything I want -- he just can't satisfy my needs." -- which is what invariably happens when two fundamentally mismatched people marry.

At long last, after many delays, resumed work on The Woman in Cabin Nine.

27 January 1969: Kay down for two hours this afternoon, in and out of bed, and without sexual indulgence for a change. A very pleasant two hours. She brought along a poem she had written, indicating that she was still under the influence of the traditional patterns taught by Edna Meudt at Rhinelander, which I discouraged. ... The temperature slowly moderating to 25° today, with once again snow and sleet or freezing rain forecast for tonight and tomorrow, an extension of the disgusting weather of the past month. ... In the harness shop today Hugh said gloomily that the canning factory was "in a bad way" with a lack of orders -- to say nothing of the foul, starchy creamed corn they had canned, which ought to ruin the factory's corn business, indeed. ... Kay on the telephone for two hours this evening.

28 January 1969: Yet another dreadful day of weather -- drizzle, rain, following half an inch to an inch of snow last night, a crust of ice, fog, and again, this evening, freezing drizzle and rain.

Kay out today for two hours, entirely abed, achieving ever new heights of sexual pleasure. She was not long home, however, before she telephoned in some agitation to say that at last some gossip had linked our names, though I was immediately suspicious about its being contrived, since it had reached her from her mother, who said Lilah Accola Murphy had told her that, sorry as she was to have to mention it, she had heard that Kay and I had been "seeing" each other. Once again, I was a "very dangerous man," and "susceptible to a woman's charm, and Kay is just the sort of woman he'd fall for." I thought this a rather curious way of putting it -- as if, indeed, Kay had set out to entrap me (as she herself boasts she did), and rather negating that "danger" of which Lilah spoke. She added that she "could tell something" out of her "personal experience" with me -- though that that could be I could not conceive even in the wildest transports of my imagination. As for the gossip, Kay was assured that it was "all over town" -- which I ascertained presently by cutting into various gossip patterns and lines it was decidedly not. Moreover, Emily Price was assured, "people are very easily influenced" by me, which has always seemed to me precisely the contrary to the fact, for my espousal of any local issue is certain to arouse the determined opposition of those passive people who are convinced that I am about to "run" things. "Oh, I hate this town!" cried Kay. "I don't want to live here. If we're married, we should live somewhere else." Told her again that she could not run away any more than anyone else. After she left the wire I telephoned Alice Conger -- who had heard nothing, and could not believe that gossip was being bruited about; Lilah Murphy had never said a word of it to her. "Of course, they know they can't pump me," she said -- as I too well knew. On reconsidering her mother's inquiry, Kay concluded that Emily had been easily enough satisfied ~~ø~~ by Kay's cool casualness, and could not have taken the gossip very seriously. Myself not very much disturbed, knowing that proof of anything but an interest in each other could hardly be adduced by anyone.

29 January 1969: In mid-morning today, Waldo Markert, 65, shot himself in his home in Sac Prairie -- the home Mrs. Jerabek had had built for her when she left the Jerabek farm, and had sold after she married John Beinvogel. His wife, Evelyn Lehman Markert, had been plaguing him for a long time to sell the old Markert farm near Denzer and move to "town" while she went to work at Badger Ordnance; so at last he had done it, much against his inclination. He was unhappy, dispirited, out of sorts in Sac Prairie; he missed the freedom of the country, the room to turn around in, the woods, the fields, the hills, the yard to putter around in; and all the "fixing up" he did in the town house did not occupy or satisfy his mind; his discontent grew. Though on Monday of this week he had bought a new car, today this had palled on him, and he shot himself, putting an end to his discontent and homesickness -- longing for the farm he had so ill-advisedly sold. I remembered, long ago, when I was seven or eight or nine, going with the family to visit that same farm -- to gather hickory nuts and the like; since Waldo's ~~grandmother or~~ great-grandmother was a Hugobach, a sister to my own ~~Grandma~~ Great-grandmother Hugobach Gelhaus Wesie, Uhr-Grosmma, who had lived out her last years at Grandmother Volk's home next to the old house on Madison Street.

Aspects of this miserable day in Sac Prairie -- fog this morning with the mercury at 32°, rain this afternoon and evening, presently freezing to a thickening coat of ice against coming cold and snow again, for the sixth time since Christmas, repeating the same pattern -- a Wisconsin Power & Light Company utility truck crashing into the Bachhuber building on Water Street and causing extansive damage, evidently because the driver drove forward thinking he was in reverse -- the flurry and flutter of juncos, purple finches, mourning doves, blue jays, cardinals, nuthatches, chickadees at the feeder and along the house where food had been spread, eager to save some of it from the predatory squirrels -- an increasing number of small red squirrels, indicating that some cross-breeding between grey and red squirrels had taken place on this acreage -- Kay on the telephone several times, she still concerned about gossip linking us -- the new, mellower whistle on the train coming up into Sac Prairie from Mazomanie, a pleasant change from the cow-like bleat of the diesel locomotive.

Worked at The Woman in Cabin Nine and the preparation of an introduction for The Further Adventures of Romney Pringle, and at a new poem for Kay in the course of the day.

30 January 1969: Another unpleasant day, though not so much a one as yesterday, for the fog was gone under a north wind, and the drizzle had stopped, and the mercury was slowly falling from 33° at dawn. The road -- Lueders Road -- was glare ice, and I drove on it tensely, though the highway was relatively free of ice, only much broken by the severe weather, the cement being widely pocked.

Kay on the telephone this morning. She lamented that her evening or late afternoon calls would be curtailed for two weeks because her sister Colleen and her cousin Barbara were staying at her home while Lionel and Emily Price were on holiday in San Diego and Dallas. I thought it not an unmixed catastrophe, for it was eminently possible to have too much conversation and thus lessen our appreciation of each other in time. Nevertheless, I began to be restless directly mid-afternoon passed.

Finally completed the initial chapter of The Woman in Cabin Nine this evening, and revised a poem and did invoices Dennis had not had time to do in today's relatively heavy shipment of books. Up for April at the high school following a late afternoon game, and saw with some relief in passing her home that Kay had returned safely from Madison, whither she had gone to take Lisa for her dancing lesson.

31 January 1969: A day of sunlight, for a change, in this beastly winter. Worked daylong at The Woman in Cabin Nine, the mail, and lesser tasks. ... Kay on the telephone twice, once for an hour -- and a letter from her in the mail, at which I spent some time in reply this evening, principally in words of caution urging her to contemplate divorce and remarriage slowly and with deliberation, myself being fully aware of the pitfalls possible in marriage to so mercurial and lovely a woman, cankered by discontent, and craving far more from life than my income currently permits. ... Stuck at the entrance to the north drive today, but luckily Wiggie Patterson came by and gave me the push necessary to take me out of the snowy verge and back into the road.

1 February 1969: Frank Utpatel in the village this morning. He had come up to have Hugh trim two wood-engravings for Caitlin, but Hugh had elected to stay abed this morning; so I brought him out to the house, since Dennis was there to drive, and had him sign copies of various books he had illustrated, particularly Walden Pond. He had sold some prints the previous evening, and had got himself drunk, and had as a result been sick for most of the night. He was still nauseated this morning, and vomited several times; but he is so inured to this condition that he is undaunted in his movements, whereas I would be far too debilitated to even want to move.

The morning mail brought in a lengthy and angry letter from Mike Hartmann. "I am out here in Los Angeles. The city of Freeways and cars and cars and more cars people out here only use sidewalks going out of their home to their cars and walking to their places of toil. I hate cars to me they'er a symbol of wealth, power, and a kind of a chromy boastfulness. Los Angeles is a city with no center in fact it's not even a city. It's a superficial state of mind. The city of no balls the casterated giant. Everywhere I look I see another branch of the bank of America. The tallest Bldg. here is a bank Bldg. The Crocker Citizens Bank. I can see it from my apt. window overlooking downtown Los Angeles. I really now after five months out here really miss New York. The people were more fun. But economicaly it is murder. Apartments that should rent for $80 a month they get $250.00 for. rent is sky high in ole New York. I'm starting to plainly see that money is God in America. It is also sex appeal. Everybody is on a money trip in the U.S.A. When billy Graham gives a serman he thinks money first and God second. God always comes in second place to money; but in fact so do people. A man of waalth thinks more of his money than of himself or others. Money robs us all. We built it as a wall between us and our freinds it's all tangled up with our survival instinct. At the basis of everything is money. People don't fuck because it you might be good. It's because it is or may be worth some money. Some really cheat them selves of a good hump. I think women do. I really hate American women what gold lusting bitches they really are. Behind their proper way to treat a lady -- Their hidden standard judgment rights -- their turning more hetrosexual types to hustling faggots. I seen a lot of this in N.Y.C. Women play mean sex games but they also lose. I was in Frisco fucking this Jewish girl from N. Y. She was going with a Jewish cat who was a publisher of dirty books. She was all for expirmentation when it came to sex; but, her big thing was money this Arnold - the publisher spent all kinds of jack on her. Took her to Vegas gave her money to play the tables the whole shmear. When I was in business with Jerry in N. Y. He told me as far as our partnership went his kid and wife came first. I came second as far as the money. All I ever actually recieved all told from him for my labors was probably fifty Dollars. I lived off the money from the law suits which amounted to $3,000. Dollars. Most of that I spent in search of a room full of people and the hopes of making a friend. Which never happened I don't fit to well in rooms or lives I don't seem to have the right credentials. The right family. The right education. The right change. The right amount of money. I talk but am never heard. Somebody's always talking at the same time; and rattling the change in their pocket. Their is no American dream for me it was destroyed on route 26 in Illinois. She was the really only true friend I ever had. Thoo in many ways she was slow to the way people cheat. I must confess I really love her and miss her." (His reference is to his mother, Evelyn Winters Hartmann, killed in a car accident.) "I hate Christmas and Thanksgiving. I really feel I'm on the wront planet then. It is strange people I admire either get shot or killed. Like J. F. K. or Bobby Kennedy. With nixon at the helm the whole country should get that much more blander -- and corporate. Well, I'm still writing my songs and hopeing. I still hope for the day I can be self reliant and not a slave for some buisness-prison Run by moneyed fools. Who fuck their wives with the lights off and the bedroom door shut. With plenty of kleenex on the night stand to wipe away any miss directed juice of joy from the spotless upper middle class sheets. Most people over fifty are so victorianly squeamish about sex. Most people ~~over~~ thirty want to secretly play switchy with the couple they play tennis with. Most in the 20s wither want to have no sex hang ups or have got sex and money really tangled up. Thanks to moma and papa -- who in their time never questioned anything and believed all those fourth of July speeches. Who had hang ups about hand holding and knee touching. Who if heard of men eating pussy - Would picture dark African natives around a pot of wrought iron cooking cats in boiling water. I have sent School for books to a Theatre group in Hollywood. I~~'~~ was working at a Dept Store Warehouse in Los Angeles as a touch up man but was laid off Dec 27, 68. Because I was told buissness is bad. I had shot off my mouth about non union places to work, and not paying 20 or 30 minutes of overtime worked. I hated the job. I really hate work. Most people who are in the working world are slobs. They have no opinions. They'ere

afraid of their job. They are mostly fawning suck asses. Who sell their souls for ninty bucks a week. I really can't fit in with buisness men or workers I find them both dull. They bring me down. The only thing I want to be down on is a nice pair of thighs eating clean cared for feminin pussy. I applied for a Civil service job as a guard it paid from $514 a month to $640 a month. I passed the test but this last monday I flunked the interview. The kid who gave the interview was only 23 yrs old fresh out of college. I think assurdly he flunked me because I told him I didn't graduate High school. I called the urban league and told my experience to them. They called the county. But the county informed them It wasn't their policy to tell a person why they didn't pass the interview. This urban league accepted that and called me and told me their results. Which seems very stupid. I can't see what good the urban league does for fair un-bias judgment. I can as a recourse go before a board of county examiners but it is my hunch this is a kangaroo Court. I am really rather tired of people and the games they play I don't ever fit. I try I fail. Maybe and easy painless death is better than being sexually depraved. Working dull jobs dreaming dreams that never come true, occupying impty rooms or rooms where I'm not accepted. I'm sick of the whole circus. When I get down to my last fifty I'm going to get some whisky and some sleeping pills and stpp over the line maybe into a better world. I've $800. Dollars left. For when my moneys gone I'm gone. Then I can beg and be spat on. My pride can't let me live like that. I have gone to the railroad retirement board and filed for unemployment. I hope I can get it to buy some time to get a perspective on life. I'm damn sick of being alone never a part of anything. As far as education I am willing to get my High school diploma and go from their to college. But, I need first a job. I hate big buisness for what it does to people most of them don't know their being made over. To conditioned slaves. I would study writing playwriting and some music theory; that is if they let me. Most education impressed me as dictorial the school tells you what to learn just as the corporation tells you how to act and what to wear. Which is all bull shit. I want to do my <u>own thing</u>. But everybody and everything seems in my way. The weight of this thought is terrible like a thousand tones pinning me to the ground. Thats why people flash out on herione and become hope-headed junkys. To excape the system that makes everybody a loser. I want to transcind this plight God help me in my cause. I'm sorry to have gone on so long but I had to let it be said. Life is not kind. But all I can say to my own question is: Why? Man seems to be destroying nature for profit as it's called by C P H. & polluting the air the Lakes the streams chopping and destroying wild life habitafs. Profit seems to be king of all the earth. Makes all wrongs right. The ring of the Cash register is the only music really heard in philarmonic Hall as the crowed wildly cheers as the oceans fill with garbage. Absolutisem and apathy are a deadly combination; absolutism from above, apathy from below. America is not the land of freedom of speech. For those who use it are ostracized. Group thought is only acceptable. Everyman to his click and a click for everyman. It's a social sin of unforgivable consequendes to see it your own way. Climb in your click and think along with the group. I say fuck it all. The more I see it The way I can see it. The less I see in it. I want my daily bread and the right to do my <u>own thing</u>." I wrote him as sympathetically as I could,knowing his recalcitrance, remembering how ill he treated his mother while she lived, how parasitic he had been. Poor fellow! He will never be able to adjust to the profit-motive in any fashion, and may indeed quite possibly seek oblivion.

Russell and Mrs. Ferrall came in this afternoon, he to talk about the editing of the new anthology of poetry chiefly by members of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, which I had agreed to undertake at a fee of $300, and a guarantee of $1,000 to help defray publishing costs. He proved to be a tall, well-kept man, much interested in his position as president of the Fellowship; he called himself a dilletante in poetry, and perhaps he is no more, and sought some assurance that it would be chiefly Fellowship poets who would be represented. They remained but half an hour and were on their way again. ... Dick Sinnott and the new tenant of the Miles Keysar home were also briefly in -- ten minutes or so -- to talk of books and publishing and to go again.

Kay on the telephone three times today, somewhat hampered by the presence of either her cousin or her niece, but managing I thought to circumvent their possible eavesdropping without too much difficulty.

A cold day, though with sunshine and some thaw, the ice on the road outside lessening a little and open patches appearing on the road.

Kay on the telephone once again in mid-evening. Some discussion of her Freudian slip in her letter, of referring to her inner "spirit" as "he". Some discussion also of her admission that she achieved more sexual pleasure orally or with the intromission of something other than the penis, not for any lack of potential pleasure, but out of the psychic knowledge and rebellion against that the penis represented male domination, and that, being fucked, she felt too possessed. In effect, then, the penis rampant symbolized her initial sexual experience with a man -- her rape.

George Marx out for the evening -- listening with some amusement to my end of conversation with Kay. I took him home presently, going around through the village, by the light of a moon almost full, making the icy countryside to shine and glitter. The mercury at 16°, and the air still, though a thin drift of high hazy cloud could be seen coming in out of the west, presaging a turn again in the weather. Once home, wrote another poem -- the 59th! -- for Kay.

2 February 1969: Groundhog Day and the morning papers filled with nonsense about woodchucks and their shadows -- as if we did not always have six more weeks of winter from this date, sometimes severe, sometimes mild -- but not spring.

Home all day writing -- getting through half the third chapter of The Woman in Cabin Nine, writing yet another poem for Kay, reading manuscripts, und so weiter. The only interruption of the day proved to be Tommy Adank -- who had come to spend an hour with Bishop Derleth instead of going to Mass; he too was fed up with churchianity. Made small talk about Jim and Ken Fasking -- "Kennie isn't the same any more; he isn't the same fellow; he's changed so much," said Tommy, and indeed he had. He "couldn't figure out" Jim, and why Jim should have taken his own life. He spoke of his father -- of Lottie Cross, of Liberty Cross, whose death was still fresh in mind, saying that Roy Adank's memory was beginning to dim "a little -- but not much."

Outside cold and humid, but not bitterly so, with the mercury reaching 28° before it began to fall once more in late afternoon.

Kay telephoned after ten, briefly, her first chance to do so today.

3 February 1969: The full moon rode not far from Jupiter low in the western heavens this morning before dawn, its light gleaming on the icy snow. Some clouds, illumined by the moon, were also framed by the oak limbs. The mercury stood at -2°. ... Up and to work on The Woman in Cabin Nine, largely marking time in Chapter 3.

Kay down this afternoon. She had warned me over the telephone that she was "horny" after six days of not being together, and indeed she was; we had almost two hours of intense and uninhibited sexual pleasure which left me feeling as if I had been raped and in a daze of exaltation, the effect her beauty invariably has on me. The mood held for hours after she had gone.

A clear, cold night, with the moonlight flooding the gleaming, ice-covered snow. Dennis out to pack books until 9:30.

4 February 1969: A slowly warming day, filled with the musk of thaw by afternoon -- a scent so unfamiliar after so long without it that I could not at first identify it! ... A handful of salt on the ice of the driveway demonstrated that it was a full three inches thick! -- and doubtless more in some areas. ... Crows in the woodlot, and juncos fluttering in and out of the trees were more animated today, responsing to sunlight and warmth. The crows cawed all day, vibrantly.

Kay out for four wonderful hours this afternoon -- all spent abed, and for once there was no need for haste, and we spent all that time (for all that it went far too fleetly by) in sexual delights. She proved again that she is more marvellously responsive to sexual pleasure than any other woman I have known, with multiple climaxes; even prolonged kissing, I concluded, could bring her to climax; her response to every stimulation -- oral, manual, etc. -- superb; but four hours did at last bring her to a point at which, though she could have gone on for the six more I wished we had, some relaxation was desirable. ... On the telephone four hours later, she was still "aglow".

The moon tonight shone upon a world of ice. Everything on the ground glittered and gleamed with the moonlight, and the ice carried wide swaths of it from the eye to the horizon beneath the moon. At nine the air still fragrant with the smell of thaw, though the mercury had fallen below freezing. ... Before going to bed, noticed the three vivid hickeys Kay had given me today, aglow on my neck, which moved me back to my desk to write her a passionate and erotic letter, which I ended in praise of "going to our bed, to drink in lustfully, and revel in, awake or asleep, the musk of that sweet cunt, whose sweetness I still taste on my lips and tongue" und so weiter; after writing which, I was moved to look up "cunt" in my Oxford dictionary and then the large Random House, finding it in neither, though it was evident that its root lay in "cunnus vulva" -- and then looked into Mencken's American Language, the dictionaries of slang, etc., etc., and much to my amazement did not find it listed anywhere at all!

5 February 1969: Began the fourth chapter of The Woman in Cabin Nine this morning.

Aspects of this sunny day: -- purple finches pecking at and eating the snow on the roof -- squirrels evidently in heat, chasing over roof and into the trees, up and down -- the crows in the trees of the woodlot, at least a score of them, one posted as sentinel -- a deer's head, antlered, which Pasha had dragged home from somewhere, one recently slain, quite evidently, season or no, which could have come from one of any three houses along the Lower Mill Road -- Kay out this afternoon for two hours, spent abed naked, as always, but without more than passionate kissing, for she was still too sensitive after yesterday's violent and prolonged loving to indulge today.

Betty Meng at Witwen's today wearing a long blue coat, her whitening hair crowned by a green stocking cap. She talked in a kind of slurring drawl, and her eyes did not seem to focus; she seemed to be looking at something far away. Though she passed within two feet of me, she did not speak.

6 February 1969: Billy Schorer died today --"young Billy" -- his constant smoking and drinking having finally done him in, at 62. He had an advanced case of emphysema, and had for some time been aided to live by a "breathing machine". He had but recently planned to go to Florida for the winter, but had been taken ill before he could board an aeroplane, and had gone to Mayo's in Rochester instead; there he had died. It seemed to me well-nigh miraculous that he could have lasted two years [illegible] or a trifle less after his father's death, for at the Schorer auction he had looked like "walking death," as the villagers are wont to put it. Though I had sent W. C. Sr. roses, I decided against sending flowers for Billy; he had lived pretty much for himself all his life, and it seemed to me fitting that he should die as he had lived. A good-hearted but thoughtless fellow, and probably the most likable of the three Schorer boys. His son, now "young Billy" in his turn, is, if anything, even more of a joy-seeking extrovert, and if the affairs of the canning company now devolve solely upon him, I should not think that the business would flourish.

Into Madison this afternoon to shop, and met Kay briefly at the Emporium, where she waited at the entrance. My heart leaped at sight of her, standing in solitary beauty there, and I could hardly convince myself that that beautiful woman waited for me. But it was nevertheless so. Walked back to Kehl's music and dancing school where her daughter was taking a lesson, and left Kay there, though I saw her later again as briefly at Manchester's. Thence to Frenchy's for dinner, and so home through falling snow.

7 February 1969: Kay telephoned before I could go into the village this morning to ask me whether I would go into Milwaukee with her to look for a chandelier for her dining-room; she had seen one there, at Lights Unlimited, a year ago, and wanted to buy it now. I hesitated, but I was unwilling in the end to lose the opportunity to spend a day with her; so I decided to go. However, she delayed long enough, unwillingly, to enable me to process most of the mail. We were off at eleven, despite unfavorable weather -- a louring overcast and the danger of snow -- and with uncertain directions Greg had given her. Nevertheless, found our way to Henrici's for lunch, and there, wherever she went, she walked like a flame, attracting all eyes from the teens to old age of men, and not a few women. As usual, our precise relationship was the subject of some speculation -- a father-daughter one abandoned by those few diners who caught sight of us kissing in our booth. Thence to Lights Unlimited where, though the chandelier she had had her eye on was sold, she settled in an hour for a

beautiful, scintillant chandelier of cut crystal from Vienna, one that sent forth diamonds of multi-colored lights, subdued and not garish. By that time the hour was 3:45, and it behooved us, once the piece was packed for transportation, to leave the city before the rush hour -- or before the weather changed. By approximately 5:50 we were in Madison, and by five o'clock we were sitting down to dinner at Poole's, in Northgate, off 113, though I would rather have gone to the Simon House. A so-so dinner, and thence home, where we soon separated. Much laughter at my riding "under the blanket" through Sac Prairie, so that we would not be seen together.

A long evening at work. Until twelve.

8 February 1969: Up at 5:45 and at once to work on The Woman in Cabin Nine, which has now begun to move. Managed to get into Chapter 5, and determined to reach the half way mark by tomorrow at bedtime. To that end pushed work throughout the day -- book reviews, letters, journal, reading booklets of the Abraxas Press for review, und so weiter. Kay telephoned early in the day; but she and her family were bound for Black River Falls today, pursuing still the question of fixtures for the new house, and the day was uninterrupted by telephone calls. Worked steadily, and so did Dennis.

At the harness shop this morning Frank Utpatel boasted of selling prints. He had a hangover, and was going out for another beer -- after which he showed up at the house, slightly tipsy, and bound to be ill. Hugh out to repair the telephone stand by affixing a new bracket to it.

A dreary day, with clouds hanging low, some light snow falling, and the mercury hovering at 33°. Yet this morning the cardinals were singing their spring songs. I thought I had heard one cock singing yesterday, but I could not be certain. In the harness shop, Hugh said he had heard them "a few days ago," he could not name the day, but one day within the week, for the first time. A late beginning.

Paul Meyer came out this evening and parked in the studio for over an hour, making small talk. George Marx was here and occupied some of his attention, but I continued to work at book reviews, anxious to complete the month's columns, so that I could work without interruption at The Woman in Cabin Nine.

9 February 1969: Again this morning, while the last quarter moon still rode up the southern slope, the what-cheer song of the cardinal from a treetop along the east line fence. The sun rose in a clear sky, and the day promised to be fair, if somewhat colder than yesterday. .. Home throughout the day, at work on The Woman in Cabin Nine, pressing close to the half-way mark, which I would have reached had it not been for interruptions -- Karl and Kay Ganzlin showing up after Billy Schorer's funeral to visit for over an hour -- and a telephone call from Mark Schorer in early evening.

This call came once again from one high on liquor -- and from the Flamingo at the open bar, where Mark, contemptuous of the crowd, once again harked back to our "lost youth" -- in which we were "too uninformed" and he had been "so unresponsive" and so unable to "give" -- and assured me that of the Schorers he would probably be "the next to die -- and if I do, I want you to know I love you" -- confessing that he had not wept at his brother's funeral, but that he was weeping now. Once again, as so often over the past 30 years, his guard went down, his feelings of guilt over his treatment of me in our teens and twenties rose to plague him; and once again, no doubt, when he grows sober tomorrow, he will be in a rage with me because he betrayed himself tonight. Nevertheless, his call troubled and upset me, and I paced the floor for a considerable time thereafter, all the old wounds of love opened a little again, all those Mark had inflicted, as well as those suffered at the hands of other lovers, who, like Mark, have never learned that one cannot begin again -- the wounds of love never entirely disappear, never entirely heal. I was made to think how, only today, Kay on the telephone confessed a modicum of disappointment with me, for she had thought me a man who had risen above sex, only to find that it was not so, and however much she now enjoyed sexual pleasure with me, I was nevertheless somewhat diminished in her esteem -- the sheer contrariness of women.

Watched tonight on television Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream, which delighted me,

and served to remind me, salubriously, how inadequate my own work is.

10 February 1969: At Dr. A. J. Schroeder's office this morning, learned from Red that Mark Schorer was more haggard than ever, that, though his hair was thinning, he wore it well down his neck in back, that he had to wear an earphone, since his hearing was bad, that, if his appearance were any indicator -- which it need not be, he was not long for this world. Had a filling replaced.

Kay down this afternoon for two hours, all abed, and almost entirely spent in sexual pleasures, both of us having had to be continent for five days; so we were abandoned to lust -- there is no other word for it. She left me -- again -- shaken by the hungry intensity of our mutual passion.

Dennis Mack out this evening to work, principally in the stock-room, but also for a while in the studio and the basement, making room for a shipment of The Wind Leans West.

Aspects of this day: a letter from Sandy, now living in Phoenix, Arizona -- fortunately too far away to make even the few trips we made to Madison so that she might see the children, announcing her seventh pregnancy and hysterectomy to follow, making no secret of her plight with Art Kiser now released from Mendota and looking for work in Phoenix. /// -- a peregrine hawk vaulting up out of my woodlot while was on the telephone to Kay -- the peter, peter call of a tufted titmouse somewhere on the grounds.

11 February 1969: Kay out once again -- again for two hours, entirely spent abed in sexual delight. She was today especially and sensitively responsive to oral stimulation and held me for half an hour or more between her beautiful legs.

This evening with Kay, Greg, Lisa and the children into Madison -- first for dinner at The Pines, then to the Union Theatre for a performance of the Harkness Ballet on its initial appearance in Madison, opening with a slow and rather stately Madrigalesco, on Vivaldi's music, traditional choreography by Benjamin Harkavy, who aldo did the choreography for the livelier Grand Pas Espagnol that followed. Most interesting, however, were Lee Hoiby's After Eden, choreography by John Butler, danced by Bonnie Mathis and the troupe's best dancer, Negro John Jopes, superb of body and muscular control, and Paul Creston's Time out of Mind, choreography by Brian MacDonald. Lisa remained lively and awake throughout the performance, which ended after ten. All during the evening I was struck by Kay's aloof coolness, a calculated indifference, as if all our lust and loving of this afternoon were the figment of an impossible dream!

12 February 1969: A fine, clear, but cold day, with a northwest wind.

Kay on the telephone several times. She was today concerned with the imagined horrors of going to Las Vegas for a divorce, of the even worse fears of coming back to face "them" -- the boggie-men "theys" and what they were thinking of her. Told her not to concern herself, since the problem had not yet arisen, and would very probably not arise; we must live together on some basis before marriage to see whether she could take life on an hour by hour basis with me before we ought to think seriously of marriage. Und so weiter.

In the harness shop this evening some talk about the condition of the canning factory's business. Hard upon the ill-advised and ill-timed investment in costly new machinery that made necessary the ruining of the taste of the cornpack, by the addition /// of too much starch, business had fallen off; the pack was now being sold "below cost," as Joe Matousek put it, he leaving just as I came in, and prospects, with the witless Billy Schorer, Jr., now, at 28, in charge of operations in Reedsburg and Sac Prairie, were not bright for the factory's future. Some talk too of the decline of Mark Schorer, of whom Hugh spoke always in the same vein, "He's a Schorer. They all take, they're all greedy, they can't give." Of old Will's will, "The boys talked him into changing it and cutting out the charities he had set down -- for the library, the church." I could well believe that this kind of pressure had been put on the old man, and that in the end, he had yielded to it. "After all," said Hugh, "he was a Schorer." A cold night, with the mercury at 15° when I left the shop.

Kay on the telephone late tonight for half an hour or more.

13 February 1969: Sub-zero cold again this morning. But the sky was cloudless, the sickle waning moon lay just over the horizon in the east before dawn, and in the west Jupiter shone with great brilliance. Up at six to work on The Woman in Cabin Nine.

The mail this morning brought word from Cousin Bea Kitch that Uncle Fred Kitch had died last Saturday, at ca. 90. Despite his ardent declaration almost twelve years ago, that he wanted to die soon after Aunt Tillie died, on the occasion of her death, he had held out with astonishing vigor. ... The mail also brought, with Valentines from Kay, one from Rick -- "Dear Valentine, I love you with all my heart, with all my soul, and --... sorry .. but it would cost me 50¢ to love you any more!" to which he had appended: "Maybe it would be to your best interests to consider some ramifications of this philosophy or policy with regard to Caitlin?(Kay). But maybe also there are some real & pertinent differences in what constitutes 'best interests' when one is 60 rather than 24. ... Love, Rick."

14 February 1969: Kay down for something more than an hour this afternoon, after running into the snowbank at the north entrance -- largely because a) she was in too great haste lest she be seen by a passing motorist; b) she unwisely used her brake on the ice of the drive and thus slid. She brought along some marshmallow hearts, a pin-cushion meant for ornament, and once again a "Valentine card" of several pages -- nine in all, representing some time at work this morning to put it together, though it was not as elaborate as her Christmas card. Yet the same motivation, the same spirit informed it. Saw her leave with regret, as always.

Rikki in late tonight. Some talk of his position with General Electric, but more of the coolness between Chris and him. He said that one day not long ago Chris had come down to visit his mother, Evelyn, and had helped her with the dishes; suddenly, while Evelyn was in the adjoining room momentarily, she saw Chris getting into her car, and running out to ask wonderingly what was the matter, was told by Chris, "I just don't feel very sociable." Chris drove away forthwith, leaving Evelyn speechless. "I told her," said Rikki, "that now she had seen for herself just what living with her was like -- she did things like that all the time." He felt bad only for Michelle, he said. "She's such a pretty little thing." He remained until after midnight, reluctant to go.

15 February 1969: Aspects of this mellow day in Sac Prairie -- the staff kidding Joe Wipperfurth in the Post Office today, about his inability to satisfy Nancy Diehl Wipperfurth's sexual demands. "Why don't you go down on her?" I asked. Joe was shocked, at which Maurie Schaefer laughed heartlessly. -- Hugh absent from the harness shop; despite its being Saturday, he was undoubtedly in the canning factory, giving in to this obsession, as he has given in all his life to one obsession after another. -- The what-cheer song of the cardinal, heard in various places. -- A constant cawing of crows in the woodlot, heard from time to time throughout the day. -- Frank Utpatel up with a proof of an engraving for Caitlin.

With Forrest Hartmann and George Marx to Frenchy's for dinner, and then on into Madison to hear a concert by the Israel Chamber Orchestra. The program included Bach's third Brandenburg Concerto, Mozart's horn Concerto in E Flat Major, and Haydn's Symphony in F Major, in addition to two number of Jewish origin by Schütz and the contemporary, Mordecai Seter, and an encore by Hindemith, which was not so much music as tonal entertainment -- and as such was diverting and not unpleasant. A fine night, not cold, with stars and a high drift of cirrus clouds.

Rikki was at home when I reached there. We sat talking until well past midnight.

16 February 1969: To work today on The Woman in Cabin Nine, completing the seventh chapter and beginning the eighth. But the day was so fine, a day of thaw, with the sun out for most of it, that at two o'clock I went into the marshes for the first time this difficult winter, going in by way of the brook and walking leisurely down to Heiney's Crossing and back, enjoying the sunlight and the mellow thaw-sweet air. People were snowmobiling in the Upper Meadow, and also in the fields east of the Lenson farm, but created little disturbance in the wide areas of the bottoms. A light wind blew out of the northeast by north, and the activity of the birds was marked — crow caws, the songs of purple finces, the calls and songs of chickadees, a nuthatch's urgent sounds, a mallard quacking as it flew up from the brook at my approach, starling talk and imitation, the song of a cardinal. I observed that pussywillow catkings were well out on the pilot bush between the brook trestles, and showing here and

there in other places, though none so pronouncedly as those on the pilot bush. Saw in one place near the Triangle Lane Crossing the remains of a train-slain opossum. As a light cloud drift, quite shallow in depth, came sunward, saw a sun-dog to the right of the sun. Despite the snow cover, solid everywhere, though no longer very deep, the bottoms were pleasing to the eye for osier red and shades of mustard willows blending harmoniously on both sides of the trackbed I walked. Alder catkins were firm and stiff, as in December, having advanced not at all to the eye.

Betty Cass Willoughby on the telephone this evening. She had just come back from two months with her son Dick -- her oldest, now 40 -- in California, and needed some information about a literary agent he might use, and would soon again go into hospital for corrective surgery on her hip. "It's over two years since I broke it, and I've had nothing but trouble ever since."

17 February 1969: Kay out again, happily, for two hours of the most intense sexual pleasure imaginable -- and how urgent it was; the appetite, once aroused, becomes steadily more demanding and with every delay more pressing. We were both lost to it, and raged against the shortness of the time we could spend abed -- but two hours -- ending when we had scarce begun and wanted many hours more.

At 3:15 into the marshes by way of the brook. A fine, sunny day, with the temperature at 40° and the sun thawing, filling the air with thaw-sweetness. West of the Lower Meadow a great horned owl called, and east, along the tracks, a bronzed grackle gave forth its reedy call -- either a winter resident or a pilot bird up from the south. In one place along the tracks a cotton rat started up and ran across the snow down the embankment into the willows, and along the brook a hawk, evidently a redtail, though I could not be certain from my vantage point. After walking to the Triangle Lane Crossing, I returned to the car, got out the clippers, and clipped a path through to the Brook Trestle -- trimmed it, rather, for the path was there, and all that needed to be cut away were the overhanging branches and twigs that had grown in during the past season. And from there I went in to cut some pussywillows from the pilot bush, and a few sprigs of alder catkins, before going back to the car and back into Sac Prairie.

I happened to glance tonight at the wax rose and rose leaves which Kay had had to decorate my Valentine package when she brought it in last Friday, and saw for the first time the explicit phallic pattern she had made -- affixing the leaves to a thorn sticking up like an erect penis. The penis-vagina symbolism was crystal clear. When I commented on it over the telephone this evening, her bell-like laughter rang out. "I wondered how long it would take you to catch on to that," she said. I assured her that I had missed seeing it at once because she had brought it, that naturally the presence of the sun dimmed any lesser thing. "Oh, what a line!" she cried.

18 February 1969: From Cora Buehler this morning a letter of reminiscences, stirred by a fereading of Walden West. "I recall the Schoenfeldt Candy Shop that had a bell that tinkled when the door was opened. They sold two licorice whips for 1¢ and a chocolate baby for the same -- and if one were lucky -- there would be a penny in its fat tummy! No bargains like that up in old Jake Ochsner's Store! 'We'd walk a mile to save a penny!'"

Kay once more this afternoon, again for two hours of sexual delight, a marvellous two hours that came to an end all too soon. Thereafter, I to the marshes by way of the brook, the temperature once again ca. 40°. A mallard flew off the brook, crying -- not far away a cardinal sang -- and finch melodies rose from the willows. The sun was hazed in light nimbus clouds spreading up from the southwest. At 3:40 the train up; I watched it pass from the maples along the brook, west of the Brook Trestle, and counted 37 cars plus the caboose -- almost as long as yesterday's 45 cars going out. I cut some pussywillows for Effie Bachhuber, and took them over to her -- only to hear at once that "rumor" had it that Kay and I were having an "affair". Quite took the wind out of Effie's sails by retorting that this was the newest rumor, following my alleged "romance" with Lillian Moore, to whom I had spoken only once in my life, and the tale that Effie and I were now being married, since Harold was out of the picture! That this particular rumor was true I would naturally not admit, though I did admit myself flattered at the ready belief people had in my ability and readiness to make the scene with

Paul Meyer out for a little while tonight. He said that the old Woodman Hall was being set afire and burned down tonight as an exercise for the local fire department. He had brought out a new hiking map -- "Sauk Trails" -- put out by the county, pointing out that "Place of Hawks" - the "home of August Derleth,writer, poet, philosopher and naturalist" was to be found at Sac Prairie. Later this evening, driving past the site of the Woodman Hall, I found it in ruins, still smoking. I regretted its passing, for it loomed in memory as the place of the first public library, where Josephine Merk served as librarian, and recalled many an evening spent there, talking with her, Millie Pohlmann, Helen Hahn, Minnie Truckenbrodt, and Emmy Kuoni -- all gone now, and many an afternoon, come from swimming with Mark Schorer, to examine the new books and take out those already accessioned. The building contained bricks from the Haraszthy foundry -- perhaps the only such building left standing -- until tonight -- in Sac Prairie.

19 February 1969: A swamp owl's low cooing hoot woke me at four o'clock this morning, and I lay listening to it for a quarter of an hour before it fell silent or flew off. I located it in the lindens north of the house, the first swamp owl to call here for some time. I did not sleep again, my thoughts dwelling on Kay, and presently I rose and put down the first draft of a poem for her, before resuming the writing of The Woman in Cabin Nine.

Aspects of this day: the foraging of starlings in the few open places now showing in the snow cover, after four days of thaw -- the rising of Harvey Bender's construction company workshop and office just across the south fenceline, a circumstance that distressed Kay greatly, since she knew she would be "seen" coming to the house and thus "exposed", quite as if, typing for me et al, she did not have a sound reason for showing up here...-- the vibrance of crow-cawing in the woodlot and elsewhere -- the increasing songs of the cardinals.

Into the marshes at 12:45 this afternoon, again by way of the brook. A light northwest wind moved through the bottoms, and the mercury stood at 35° or slightly more. I walked down the tracks. Already the ties were beginning to show in many places; two more days of thaw would clear most of them. To the Triangle Lane Crossing, and from there in along the tracks made by the farmers come for hay -- Oswald Ballweg, most likely -- and on to the haybarn, still laden with hay, contrary to last winter, and sweet with the fragrance of the dry grasses. In the Lower Meadow the remains of a burning tree stump, fired not long ago by someone who had driven in to light it. Crows cawed constantly but at a distance, along the Wisconsin. I walked to the barn and stood there taking the sun and writing a poem for Kay -- today's second. Some light cumulus clouds rose out of the southwest presently, and crossed the southern heavens, occasionally shading the sun; so I walked back to the tracks and up, and paused to take the sun again at the Brook Trestle, until it was time to go back to Sac Prairie and to work.

Edgar Obma showed up this afternoon finally with the Moody Price portrait for Kay. I paid him and then with the children went up to the new Mulcahy house abuilding, finding Kay there and put the portrait into her car. Then into the house to take a look at its shaping, with Greg taking us around, and Kay and Lisa ultimately reappearing.

This evening the new moon, umbral, horns upward, shone but 3° below Venus, brilliant in the western heavens, with the moon yellowing to chrome and burnt umber at setting. Myself into the village to visit with Clara Merkel, who said that Minnie Meyer had left about $80,000 -- "But none of it went to Gillie Meyer," she added -- and bemoaned the loss of the old Woodman Building, the while speculating about the possibility of a new post office at that place; already the bricks and refuse of the burned building had been cleared away. Thence to the harness shop, to sit for 45 minutes with Hugh before going home to work. "What have I done with my life?" wailed Hugh -- but his question was purely rhetorical, for tomorrow morning he would report for work as usual at the canning factory.

20 February 1969: A hoar-frost morning, with a fog off the ground. The trees, bushes, even the weeds in the north field stood clothed in frost, not as thick as that on branches and reeds along the river, but nevertheless beautiful to see, though no sun shone to make it flash and glitter. Early to work on The Woman in Cabin Nine and to a new poem for Kay. The day spent largely at the desk, with but three telephone calls from Kay -- one this morning, two this evening.

21 February 1969: Into Madison at noon with April and Dennis. Myself directly to Stemp's to arrange for an exchange of Kay's typewriter, then back up State Street to meet April and Dennis at Victor Music, where I picked up a Poulenc Aubade and a Poulenc Concerto, which proved to be most pleasant and delightful music, romantic in a semi-modern vein, and the new Aretha Franklin record. So to Dr. Cooper for some dessication of a few warts, he telling me I must now without any further delay come down to my approved weight limit -- shaving off 16 lbs. in order to do it -- for he detected some fatty pigmentation changes under my arms. Thereafter to the Strand -- while April and Dennis went elsewhere -- to watch Zeferelli's Romeo and Juliet, which proved to be beautiful to look upon, though somehow Zeferelli's cutting of the Shakespearean lines made the climaxing scenes wildly incredible; the film, however, offered lavish costumes, pleasing to my eye, and a handsome young boy, much reminding me of Rick in one scene seen nude, while the actress playing Lady Capulet made me much to think of Kay some two score years hence, still a beautiful woman, as Kay will be. After the movie was done, met April and Dennis outside, and thence to Frenchy's for dinner -- which tonight cost $23 for the three of us, a sum that illustrates better than any other the advance of inflation in this country. So home and to work on the mail, with some brief interruption from Kay on the telephone. To her, too, a letter, the aftermath of the afternoon's film.

22 February 1969: To The Woman in Cabin Nine, completing the first three-fourths of the book, and assuring shipment by March 3, with Sunday a week hence for necessary retyping and revision of this first draft. ... Much cardinal song this morning, both in and out of the village, and Hugh reported hearing in the early morning hours the first mourning dove song of this year. .... Dennis to work all day, in the studio as well -- to which he confessed he had been looking forward -- as in the stock room and the basement. This evening George Marx out for my birthday dinner, marked two days earlier -- and Forrest Hartmann out for a little while, to bring a review of Murray Bloom's book on the legal profession, which came appropriately when I was at work putting copy together for the column of March 13th. ... Today's mail in with the first advance-review of The Wind Leans West from the Publishers' Weekly, and one considerably more favorable than the book merited -- "The result of this unlikely alliance (the continuing saga of the expansion to the West with a paean to the romance of banking) is surprisingly entertaining. ... Mr. Derleth has succeeded admirably in transmitting the real excitement of building the country in solid, enduring ways." I headed my own negative review of the book with this quotation, and thus had leeway to express my own conviction that this one of my novels is "from dullsville", in a column prepared for the Times of April 3. Completed book reviews through mid-March this evening. ... Forrest, having read one ofmy letters to Caitlin (Kay), seconded her opinion that they ought to be published, edited perhaps, but published, and in a limited and costly edition.

Young Bill Gissall of Wisconsin Dells came in this morning for an interview. A handsome youngster of 16, he was today at somwhat of a disadvantage, for he had lost one of his contact lenses, and the strain on his eyes was evident. He had come prepared with questions, some of which his teacher had given him; his mother had driven him down, and had then driven off, leaving him alone with me. Sat down to his questions, and in somewhat less than the hour I had promised to give him, he had finished, his Mother came for him, and away he went, considerably elated. He seemed to me slight of build for his age, but promised to be as tall as his father when mature.

23 February 1969: To Mass this morning, only to hear Msgr. Van Berkel launch into the same, trite old sermon about sins. He assured the congregation that what the psychologists, the columnists, the doctors, the social workers said, controverting the nonsense about sex &c taught by the Roman church was "all lies" -- the too weak rebuttal no one with even a modicum of intelligence any longer believed. It affected me with both sad amusement and a faint nausea. ... To work on The Woman in Cabin Nine, completing the tenth chapter and getting into the penultimate chapter before I finished the day's work.

Into the marshes at noon by way of the brook. The temperature was 40+°, with the sun in a reasonably clear heaven, and a light southwest wind blowing fitfully. The day was uncommonly warm, and much birdsong rang out -- of nuthatches, blue jays, purple finches, juncos, tree sparrows, starlings -- woodpeckers rattled and crows cawed steadily and vibrantly from along the western rim of the Lower Meadow. The air was sweet with the musk of thawing snow and ice, and water stood along the tracks, down which I walked almost to the oak grove, then turned back to the Mid-Meadow Trestle and sat there to take the sun and enjoy the fresh air until Hugh

came along. Then sat with him for a while, and afterward walked down to beyond the Triangle Lane Crossing, waiting while he cut his annual gathering of pussywillows and alders for the harness shop -- clipping some for Louella as well -- and thereafter with him leisurely up the tracks and out along the brook, reluctant to leave the bottoms, but with little choice in view of work yet to be done and of a visit to be made at the new Middle School for its dedication, though I had no intention of listening to the program arranged for the day. Stopped first at the school swimming pool and then walked to the Middle School -- around enough water from the thaw to fill the swimming pool -- and there talked with Gerry Eyler, John Oakeson, Merle and Lucy Hasheider, Kay Ganzlin, Mr. Eichstedt, Loretta Roessler, Billy Kirschner, many another until, over an hour later, we left so that I could get back to work.

Frank Utpatel up this morning, boasting of his ability to drink again -- as if totally unaware of the fact that drunkenness may bring on a fatal attack, as he has been told repeatedly. He seemed to me inordinately nervous, striding back and forth, unable to sit still for very long at a time.

Kay down tonight, with Helen Ann Wimmer Chalmers, Jimmy Wimmer's daughter, a tall blonde, blue-eyed, and attractive enough, though with a bad mouth, from which issued damning evidence of an almost total inability to think. She too was concerned with divorce, though it seemed to me she had no more reason for it than her husband did, he being totally self-centered, to hear her account of their lives together. I thought it must take a kind of madness to be able to live with her, for her ideas, such as they were, struck me as so wildly irrational, which must be maddening to live with. Much talk about the problem of black power, student riots (Helen thought Negroes should "have what they want" without having the vaguest idea what it is they want, and that students had a "right" to disrupt and destroy property), of her home situation (for which both she and her husband seemed to be equally at fault), und so weiter. I discovered myself profoundly disturbed at discovering one so mentally inept being one of Kay's "closest" friends. They did not leave until 1:15, long after the fire on the hearth went out.

24 February 1969: Woke to fog and a light snow falling. ... Myself 60 today, feeling no pain, but with increasing intimations of mortality. In the course of the day came Kay with a cake, far too rich for the good of my waistline, Kay Ganzlin to return some books, and at supper time, Hugo and Louella, she singing "Happy Birthday" -- as she had so often sung it over the telephone in duet with Will Schorer. Both Hugo and Louella stayed long enough to sample Kay's elegant cake, and also my Tullamore Dew, Irish whiskey sent for for my wine cellar, both pronouncing cake and whiskey excellent, though they had only a little of the whiskey, since I felt it too strong for someone unaccustomed to drink. Bestowed a trifle more on Frank Utpatel when he came in this morning, and he savored it for all that he drank it too fast.... A mild day with occasional bursts of sunlight. I waited in vain for delivery of The Wind Leans West, shipped this day a week ago, and in evening telephone Forrest Hartmann to ask that a complaint about the Briggs Company's service be made to the Public Service Commission, for in 30 years of business, their service is by all odds the worst.

25 February 1969: Up the railroad tracks from Heiney's Crossing early this morning, hearing crows, blue jays, and cardinals in song. The sun shone from among clouds, and the temperature stood at 30°. I walked up to the oak grove and back, and on the way home paused to walk in along the brook, where I heard a pheasant cock crowing, and a red-shouldered hawk screaming. .. At 11:45 once again into the marshes, via the brook this time. The temperature now 40°, a northwest wind blowing, and a trio of tufted titmice calling, together with one redheaded woodpecker, some blue jays, and two nuthatches. Walked slowly down to the Mid-Meadow Trestle observing that enlarging areas of the Lower Meadow were now free of snow, as well as the south slopes of the low Ganser hills. Home by one o'clock, waiting on the shipment of The Wind Leans West to arrive. The books finally came in at 3:20, with a nonchalant young driver who, when I inquired where they had been, said, flippantly, "Do you want me to tell you, or do you want me to lie to you." Told him not to trouble himself; the Public Service Commission would presently ask Briggs to explain, which subdued him immediately. Helped him to unload in part, then took a box of books into the house and made ready to run into Madison with Dennis at 3:50, there to deliver an order for Moseley's, and to take another for Saturday delivery. To the Simon House for dinner, where, though neither of us had any liquor nor dessert, the tab came to $14.00 for two dinners -- an indication of the increasing inflation in our time. .. So home, where Dennis brought boxes of books in until he was too tired to work any longer.

26 February 1969: The Falcon, which had to be left out of the shed last night because the books occupied its place, was frozen in this morning. It took me fifteen minutes to loosen it, by rocking, pushing, and starting it, which exhausted me for the day.

The morning mail brought in a letter from one Jan Cutler, of Kalamazoo, offering Arkham House the manuscript of Voices From Beyond The Grave. "These are taken from actual tape recordings of conversations with disembodied persons in various degrees of spiritual development. Called 'DEAD', they are people actually living in the next plane of existence. Sans physical bodies, they borrow my voice box in order to communicate with the living. My psychic phase, trance control, is very much under my husband's command. He can 'call up' the person with whom you wish to speak, and direct the conversation to bring out the desired points. ... We have written clearances from relatives of the contemporary speakers. Those ~~of~~ others, whose statute of limitations (sic!) has run out, are available universally. Including the 'unhaunting' of houses, my work is usually done in the light, therefore pictures would also be available. These show trance states, broadcasts, public speaking dates, classes, haunted houses and related subjects of interest. This book would teach the understanding of life's most important riddles by a process of enjoyable osmosis, and should appeal to serious questioners in all walks of life." -- Not being in the mood for assisting in the teaching of the understanding of life's most important riddles by a process of enjoyable osmosis, I was impelled to decline the highly dubious honor of publishing this masterpiece.

Kay down for two hours this afternoon -- unwell, with fatiguing anemia, and with widespread moniliasis, which, unhappily, I had myself carried to her mouth from her vagina after making love last week.

Into the marshes at three, going in along the now rising brook. The temperature again ca. 40°, and the sun shining out of a clear sky. A northeast wind blew steadily but without much strengt A pheasant cock crowed, a pileated woodpecker cried out, and blue jays talked now and then. Along the brook and in sheltered places green blades and leaves were beginning to show , and pussywillows were pushing out of their sheaths all along the embankment, though none as insistently as those on the pilot bushes near the brook. I walked leisurely to the Triangle Lane Crossing and there turned back, enjoying the sun and little troubled by the wind.

27 February 1969: A day given over almost entirely to work on a heavy morning mail, involving not only book orders, but also problems relative to permissions, sales of manuscripts, Morton Feiler's invasion of Scott Meredith's paperback domain with Arkham House books, und so weiter. The prospect, despite Dennis's being here to pack the 168 books ordered this morning, was so tiring that I found it necessary to lie down several times in the course of the day. ... Kay telephoned three or four times in the course of the day. Much discussion of our mutual madness. ... Wilbur Quandt in to visit briefly, to show me pictures of his six children. Now 48, I had almost forgotten him, though his presence animated my earliest short course class at the University of Wisconsin, now 30 years ago. ... A flock of wild geese up river today -- the season's first, and a flight deemed early by most watchers. .... Fritz out, weighing 266 lbs., contemplating an elopement ca. Christmas, currently suffering some sort of abdominal disorder, for which He had come home from Platteville for x-rays. He had been going to Tom Walsh, who had given him some palliatives, but finally sent him to a specialist in Madison.

28 February 1969: This day completed work on The Woman in Cabin Nine, in 137 pages. Little pleased with it; it lacked the comedy of its predecessor, though its mystery was a little deeper, less amenable to solution through the efforts of the three youngsters alone, and perhaps the less interesting therefore.

Geese again flying north today, harbingers of spring.

Into the marshes this afternoon at 12:45, despite a fresh 15-mile an hour wind out of the northeast, a disagreeable corner. The temperature ca. 35°. The brook, I saw, was still a little swollen, but not much, indicating that thaw-water went largely into the ground. Crows cawed, a pheasant cock flew from the brookside, purple finch song filled the air now and then, and horned larks sang in the Lower Meadow. The trackbed along which I walked into the sun, was now dry, save for a few puddles of water between ties here and there. I went down to the

Triangle Lane Crossing, and thence in to the old barn in the Lower Meadow, and there, out of the wind, I stood in the warm sun, my face tanning, reading poetry and watching the clouds, moving from east to west today -- how they came up compact, but expanded and lingered over the sun, and contracted moving away from it, all as lazily as on a summer day, ragged cumuli most of them, and not designed to remain long in the heavens. There I stood for an hour reading, while -- at 1:40 -- the train came up from Mazomanie, preceded by its mellow whistling for the crossings, making me to think of the old locomotive whistles and their infinite and mellow variety, pulling 13 cars and 2 cabooses -- for what reason I could not tell; I watched it pass framed in the reds and mustards of young maple trees, osiers, and willows. Presently, ventured successfuly to go up the Lower Meadow to the brook -- where no one had walked all winter west of the Brook Trestle -- and so made my way to the embankment and out, observing that the brook had risen noticeably at this hour, 2:15, and would perhaps rise a little more -- but not to any height approaching flood stage.

Rikki in tonight -- and for the night. He had had only this morning a letter from Chris telling him to "stay away" -- she did not want him there, for only a "Hi" and "Goobye" -- she had no sooner got used to his being gone than his coming upset her again. Envisioning their ultimate divorce, I told him by all means to keep the letter, at which he laughed, because Johnny Voll, and his mother had told him the same things. It affected me for more reasons than one, for it is perfectly clear to me that Rikki does indeed have his eye on April as a potential second wife, and his male beauty undoubtedly affects her as well, for she is young enough at 14 to be uncritical, in spite of such cautionary words as I have indirectly dropped. But from separation to divorce takes time, and from divorce to remarriage even more time, and April will have opportunity, if Rikki restrains himself, to mature in wisdom and judgment, so that her decision may be her own.

1 March 1969: Rikki today copied on the MM machine the 40 relavant pages of The Woman in Cabin Nine I wanted Carl Marty to read -- since he appeared on them -- and also my letters to Kay, 60 pages of them, mostly in single space, which added up, we estimated, to almost 40,000 words.

With Rikki today to Madison to deliver books to Nelson's and Moseley's, to shop briefly, to watch with some admiration and interest The Lion in Winter, which seemed perhaps more Katherine Hepburn's picture than Peter O'Toole's, for her diction was clearer than his, and his role demanded too much uproar of words and laughter than hers; the Henry II depicted by O'Toole differed markedly from that kind depicted by Richard Burton in Beckett; and each film turned and twisted the facts of history to suit its author's theme. From there to the Simon House, where had lunch for dinner -- the lesser meal because I had unwisely devoured an entire box of popcorn at the Cinema, and could eat no more, which was perhaps as well. Thence to Kohl's, and so home.

George out tonight, and Rikki, and with them spent a pleasant, relaxed evening making small talk, while Rikki worked at the copying machine.

Kay but twice on the telephone today, her own life crowding her romance a little, as might be expected.

2 March 1969: A fine, sunny day. Throughout the morning reread The Woman in Cabin Nine, which moved despite its comparative lack of action, but was nevertheless thin in substance.

Into the marshes at noon today by way of the brooks. The sky clear and sunny, with a light wind blowing randomly out of west and northwest, not strong enough to be cool to one clothed for winter. The temperature stood at 40°, and the sunlight was warmer. I observed directly on leaving the car the hay-sweet smell of the sunlit grass along the verge, from which the snow had now completely melted away. The brook was but a few inches higher than normal, in marked contrast to the high water of other springs; but the snow thawing assured a sinking way of most of the water. Nuthatches gave voice, and crows, and purple finches; I listened in vain for any spring voice -- of killdeer or redwing or bluebird, or even of wild geese honking northward. ... Down the tracks into the sun, and in along the Triangle Lane to the old barn on the Lower Meadow; and there I sat down in the now dried hay fallen from the barn, and read poetry, presently pausing to write another poem to Kay. Fugitive sounds fell constantly to ear -- a kind of muted humming that was endless, the faint noises of collapsing ice and snow,

of water dripping, of far crows, of starling mimicry at some distance; and among them I hoped to hear spring's first voice, but heard it not. I saw flies and spiders about, and at 1:35 heard a horned owl colloquy along the western rim. At two o'clock, having finished three books of poems, and written one, and having been exposed to the sun enough for one time, I went up meadow to the brook and followed it out to the Brook Trestle, hearing both west and north the sound of guns from those poor shoats whose idea of a walk in the marshes is to shoot at something, a target, or, preferably, something they can kill. At the Brook Trestle Ron Hering waited; he had come down at 1:30, and had sought me in vain; but now he walked down from the Brook Trestle to the oak grove with me and back up to the Spring Slough Trestle, passing two groups of Sunday walkers -- much to my surprise -- and catching sight of a foursome, two couples (the men of which carried guns), walking along the Triangle Lane into the Lower Meadow. So out along the brook and home, after almost three hours in the bottoms.

3 March 1969: A day filled with surprises. The morning mail brought in a royalty report from Prentice-Hall, whose advance against Vincennes was still unearned in the sum of $894 -- and lo! brought a check of $1710+. --- From Hollywood two telephone calls -- one from Paramount Pictures, one from Twentieth-Century Fox, both interested in seeing The Wind Leans West. I assured both callers that the novel was very dull -- which startled them -- so dull, in fact, that Hollywood might find it possible to improve it, contrary to the usual ruination of a good property that went on there, but nevertheless responded to their insistence by sending them books. --- From Mark Schorer a letter: "...let me say that I meant what I said on the telephone at brother Bill's remarkable Flamingo wake." I replied that I no longer knew what love was or meant, since it had so many faces; and that the trouble between us was not in that we were, as he had put it, "uninformed", but that each of us was flawed by flaws that have persisted -- I by possessiveness, he by an inability to give. I know it will not sit well with him.

Betty Meng's sad "boy-friend" visited her over the weekend, released for that purpose from confinement in the asylum -- presumably Mendota. I saw them down town twice in the course of the day, walking hand in hand, she striding forward somewhat in grim defiance, he shambling at her side, looking like a not quite mature ape, a pathetic couple eking out of life some tenuous grains of happiness. What a wild look she wears on occasion! And how little softness remains in her face that once was lit by the smiles of youth! She seems to me to reflect all too poignantly what life can do and does to many men and women who emerge unprepared for its realities from childhood.

Kay came to spend three wonderful hours with me this afternoon, all abed, in increasingly pleasurable sexual indulgence, which mounted steadily the longer we were about it, and for both of us reached a new and heightened plane of awareness, incredibly. Later, at sundown, I walked the tracks from Heiney's Crossing, marvelling at the experience of those hours, as if it had not been possible. A skein of wild geese going north, and the songs of cardinals fell to ear, but no other sound.

4 March 1969: This morning briefly up from Heiney's Crossing, but heard no spring voice. Kay on the telephone. She had had the same reaction to mine after yesterday's pleasures. "I'm going out of my mind, I want you so much" -- but this certainly is a purely sexual reaction, and to be expected from a sexually sensitive woman too long starved for love and sexual pleasure.

Into the marshes at 12:15 today. At the Brook Trestle I stood offside while the train went up -- the diesel pulling 28 cars and the caboose. The brook today more markedly risen, but still well down from its banks. The temperature 42°, and a light northwest wind blowing. The sun shone among but few clouds, while I walked to the Triangle Lane Crossing and in along the lane to the barn on the Lower Meadow, where I sat in the sun for an hour and a half, reading poetry, before going up meadow to the brook, out along the brook to the embankment, and up to the Spring Slough Trestle before going home. The ice on the Spring Slough still firm, without a break. A redshouldered hawk flew along the slough at treetop height. No spring song came to ear, though crows, cardinals, purple finches, and chickadees gave voice throughout the afternoon.

With April up the tracks from Heiney's Crossing after sundown, listening in vain for any spring voice. A skein of geese -- not more than two dozen birds -- moved toward the lakes from the river, and the pussywillows were beginning to look spectral in the twilight.

Saw again today, unmistakably, a peregrine falcon, a handsome bird whose feathers shone with a bluish sheen in the sun. I had seen it three times previously, swooping in from the woodlot; today it flew out of one of the trees along the south line fence, low enough to catch the sun on its back. It gratified me to see it, as aware as I was of the rarity of this magnificent bird, fallen victim in great numbers to the biocides killing all wildlife, spread so wantonly by the greed of man.

5 March 1969: In along the brook this morning, while the rime of frost still held to bushes and grasses, hearing cardinal song, the melodies of purple finches, crow cawing -- but no spring bird in call or song. The air crisp and fragrant, and the rising sun promising more warmth, more thaw. In the village mourning doves keened. I saw Hugh go by, and went around to the harness shop to sit briefly there. The factory was not operating today, and there was a possibility it might shut down. "What will I do then?" he baked rhetorically, which stirred my impatience at once, as if he did not already have enough orders for furniture to keep him occupied five years or more.

Kay painted walls in the new house today, and mourned her inability to come out. Despite missing her, I was not so sure that her inability to come was entirely unhappy, for the constant indulgence in sexual pleasure certainly makes both of us less objective, so that we cannot see clearly, either ourselves, or our situation as now and in the future; and the marriage that now seems so desirable cannot rest on sex alone. Separation cannot but make us more objective. Late tonight she telephoned again to say that she was certain that she would ultimately divorce Greg, but less certain that she would ever marry again. But we must, above all, remain lovers, no matter which decision she made! She was on the telephone almost two hours.

In mid-afternoon today with Dennis and April to Hilldale, where I bought tickets for War and Peace, Russian version -- in two parts of three hours each, for the following Tuesdays, and shopped a little before going back to Sac Prairie. Paused at the Pines en route to pick up some shrimps and shrimp sauce. Spent the evening at work, setting April to entering Arkham House books.

6 March 1969: Woke to a fresh, wet snow cover of just under an inch, and a temperature of 29°. Juncos and other small birds foraged along the walls of the house, where the snow had already melted away. The snow faded soon -- at first from the roads, then the verges, then the fields and lawns. ... In the village more trees -- all diseased elms -- came down today. Mourning doves keened, and crows' vibrant caws rang out all day long, though clouds held to the sky for most of the day, allowing only a little sunlight to look through from time to time. ... Effie Bachhuber enplaned for Washington, D. C. this morning to have her gall-bladder removed under David's eye. Telephoned David's home this evening to learn how she had come through the journey, which she had viewed with some apprehension, and talked with her. She had taken the trip very well. ... Kay on the telephone twice today, and once this evening.

Into the marshes at one o'clock, walking in along the brook. A chill northeast wind blew, but only at eight miles an hour or so. I observed in one place, where a branch of willow dipped into the risen brook, a perfect, striated circle of foam around the branch in a little eddy. It made me to think of the cross-section of a treetrunk. Two tufted titmice carried on a conversation up the tracks, and in the brook cress was greening and growing. I walked down to the Mid-Meadow Trestle and back, and heard constantly, near and far, the sound of aeroplanes -- and thought of the one afternoon plane that went over when I lay on the hills to read and write almost 40 years ago; and reflected again on the proposition that "progress" and change make one ready to die rather than surrender all the touchstones one knew in one's youth.

Myself very tired today, as yesterday, unaccountably, though I began to suspect that the medication to keep my blood pressure down was too much for me, and determined to omit it for a day tomorrow. Spent this evening writing at my journal, at book reviews to run into April, and talking to Kay on the telephone -- in a miasma or dream or daze of love that runs like a freshet wild through all my being.

7 March 1969: Aspects of this windy March morning of sun and cloud -- Bennie Henn at the Standard Station solemnly asserting "It takes a thunderstorm to knock them frogs out. I remember one night we was milking, and a storm come up, and right after that storm we heard them frogs over in the pond the first time that spring. Oh, now I'm living in town, I sure do miss them frogs!" -- Ione Gasser at the Farmers & Citizens Bank: "I fed so many birds this year. I had two grouse, a lot of quail, some evening grosbeaks -- and I counted as many as twenty cardinals."

Mourning doves, crows, and cardinals gave voice this morning -- the doves and cardinals singing their spring songs, the crows cawing with carrying vibrance in the woodlot, where they may have discovered a hawk, to judge by their insistence and their numbers.

Late this afternoon with Karl and Kay Ganzlin to the Pines for dinner, and then on to the Memorial Union for a concert by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, directed by William Steinberg with singular grace and ease, and, apart from an occasional stamped foot, no histrionics. The concert consisted of but two symphonies, both favourites -- Brahms's third in F Major, and Mahler's first in D Major; but, favourite as the Brahms always was, tonight I had a preference for the Mahler, which more exactly suited my mood, heavy with brooding about Kay and the obsessive affair. ... Some talk with Jimmy Wimmer, grown overfat, his wife, Mary Alice, with Walter and Mrs. Rideout, with the French teachers, those delightful old ladies from Paris, who were struck with my tailored suit and black Nehru and said I looked "so elegant", with John Bailey, who was ushering, and said this was "my first symphony concert." He wore, said Kay, the "in" spectacles, gold-rimmed, looking 1850ish. Rode home by the light of the rising moon, close to its third quarter, with Jupiter not far away, brilliant above and to the right. The night cold for March.

8 March 1969: The temperature 14° this morning, the sky clear and wintry, with frost on the pane. In the west the gibbous moon pale and Jupiter dimming.

Dennis out to pack books, managing to work fast enough so that he did all his work this morning and did not need to come back in afternoon. Directly after 12:30 with George Marx to the brook, and in along it, and down the tracks almost to the Wisconsin Heights, taking the sun, and there turned, walking leisurely, facing a north wind on the way back -- a long walk of three miles or so, long for so early in the season. George waxed indignant about Fr. Heitke's being persuaded by the "Education Committee" of the Parish Council at St. Aloysius to abandon teaching religion to the moppets and teach the parents instead, relying on them to teach their children -- a fatuously idealistic decision, wholly unreal, which I thought an illustration of the folly of assuming that the parish council, composed of "average" Catholics, had the combined intelligence to make any such decision, though George's indignation, I suspected, stemmed rather more from the fact that his hegemony over the moppets of his class, which fed his ego, would be terminated, than it did from any principle in the matter. Of birds heard cardinals, mourning doves, a great horned owl, chickadees, crows -- but no spring voice, none at all, though we caught sight of a marsh harrier flying among the trees toward the meadow-marsh abutting the highway east of the tracks.

Some time in mid-afternoon, Mother, sitting before the television, had a minimal cerebral accident -- her second; but it was only when she tried to get up and found herself dreadfully dizzy and nauseated, that she realized she was ill. Paul Bishop, coming in later, decided that her sense of balance had been affected, and that it would very probably be rectified in a few days at most, and decreed that she must stay in bed. Kay had come in, meanwhile, and was now somewhat reluctant to make love; but, Mother once settled in bed, and Dr. Bishop gone without having seen her car in the garage, I persuaded her to come to bed, and we spent an hour making love, for which she was ready after five days of continence, for she came to four climaxes readily enough, and would have come to more had time permitted. She was somewhat disturbed to be told that Kay Ganzlin suspected that the object of my passion was "Kay Price" but it could not matter. After she had gone, I looked in on Mother again; she rested, still dizzy, but less nauseated -- then telephoned Hildred and Aunt Gene, and waited on the arrival of George Marx, who came after seven, sat for a while with Mother -- though she was little in the mood to listen to his grievances (which I had heard along the tracks hours before), and then came upstairs to spend two hours or so before I took him into Sac Prairie and home. A chill night for March, with the mercury at 17°.

9 March 1969: Betty Meng down town this morning, sitting at the round bar of Romie's Dinette, smoking a cigarette and reading the morning paper, her hair astraggle down her shoulders, her face intent and severe, alone, paying no attention to other breakfasters. She had evidently had a cup of coffee, no more.

Mother somewhat improved this morning, with a better color, less dizzyness and nausea. Got her up at three this morning, and April saw her up again later in the morning. The ever-present danger of successive cerebral accidents could not be overlooked, however, though she spent the day in bed in reasonable comfort. Hildred, George Marx, and Aunt Gene telephoned for a report on her progress in the course of the day.

At one o'clock in along the brook to walk down the tracks to the Triangle Lane Crossing to the barn, where I sat on the spill of hay and read Gray Burr's first collection of poems, a refreshing book indeed. The day chill, with a temperature not far above 32° -- no more than 35° at most -- and a northwest wind blowing; but the sun shone out of a cloudless sky, and at the barn the temperature was certainly higher, protected from the wind, and reflecting the sun's warmth. Of bird voices, very few, and none of spring. Going out an hour later, I met Jimmy Schmitt and Harry van Walen -- a swarthy Dutchman, who certainly had some East Indian blood in him to account for his color, his paternal ancestors having certainly somewhere married native East Indian stock. They were cutting pussywillows, and, having gathered enough, walked along with me, following the brook across the Trestle and out to where their car was parked behind mine. So home to read and write.

From his pulpit -- i. e., the steps before the choir loft -- the Rev. Wilson Bixler this morning resigned his charge after 28 years, to return to his native Indiana where Marie, his wife, is buried. It saddened his congregation to see him go, for, though a singularly unimaginative man, he was an excellent man of the cloth, for he willingly assumed obligations his fellow priests and ministers shunned -- visiting the sick of all denominations, and he satisfied his congregation's need for religious leadership, though he was depressingly dull as a preachers, relying upon scripture quotation and explicating upon the quotations in place of any real sermon, for the most part. Since his wife's death he walked the streets by day and night, growing thinner and older, his wife's death a blow for which he found not enough comfort in his religion.

10 March 1969: Effie Bachhuber underwent surgery at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington this morning for the removal of her gall-bladder. David called in the course of the day to say that all was well.

At Witwen's this morning, when I went around to the cash register to remove a day-old charge slip, I happened to see a check signed "Sophia Meng" which the bank had returned to Witwen's because of an "improper signature" -- which meant, simply, that Betty had forged her mother's name to a check: a pathetic one of but $2.00, which Sophie would certainly be forced by Betty to declare good.

An unseasonably cold day -- with not one of the customary spring birds in at this date to be seen or heard: no redwing, killdeer, robin, bluebird, song sparrow, lark -- making this a late spring, as I suspected it might be. The day began with a temperature of 10° and did not warm to more than 30°, with a brisk north wind blowing.

Kay down for two hours abed, bringing me a studio photograph of herself which I promptly stood up on the desk the moment she left at three, the portrait of as beautiful a woman as I have ever known, her beauty exceeded only by that she reveals in ecstasy. Our passion today was so intense that I managed to burst a small blood-vessel in my temple, and thought grimly that this might well be an augury of things to come. I could easily imagine the hilarious comment that might be occasioned by my death while at loving.

To Naomi Meyer's high-ceilinged house on Ray Street -- two or three doors from Kay's home -- to have a letter from L'Herne's editor Francois Truchaud translated, though I had pretty well read and interpreted it correctly. Much mutual scorn and laughter for the permissiveness in education and society, for the uselessness of some of the "co-orinators" at the high school, und so weiter.

The village buzzed today with talk about local divorces in the making -- Fifi Nolden's finally, after many public amours and the haunting of local bars, left her mother-seeking husband, who had condoned her conduct for years; Jerry Jonas left his Janie, who had become even more Ronnie Meyer's; the long-suffering Cleo Coenen and the habitually adulterous and perverted Shimmel had parted, living separately, she to seek divorce at last. This will be the common talk of the village for a long time to come. What one heard most, however, was the wonder of how Fifi's husband, "Bubbie", and Cleo Coenen had been "able to stand it for such a long time -- and only now go for divorce?" -- which was only half accurate, for "Bubbie" had not gone for divorce, she had, he would willingly have continued in the same cuckolded position because he saw in Fifi rather more mother than wife, and he had tended to treat her as a mother for most of their married life.

11 March 1969: Dreamed in the early hours of this morning, that I had to hurry downstairs to wish Dad a happy birthday -- a curious coincidence, since this would have been his 86th. ... Another cold day. Behind the harness shop purple finches sang very pleasantly, making a considerable concert. ... To order roses for Effie this morning, and some new publicity printed.

Kay down for two hours abed again this afternoon. She saw that I had put up the large portrait photograph of herself that she had brought down yesterday, and put some red roses in front of it, three of them, and remarked that it made her think of my putting flowers on the altar of my "own Virgin Mary". I thought "virgin" an inappropriate word, though to a large extent, it is undeniably true, her mind continues virginal. She gave herself again this afternoon deeply and with great and manifest pleasure to sex, and climaxed half a dozen times, with considerable abandon.

Late today, at 6:45, with Dennis and the children to Hilldale, where sat through three and a half hours of the Russian version of War and Peace, the first half of this long picture, which was well cast, save for Natasha; for all its action, the film demonstrated the Russian propensity for the hero as man of ideas. On the way home, as Sirius was setting and Vega rising, watched a fine display of northern lights -- band, ray, and curtain at last, one formation blending into another. Home just past midnight.

12 March 1969: A cold but clear day, unseasonably cold, with the mercury not over 30° and a north wind, light and fitful, blowing. There was but little thawing. At morning only a duo of mourning doves called, and a cardinal sang -- no more. In the course of the day the pleasant songs of purple finches, the low-keyed mimicry of a trio of starlings along the south line-fence. And at sundown, when I paused for a little while and walked up the tracks at Heiney's Crossing, one would have thought that Rachel Carson's Silent Spring had come to pass, for no single bird voice fell to ear -- a circumstance that has never occurred before on this date, not alone because of the lateness of the spring, the persistence of cold nights inhibiting migration, but because of the murder of millions of birds of all kinds by the wanton use of pesticides.

Kay down for scarcely more than half an hour this afternoon, but so intense was our mutual desire that we were at once abed, and in that little time she climaxed twice, violently; and later was on the telephone twice, for almost an hour each time, caught like myself in such a web of passion and love that there is no escape from it. Later, when I had occasion to stop in at the new house abuilding to talk with Greg about the building of the Arkham warehouse, I was struck with his unawareness, his essential innocence; at 30, he is still a boy, ambitious, his principal goal in life to succeed -- he spoke of his plans (for more houses, each to be lived in for a little while), of his eventual enrichment, but said very little of Kay or of her possibly reactions at being moved from one house to another, innocent of life, of the nature of women, and I felt an anguishing surge of guilt, as if I had plundered his heart, even as I knew that by his neglect of her -- even now it was 6:50, and he knew he "maybe ought to be home for supper" for which Kay waited in this fashion night after night -- he had left the way open for someone to reach her, and if I had not done so, another man would.

Discovered tonight that the "packing" that had so puzzled me about the socket of the night light over the radio was not "packing" at all, but hundreds of sizable moths that had flown

down into it and died there over the years that the light has stood there. ... Sat with Hugh for a while in early evening in the harness shop, he very tired after working in the factory, completely unable to leave that mother-substitute and resume his working at furniture in the shop, a man surely and determinedly deteriorating toward senility. I was so rapidly depressed at his spinelessness, his willing assent to this decay, that I left sooner than I would ordinarily have done so.

13 March 1969: Again this morning, but mourning doves and cardinals in voice. A cloudy warming day, but still far too cold for this time of the year, but a week from the equinox. And too still! At one o'clock I went in along the brook, and stood for a while at the Brook Trestle, taking what sun came from among the fast-moving clouds, and read; but the wind was cool out of the southwest, and the only sound I heard was the twittering of juncos or purple finches. I walked a little way down the tracks, and presently rode to Heiney's Crossing and to walk a way up the tracks from there, but there was no spring voice to be heard, none whatsoever, not even the honking of wild geese or the cawing of crows. ... Some snowflakes fell in the course of the day, most of which I spent at home, catching up on correspondence, talking with Kay on the telephone (close to three hours!). Dennis out to work tonight, both in the packing room and in the studio, after which I took him home, he depressed and grousing because his father would still not permit him to own a car, and used his own so much that Dennis seldom had it. A stupid man, who has already alienated his son.

14 March 1969: Another unseasonably cold day, though the sun shone for most of it, and the slow thaw continued. A chill southwest wind blew, laden with moisture. I went into the marshes at one, and walked a little on the tracks, and stood at the Brook Trestle to read, hearing only the voice of a chickadee, none other. But the pussywillow catkins were showing now on virtually every willow but the very latest to come each season -- there was no other usual sign of spring: no green along the brook save of cress in the water, no frog to be seen, no spring voice to hear -- making this the latest spring within memory.

Forrest Hartmann out this evening for a little while. He said he was representing Jerry Jonas in the divorce action Janie had brought against him -- it was not, as gossip had it, that he had gone with the children. She alleged the customary "cruel and inhuman treatment" and Jerry did not deny that he had beaten her,"knocked her down and slapped her around," and Forrest's sympathies were, nevertheless, with Janie; he said he was "pushing for a reconciliation," but Jerry would not hear of it, however much Janie might reconcile. The burr of Janie's adultery with Ronnie Meyer was too much for him. But the fault, as was clear to Forrest, was mutual, for it was clearly Jerry's sexual incompetence that had driven Janie to look for other satisfaction. Jerry was not likely to admit this negative flaw, nor to admit either that it balanced her adulteries.

Rikki in for the night. Chris had telephoned only an hour before he came, to talk about her plans -- not fully formulated as yet, though she did not intend as of now "to go for a divorce; Rick wants me to, but I continue to hope we could get together again," and she wanted to know, somewhat cagily, whether "Rick goes out?" -- i. e., with other women. I told her I did not think so.

15 March 1969: Rikki up early and off to Dodgeville -- which he made at breakneck pace, in 35 minutes. ... Kay on the telephone for an hour this morning. She had received the letter Forrest had addressed for me, to keep a variety of script passing under the postman's eye; she thought it "the best -- but a little sad." What intrigued her above all was some evidence of my "slipping control" -- which touched me, for she sustained a dream of controlling our married life, if we were ever to marry, though she lacks both the discipline and the organization to control.

Mourning doves sang at dawn, but the day and the night continued cold. At sunrise, the mercury stood at 10°; in the day it rose to 42°. I went into the marshes along the brook at one o'clock, under a cloudless sky. A piliated woodpecker worked away at a dead tree along the brook near the trestle, but hearing me approach flew off protesting; a chickadee sang its phe-be-be song out of the Upper Meadow; and crows cawed from time to time along the western woods -- but there was no other sound of birds to be heard. I made my way along the brook

19 September 1968: Les Hicks said down town today that one evening recently when he and his wife had been driving through the Genz Pocket trying to spotlight deer, his spot had caught a wildcat in the middle of Norman Genz's alfalfa field. Though I took it -- coming as it did from Les, whose imagination in such matters is unconfined -- with a grain of salt or two, it was not impossible or even unlikely, for all that none had been reported as calling in that vicinity in recent months.

Aspects of this day in the village: -- the reddened leaves of the hard maple trees, both along Madison Street and in the Freie Gemeinde Park have begun already to fall -- in some gardens asters now at their height of blossom, nasturtiums beginning to fade -- April brought to my desk perhaps the last of the nasturtiums from her garden. -- an increasing number of elms marked for taking down as a result of Dutch elm disease, altering the face of Sac Prairie.

Stopped at Ferbers today to learn that Aunt Gene had had her cataract operation yesterday morning, and had made a good recovery, after some initial pain. "She's in the same room I was," announced Uncle Lou. Cousin August Ferber there, grossly fat, and obviously -- as I saw his plate at table -- doing little to reduce. His face was florid, his eyes bloodshot.

20 September 1968 --

Pat Kieckhefer and her sister Allene up for lunch and a walk at the Ferry Bluff. "You've never looked better," said Pat, "Could you perhaps have met someone at your class in Rhinelander?" They saw, too, On the Telephone -- one of the poems to Kay -- on the desk, and came to the correct conclusion. I told them about her, and Allene, who had gone through a divorce, suggested Las Vegas as the answer should Kay ever summon the courage to seek a divorce, which I doubted she would. Walked from the Ferry Bluff landing to the Moely sugar bush and back, drinking in the fragrance of the woods and the swollen streams and sloughs.

Kay in this afternoon, late, bringing a record --Slip Away ("our theme song") -- and I put to her at once the result of the week's agonizing appraisal: if indeed she intended eventually to seek a divorce, she could go to Las Vegas, establish a six weeks' residence, I would give her enough money to do so, without her making any promise of marriage; and, if she had decided by the end of that period, to marry me, I would fly out, marry her there, and then go on to England for a honeymoon. She was so taken aback that she could not speak for five minutes.

21 September 1968: Kay on the telephone this morning for some time, before Dennis and I set out for Madison and the bus station to meet Peter and Gail Ruber. Peter somewhat more plump, Gail stocky, with an interesting face framed in blonde-red hair; she possessed a certain self-assured masculinity that was not displeasing, did not chatter, but spoke only when she had something to say. Before going home, I had time to go to the Perfume Shop to buy some Majolica pearls to commemorate the first time I kissed kay, and to order made a bracelet in gold, set with opals, to mark the month-day of our first time of making love. Thence swiftly home, where I took the Rubers to lunch at the Flamingo. Much talk of The Three Straw Men, and Peter's plans for it -- publication in June of next year, und so weiter. He conceded on the title, which he had said ought to be made more mysterious, and I on all the other changes Gail had suggested. Their plans concentrated on library bindings, and they meant to publish it together with Marcia Masters' Grandparp Flew In, so that they might have two junior books to offer to librarians.

After lunch they went to the Ganser Motel to rest, while I returned to the desk. Rikki, who had flown in to get his "442" and drive it back to Ft. Belvoir, came out -- slender and self-conscious about his short hair, now beginning to grow out again -- chiefly to talk about Kay, who was presently on the telephone talking herself, first to me, then to Rikki, and at some length; I gathered that their conversation, in turn, was about me, hearing occasional lines from Rikki's end -- "How many times do you find an August Derleth?" he said once-- I gathered that Kay was at her curious probing once again. Afterward more talk with him -- he knew very well how far our love affair had progressed, for he knew me well enough and my infatuation with Kay had obviously reached the stage of sexual involvement. In the midst of our conversation Kay telephoned again. "Will you two please stop talking about me! I can feel it way up here." Rikki off again after two hours or more, to rest a little before beginning the long drive to Ft. Belvoir -- 900 miles or so.

RESUME

Kay Price Mulcahy
100 Jefferson St., Sauk City, Wis. 53583 Phone 608-643-3?4?
Age 35, female, married, one child, So. Sec. No. 396-40-4981

I graduated in the upper quarter of my Prairie du Sac High School class. I went to Eau Claire State University(now a part of the U. of Wis.) for two years and disliked college very much. I was homesick, removed from a sheltered life, too far to commute to see family and friends. I had no sense of self, no awareness of my talents or interests and only knew I enjoyed my English courses and nothing else. I didn't want to be like my English professor, a sour old maid, and I didn't see what a degree in English could possible by used for other than teaching. In 1964, a woman became a nurse or a teacher. I chose marriage as the way out.

Slowly I started to mature and to develop interests and talents I never realized were possible. I took classes at M.A.T.C. in Madison in creative writing and interior decorating. I started to do free-lance writing and eventually got a job working for the late August (1973-77) Derleth. I learned a lot from him about writing, proofing, and editing. I acted as his social hostess at large gatherings of VIP's including congressmen, U. presidents,the governor, famous authors, etc. I attended a modeling class taught by Miss N.J. of 1954. I modeled for two years for Simpson's Women's Store '66-'67, Madison's most exclusive store at that time.

I started to get articles and poems published in newspapers and magazines and I became active in the Wis. Regional Writer's Association. I have been writing and getting published for almost 12 years. In 1971, I judged for the local Jr. Miss Pagent and was asked to tutor the winner for state competition in 1972. I helped start a local theater guild and had the leads in two productions, working in all aspects of theater work from 1965-69.

I spent a winter in San Diego and worked for Publisher's Ink, an educational publishing company responsible for developing college by newspaper courses. I worked on that project plus others with professors from the U. of Calif. in La Jolla. (1974)

Together with two friends, I started an Arts and Crafts company called, Craftiques, Inc. We designed, created and experimented with various art forms and ultimately sold them at art fairs or through the mail.

I took up fencing as a hobby and started to work as an advocate counselor for Battered Women of Dane County. (1977-78)

I travelled all over the U.S., Mexico, England, France and Wales, I continue to travel frequently. I have developed a real interest in history as a result of my travels and I continue to pursue knowledge of it. I have attended writer's conferences for 11 years all over the country, having studied under the finest authors in the world.

I am active in community projects and just recently was appointed to the Board of Directors for the International August Derleth Society. I am an active member of the Wis. Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters.

I am a mother of a teenage daughter and I had two teenagers as foster children for a year. My elderly parents live near by and my mother requires much time because she just had two open heart surgeries.

There is no end to my interests and reading tops my list. I have tried to self educate myself. I am returning to get my degree because it can fit in around my writing schedule and other responsibilities.

References for my character and personality would include:
Edna Meudt, the midwest's most respected and talented poet, Dodgeville, Wi.
Herb Kubly, winner of the Nat'l Book Award, and U. English Prof. at Racine, Parkside, and the dining out critic for the Milwaukee Journal. 5000 Graceland Blvd., Racine, Wi.

Comments made by Kay Mulcahy April 17, 1982
Concerning Her relations with A.D.

Kay & A.D.

Mentioned in one of his books that he first saw her in church. She can remember taking communion and seeing him sitting in back row peering around, almost standing up to see who was there. She saw that he was staring at her and thought what a fresh person he was, living up to his reputation.

Her mother showed her where he had mentioned her in his Cap Times column that he had seen the attractive Kay Price serving at Jimmy's Dell Bar in the Dells.

In 1968 her husband suggested that she develop interests of her own. She was always interested in writing so she signed up to attend the U.W. Rhinelander School of writing. Her mother took care of Lisa while she attended one week during the summer. She did not enroll in class taught by Derleth, although she remembers seeing him.

In 1969 she attended for two weeks and enrolled in his class. She said nothing the first week, sitting in back and watching him in action as he enthralled the older ladies. He loved to stir them up by telling them that drying morels smelled like human semen. Or how he and Marcia Lee Masters while they were engaged in early forites would make love for two weeks then she would go home for her period and return two weeks later for more love-making. Nobody talked back to him as he was so intimidating. During the second week she stopped after class, he was reading a theme, he looked up when he sensed her presence, and she said to him, "Are you bi-sexual?" and with that left. He did walk her down town, danced with her one evening much to the consternation of Dorothy Litersky who was very jealous since she was in love with Aug secretly. (Kay digressed to tell about her conversation with Litersky two years ago. Litersky was writing a biography of A.D. and ends the book by blaming K.M. for his death--the undue stress placed upon him by their love affair. K.M. said Litersky was never aware of the autopsy report which indicated that scar tissue from infections had been the cause of death and made the heart burst.) He invited her to ride back to Sauk City with him (he had a driver). She accepted--he was amazed by the amount of clothing she had, not realizing that in those days she was a clothes horse. They had a delightful conversation on the way back, there was a spark, she knew and he also that here was something special. He had been in love during his life with seven other women, but this was the real thing. He had the driver drop him off first and then K.M. As she took things out of the car, she was trying to think how she could arrange to see him again, maybe she could "accidentally" leave something in the car, but decided against it. Shortly after she got in the house he called her saying that he had accidentally taken her travel iron, did she want to come by and pick it up? Next day she went out, the spark was still there, continued their talking, she not being intimidated by him--giving back a jibe for every one he threw at her. He gave her an arm-load of books, ones that he had received from publishers for use in his book review column in the Cap Times. When she got home she realized that she had forgotten the iron, so she called and went out again the following day. He gave her some more books (he was always suggesting ways or books for self-improvement), the iron and a kiss as she left.

a few days later
Shortly afterwards a package arrived in the mail. She opened it and there were ear rings and brooch, no note. (K.M. said jewlery was old fashioned--she would never wear it) The next day another small package arrived, post-marked Madison and again ear rings and brooch, and no card. Same thing the next day. She finally called him, asking if he had sent them and why. It was his way of saying she was special to him.

Soon after she received on consecutive days a single rose, delivered by florist. When she called him, he said that was his way of telling her that he loved her. She, only 23 at the time didn't know what to do. Here she was a married woman, small child, family living in the area, really attracted by him what should she do?

Because she was married they had to be very secretive about their meetings. One time they decided to go to Madison. She was driving and she insisted he crouch in the backseat covered by a blanket which was quite a feat because of his size. They crossed the bridge and were headed up the hill, he vehmently protesting, she turned and glanced back and then turned forward to see a school bus stopped with kids getting off, she slammed on brakes and veered to left. A.D. was thrown up against the front seat, the blanket coming part way off. She stopped the car just as they reached the bus driver who glared down at them. She wondered what he thought then he saw the hulk in the back seat. A.D. introduced her to opera, classical music, art in Madison

They would often go to Madison to the movies, shopping or to eat. The Pines in Middleton was one of A.D.'s favorite places to eat because of unlimited salad and shrimp cocktail which were reasonable in price.

But most often they rendezvoused at Place Of Hawks during the early afternoon when Lisa was in nursery school or kindergarten. Rose Derleth, A.D.'s mother was aware of what was happening, did not approve the idea of marriage because of the earlier failure of the Sandy marriage. It was ok if he wanted to sleep with her, but no more. Kay said she helped Rose as much as she could.

Almost from the start A.D. wanted to marry her. He urged her to get a divorce from Greg and marry him. He even went as far as to start arrangmeents in Las Vegas for her to go there for the divorce. At some point in time Kay broached the subject to Greg, but he said no. Greg went to see Aug. In fact, she says that Greg saw Aug more often then she did. Aug became a father-figure to him, making up for the lack of a father in his life. Urged Greg to give a divorce but when he refused Aug tried to help Greg overcome his social & emotional problems.

Greg did find out about her carrying on and confronted her. She admitted it, saying she loved A.D. and wanted to marry him. In the meantime A.D. had published CAITLIN over her protests. She thought it was a private matter and should not be shared with anyone else. Finally he promised that he would not sell any in Wisconsin and she yielded. But in time A.D. became so confident or something that he took a couple copies to a local store (it may have been in Madison). Donna a neighbor woman of Kay's who had a crush on Aug became suspicious. She apparently got a copy of the book. One day Greg came out to his car parked downtown and found a note attached to the steering wheel and a copy of the book. The note said something like this, "You proably will be interested in reading this, it may tell you something about your wife that you don't know". Although not having firm proof Kay and A.D. were sure it was Donna. So Aug put a want ad in the local paper, "If you know any good gossip, call Donna". Immediately Donna's friends knew who should be called as she had the reputation. Kay ran into her shortly afterwards and Donna complained to her. Kay's retort, "If you want to know anything about me, why don't you come over and I will tell you."

The name Caitlin is Welch for Kathleen. Her name for him was Phoenix. When A.D. told this to E. Hoffman Price, a west coast science-fiction writer and astrologist, he was aghast because he had read the stars for A.D. and the name fit right in with his reading. Price made this reading just prior to A.D. going into the hospital in July 1969. He was in the hospital for over 85 days and Kay visited him every day having a single rose delivered to his room. He had started out in St. Mary's hospital, but after his illness became worse he was transferred to the University hospital. Several times he was given up for lost. Kay feels that she willed him to live, standing by his bed when he was not conscious, holding his hand and telling him, "You are going to live. You cannot die. I love you." Later he said he was conscious of her presence, but was not capable of telling her. She brought him home from the hospital, he was very weak and needed assistance in walking. His mother who had not visited him at the hospital, greeted him, "You have to do something about April. She won't listen to me." Which Kay said was very typical of the Derleth women. They were a

a combination of naggers, hollorers and screamers. Rose, his mother, Lillian his sister, and April his daughter were all like this. Kay attributed his recovery to a woman doctor at the UW hospital. She had been a classmate of A.D. and her insistence that something was wrong and something more should be done really saved his life. His basic problem at the hospital after 4 operations was a series of successive infections in the body (little pus sacs would form and would have to be opened) after a gall bladder operation where bile was accidentally spilled into the body.

She was 23 and he was 58 when she first took up with him. The 35 year difference in age was mentioned several times, but there was a little variation in specific ages of the two. She was skipping around from one story to another so the confusion came probably from my not being able to exactly know what year she was talking about.

Kay & Greg.

Kay was raised in the Plain area, moving to Sauk City just as she was entering high school. Greg lived between Plain and Sauk City on a farm. He was a senior, football hero when Kay was a freshman. His father died when Greg was two. His mother remarried and the new father turned aut to be a drunken tyrant. The mother was a very cold woman(although she had 6 more children from the second marriage) so Greg received very little love in the home. The step-father became so abusive that Greg finally went to live with his grandparents. He was a hard worker, participating in sports in school and then coming home and doing the farm chores. As he grew older and the grandfather aged, Greg virtually ran the grandparent's farm. Upon graduating he went to college at Platteville, majoring in Ag at his grandfather's urging. However, he began missing classes, spending time in the library studying blueprints. Eventually he quit school the first year came back home, worked on the farm, and became acquainted with a brick mason. At about age 19 he and the mason formed a partnership, Twin City Forms and went into the business of pouring house basements, then swimming pools and is now specializing in cement pig styes. He loves his work and Kay says he is a workaholic.

Kay in high school was a string bean, known as Olive Oyl. She had not dated, boys were not interested in her because of her gawkiness. Her best girl friend was dating Butch whose buddy was Greg. One night Kay and her friend went to a dance. Butch danced with his girl and Kay danced with Greg who was very quiet and reserved. She did not enjoy it. Later she got a call from Butch who asked her for a date. She turned him down because it might threaten her friendship with her friend. Butch called several times. She kept saying "no". Finally her girl friend who heard about it insisted that Kay go out with Butch. She had some dates with him, but he left for the service. He wrote her and Greg would call her to find out what was happening to Butch. She started going out with Greg, he seemed so lonely, neglected. She was quite impressed with how hard he worked. But he didn't have much on the ball socially. Butch came home on leave and was quite upset when he found that his best friend was dating his girl friend. So she became Greg's girl. She, upon graduating from high school, went away to college. It must have been during that summer or the first year of college that she became pregnant(only had sex with Greg once before getting married and that was because she felt so sorry for him). So they were married, 18 years ago. She is divorcing him now because he is a workaholic and they have no common interests. Greg showered her with every material thing she wanted. In 1968 he built the house they presently live in, designing it himself and including many things she had seen in magazines. The house is probably worth a minimum of $150,000 today. He know how to mouth all the old romantic cliches, probably having read them in books or magazines, but he was not capable of loving a person, not having any love previously in his life.

M. L. Masters - she was moody - temperamental - spoiled
so he broke engagement

Story about shopping for clothes in Madison
She wanted simple black dress
It liked red + also grey - she tried them all on.
Try black again - afterwards clerk gave her large
package - contained all 3 dresses.
Rose said he would go broke if he didn't stop giving
gifts so freely

He wrote everything about their affair in his journal.
She saw many entries. She had written those in
many love letters to him - J. Hartman got
his files.

She tried to describe the uniqueness of their feeling
for each other - their love was so deep - it was spiritual -
she wanted to please him - give to him so much
that you give + give until it hurt - forgetting one's self.
They spoke a special language to each other. They could
be in a group + be able to communicate with no one
else aware or understanding what they were saying
to each other.

Caitlin-Phoenix

They had one big argument and that concerned a pre-nupital agreement that F. Hartman had drawn up and Aug wanted her to sign. In it she would have claimed only half of his estate, the rest going to the children. She vehmently protested against this and refused to sign. It sounded as though her argument was really with Hartman and not Aug.

Before she ever went to Rhinelander she found herself ahead of him in a grocery line. He had his market basket on his arm--the basket he used to pick up groceries and mail. As she was interested in writing, she wanted very much to turn and ask him a question, but she didn't have the nerve.

A.D. as a father gave his children quite a bit of his time, taking them on hikes, to the Dells, to Madison to shop, movies, cocnerts (at that time it was uncommon to see children at concerts.) But he spent a lot of time behind the typewriter, after all this was his means of income. April and Walden lived with the Mulcahy's for a year after Aug's death and Kay found April to be quite cold, reserved, intelligent. Today April would disown the name Derleth. Walden while very personable, is not too bright. Aug frequently used the term "blockhead". Aug was quite embarrassed when Walden became the butt of the teasing and pounding that always takes place on a school playground. Kay made a birthday cake for Walden and she was amzed when he became very angry when she offered a piece to other people. In the Derleth household when Rose made a cake for a person, only that person would eat it. The children were amazed at the manner in which the Mulcahy family celebrated Xmas and Easter. Because there would be little interference, Aug spent the day at the typewriter, so there was little family-cenetered activity on holidays.

Sandy Aug really was not in love with her when they got married. She had become pregnant by a man in Madison a few months prior to the wedding. Aug insisted that she go to California for an abortion, otherwise he would not marry her. He was not going to raise another man's child. Kay pointed out to him that if they married he would become the father of Lisa. That was different. A.D. started dating Sandy when she was 16, thinking all the time she was 18.

Caitlin-Phoenix

He wrote everything about their relationship and affair in his journal, not leaving too much to the imagination. She read many entries, questioning him as to why he would put some things into it. She has 250 love letters that he sent her. She, in turn, wrote him a great number. They are probably now in the possession of Forest Hartman. She also kept a journal or diary.

She told the story of going to Madison with him. He insisted that he wanted to buy her a dress. She said she only needed a simple black dress, but he saw a red one and then a grey one, both very attractive, that he urged her to try them on. So she tried on all three, parading up and down in front of him for his approval. He said he would get her all three. She said aboslutely not. She only wanted the black one. He asked her to put the black one on again which she did. He said ok let's get that one. He went over to pay for it and came back with a huge package. He had bought her all three dresses. When they got home Rose Derleth said he would go broke if he didn't stop giving her so many presents.

She tried to describe the uniqueness of their feelings for each other. Their love was so deep that it was really a spiritual relationship. Something that the Gods had destined for them, although Aug thought they were playing a joke on him, by bringing his true love to him so late in his life. Their love caused pain, because each tried so desperately to please the other, to give to the other all that they had and even more. They spoke a special language to each other enabling them to be in a group and communicate with each other without the others being aware of what they were saying or doing.

Miscellaneous

A. D. used Hugo Schwenker to report to him on the pulse of the twon. Were people gossiping about his affair with Kay. Rose, the kids, George Marx and Hugo were the only ones in the village who supposedly knew about it.

Despite the heat took Hildred over to see the Mulcahy house. She said bluntly, on leaving, "She'd be a fool to leave it for you." ... At five o'clock with Forrest Hartmann driving, Effie, Mother and Hildred to Pendarvis House for a dinner of pasty and veal and parsley pie, of which I ate more sparingly than usual. A little rain fell, but a shower in Mineral Point was done before we reached the village. At Pendarvis Effie unaccountably allergic to something -- perhaps day-lilies on the table -- Effie seized with sneezing and a running nose, which came to an end when we left the building after our meal. Home by 8:30, and, after some time on the telephone with Kay, back to work, at which I remained until midnight.

17 July 1969: Another hot, humid day, complicated by rain -- over two inches of which fell this morning, drenchingly, in a relatively short time, bringing to 20 inches the total for 1969, and making the day unbelievably uncomfortable, for all that the temperature fell a trifle -- but no more. The rain brought down little pools of linden blossoms, that lay, faded flowers, under the linden trees. A journey to Madison to go an a tour of Shorewood homes sponsored by the Attic Angels was abandoned, and I remained at home to work throughout most of the day and evening. ... Paul Bishpp put me on a liquid diet for three days.

18 July 1969: Despite the threat of rain, With Kay and Lisa to Madison, where we met Greg, and with him went to Shorewood to go through the houses open to the Attic Angels -- first to Dean Baldwin's home on Dartmouth Road. As I feared, I was recognized at once, and the ladies immediately made some comment or other, halting the line sufficiently so that when at last we set out we were at the head of it rather than in the midst of a crowd -- this was the sole benefit of being recognized, though at Dr. Sinaiko's Oak Way home, his pert wife Rita took me around to show me some paintings of Aaron Bohrod's, and at Dr. Hans Reese's his wife took some pleasure in showing me some of his incunabula (I had not missed on his shelves some of my own books). At Reese's a shower -- just enough to dampen the luncheon, though some of us stood in the garage and partook, myself only of a slice of pumpkin bread. After lunch to the home of the Gerald Bartells, where some Dalis were on exhibit -- this one home very much to my taste, as well as to Kay's and Greg's, a house of field stone and "pecky cyprus" with large window expanses and beamed ceilings. Thence to the Raushenbushes down the road a little way, and so back to Shorewood and there to separate -- Greg to take the truck, leaving Kay, Lisa and I to go on home, none of us willing to cross to Maple Bluff to visit the three homes open there. Myself recognized everywhere; I had hoped I would not be.

Worked late tonight at New Poetry out of Wisconsin and Thirty Years of Arkham House, making both manuscripts ready for shipment in the morning, together with a letter of instructions to Banta. To bed at midnight.

19 July 1969: A hectic day, what with a perplexity of mail involving Ruth Mary Fox's late submissions to the poetry anthology, books to be replaced, held back letters to answer, a hasty journey to Madison to deliver copies of A House Above Cuzco -- in at last from Goleman, and a very handsome book -- to Moseley's, and to shop briefly at the Perfume Shop, picking up some repaired jewelry of Kay's, and a new piece for her collection -- an anniversary piece -- and again home, Roger driving, making the entire trip in an hour and forty minutes in mid-afternoon.

George Marx out tonight, though he spent most of his time downstairs, while I worked at last-minute mail and other tasks agains the journey north tomorrow.

20 July 1969: In late morning --just after I had finished the last of the work laid out to be done -- came Edna Meudt and her grandson, Chris, together with a daughter-in-law, who had driven them up. She looked at the jacket drawing for New Poetry out of Wisconsin, discussed poets -- Louise Leighton's eternal "simpering," Helen Smith's high opinion of her work -- "Though it's nothing to the way Mildred Breedlove goes on! Why, at the convention of the National Federation of Poetry Societies, she got up and declared that her poetry was the equal of Shakespeare's and Homer! Can you believe it. A few people walked out, but the rest of them just sat there and took it." Dennis Mack came next, to load up Kay's mother's car when she came -- and Kay came last, as I expected she would, 35 minutes after the time set for her coming, though it did not matter in the least. Dennis loaded all the paraphernalia, and took

himself off, delighted that he did not after all have to drive to Rhinelander with the luggage; and presently the rest of us followed -- Edna riding in back, with Kay's dresses & my suit et al, Chris riding in front with us, Kay driving. The day very fine and sunny, not overly warm, and with a light wind blowing out of the northwest. Edna kept up a steady stream of conversation all the way along, while I took note of all the flowers in blossom -- she talking about the poetry anthology, about Mildred Breedlove (again!, seemingly obsessed by her vanity), about Bob Gard's publishing her next book of poems, about her daughter Christine, Chris's mother -- he having been born to her before her marriage and taken to be raised by his grandmother, and promising despite the softness of his appearance to be a rather good-looking young man, about the School of the Arts to which we were all going, und so weiter all the way to Rhinelander. Traffic being heavy, we made less time than in previous years, but all in good time we were at the Fenelon Hotel, leaving Edna and Chris, and on to the Claridge, where we planned to have an intimate little dinner and then repair at once to bed to slake our lust after far too long a time of abstinence. But this was not to be, for a reception committee waited at the desk --Bob Gard, Studs Turkel -- a short, unprepossessing man, Dorothy Guilday, Dorothy Litersky (whom I at once kidded about being jailed in Washington, D. C., for a peace march on the White House lawn, saying I was ill at ease about my biography being written by a jailbird), and others, to whom were added presently Edna and Chris, so that we occupied two tables in the Claridge dining-room, and Kay and I were not able to escape to our quarters -- Rooms 100 and 102, connected -- quite as early as we liked. But once there we lost no time stripping off our clothes and falling upon each other for two hours of almost violent sexual pleasure, after which, exhausted, we slept in each other's arms, though not before watching the moon landing of the Apollo 11 astronauts.

21 July 1969: The first day of class -- which was preceded by a little more loving in the day's early hours. At the desk in the Rhinelander High School Dorothy Litersky said she had actually been in jail for ten days, and had fasted -- "I lost ten pounds," she said, "but I wasn't there long enough." Again in Room 206, as for the past two or three years, and there I found 35 students, Kay having preceded me, among them many I had previously had -- Lu Bollow, Verge Karow, Sara Rath, the detestable Phyllis Marking, Isadore Brothers Schwartz Larmon, Jim Murray -- again with the inevitable account of logging days, with which he is obsessed -- and others. Phyllis Marking came up to the desk almost at once, and stood there with her half-blind stare directed at me, and handed in a sheaf of a dozen pieces she had written, and which I saw at a glance were as unpublishable as everything else she had written; she said that next year she had been "hired" to "teach a class in creative writing," which at first left me thunderstruck, until I reflected that the only place she might be teaching such a class would be in a lunatic asylum; despite all my efforts to suppress my feelings, I kept hoping she would drop dead, for her nauseating self-pity, her exaggerated shortcomings, et al, overwhelmed me with disgust and loathing. Kay, of course, sat like a star in their midst -- supernally beautiful, across the aisle from Genevieve ("I'm good in bed") Turk, in class for the third time, and not far from Sara Rath, who appeared to have no make-up on at all, and, though her eyes were attractive, showed a forbidding lopsided mouth whenever she smiled. Presently launched into the customary opening lecture on writing and publishing facts, answering questions as I went along, took in a sheaf of manuscripts, and at noon escaped with Kay for the Claridge, where, after luncheon, we repaired again to the bed for several hours before I began to read manuscripts, taking time to write two more poems -- one about Kay's face in the repose of sleep, as I had watched it last night, the other about making love by the flickering light of the television screen bringing us the landing of the astronauts on the surface of the moon. Again to make love this evening before sleep.

22 July 1969: Again to make love this afternoon, following class and luncheon, an apocalyptic day, for, after I had been brought to orgasm at Kay's hands, experienced a second, lesser orgasm with her climax while she sat astride, and, astonishingly, a third during penetration in the usual position. Brought her to another climax by oral and manual loving, which, as always, climaxed her in sighing and screaming ecstasy. Both of us realized, however, that this kind of lustful indulgence could not continue, for each of us was aroused at the other's mere touch, and all else was forgotten in the pleasure we took in each other, a pleasure that was so intense as to drive every qualm and quibble from mind. No one -- not Myra or Marcia or Sandy -- has brought me such moving sexual pleasure, nor had anyone caused Kay to experience anything remotely like it.

Kay's reference to an erection as "a hard" -- not "hard-on" as is common with boys or men, but "hard" -- and in plural, "hards". Thus, in reference to my erections: "You had five 'hards' today," or "You had 'hards' five times today."

At six o'clock up 17, across on A, and down through Three Lakes on 32 to the Northernaire where had dinner, Carl Marty joining us and, as usual, picking up the tab. He retold some tales, added a few new ones. Leslie Carroll's lecture tour had proved to be a great success. "She's booked up for the next three years," he said. She had not wanted to go out, for lack of confidence. "She came to me and said 'Will you hear me the first time?' And I told her she'd have to give it to me with the old folks at the retirees auditorium. She did -- she began weak but came on strong, and after that she was in . She's been especially well liked at schools." I was glad to hear that she is spreading the gospel of conservation so effectively -- and among the young, where it is most needed to bear fruit in the years to come. We chose not to stay for the Show Boat performance, but after dinner went down to look at the villas, and then back to Rhinelander, where we walked the streets under the light of the waxing moon, principally up Frederick Street to Ridgeway and back, past many of the handsome old houses built by the lumber barons and paper executives years ago. I could not help but point out to Kay that I had come full circle -- this kind of walking out in the evening had been the only way in which I could be with Margery (Lillian Dresen); now the pattern was being repeated, though without the limitations of that early love affair. A fine, balmy evening, with so few mosquitoes that they were felt but twice. Trees shaded and darkened these streets, with occasional bursts of moonlight, where we paused to kiss. Walked for almost an hour, then back to the Claridge and to sleep, locked in each other's arms.

23 July 1969: After class to explore the shops today. A clerk at DeByle's explained that he had lost his wife and child in a Vietnam raid, but did not contemplate any early remarriage, though he was not unprepossessing in appearance. ... Spent some time making love today, but not too much, for we were both exhausted after yesterday's excesses.

In evening, after dinner at the Claridge, to the Rhinelander Senior High School, where with Studs Turkel at a table opposite me, sat through the annual autographing party, Kay taking care of sales, and sold some 30 books. Curiously, whereas last summer Evening in Spring had sold out, this year only three copies sold; Wisconsin Earth and Collected Poems sold best -- somewhat to my surprise -- followed by The Beast in Holger's Woods, which was more or less to be expected, for its Rhinelander setting. No great crowd attended the autographing, though Ted Olsen came in briefly to talk. Turkel, a short, mop-haired fellow, was clearly taken by Kay, and would, I felt sure, make her some sort of proposition when the occasion offered itself. Ed and Marie Kezeli again had a Fox Lake young man in tow, and Kay concluded -- correctly, I felt -- that Marie liked to surround herself with such young men because their constant attendance upon her was flattering. Observed, too, that Tere Rios -- as she had been to Tommy Sheets -- was drawn to him, who was handsome enough, lean and hungry-looking (with a hunger not for food),and much given to attending to the Kezelis' 17-year old daughter, who seemed to have none of the necessary affection of her parents, much as Marie seems to have to spare for the Fox Lake boys.

Once the autographing was over, repaired, following ~~[illegible]~~ other guests, to the Ford home, where the customary varied and ample spread of food was ready for us, and where, as usual, Iris's husband poured out generous libations of Scotch. The party was for us, in effect, an anniversary we could not or would not escape attending, for it marked the first anniversary of the spark's being lit between us. Much talk with Mel and Mrs. Ellis -- he a lean, seemingly rough-hewn fellow of middle height, she a short, vivacious, pretty woman, to whom Kay took immediately (and to whom, subsequently, Kay confided some facts of our love -- omitting only the obsessive sexuality -- concentrating on the romantic quality of it, such as the delivery each day here in Rhinelander of a single red rose from "Phoenix", etc.) The Ellises were by choice rather "out of it" preferring to keep to their quarters, and he was uncertain in his role as a teacher, never having played this role before. He is quite obviously an "outdoors" writer, both in his column and in his books, a new one of which about a snow goose is to come this summer from Holt, Rinehart & Winston. His face is rugged, rather narrow, and Irish-looking with an Hebraic cast. She is shorter than he, his second wife; she smiles easily and pleasantly. ... Spent some time also with Edna Meudt, who was most anxious to see

some of her favorite poetry students and friends represented in New Poetry out of Wisconsin, for all that the manuscript had gone to the printer -- Gerti Sennett and Marj Niendstadt, in particular. I promised to look anew at their verses, and discovered from Ted Olsen that he too had poetry ready, though unpublished, and asked to see some of his poems as well, when he could get around to typing them for my eyes. Some brief talk with Tere Rios, Getti Sennett, Iris Ford, Dorothy Litersky, Dorothy Guilday, et al. At eleven off for the Claridge, having overeaten, however carefully I had chosen food -- fruit, for the most part, and set off a minimal gall bladder reaction. So to bed together.

24 July 1969: Spent this day at loving, class, lunch, loving some more -- and in late afternoon off for Piper's for the annual School of the Arts banquet, where we sat with Mel and Gwen Ellis, while the foot of our table was occupied with Isadore Brothers Schwartz Larmon, and at her left and across from Mel -- who had maneuvered himself into the end of the row, sat Ellen Hoy. At my left Kay, on my right David Klingman, the young struble-haired Jewish boy from Chicago, taken under the Kezelis' wing, at the head of the table Jim Schneller, next to him Elvira Vecsey, the Hungarian ballet instructor -- an attractive, platinum-haired, fine-featured woman in her thirties, with dancing and rouguish eyes on provocation, and across from Kay and me, Alice Smith and her oldest daughter. At the end of the head table sat Helen O'Brien, so that the conversation was dominated by Helen's raucous voice and laughter at the one end -- she vying with Jim Schneller, and at the other by Helen Hoy's high-pitched compulsive talk directed largely at Mel Ellis (at one interval I whispered to him congratulations at having so effectively tied himself into a corner), which went on at such length and so volubly that she was not aware of my asking Isa whether she could get a word in edgewise and, at her negative, my saying, "How wonderful it is that God provides such special occasions for mortification of the flesh and spirit!" At my right David Klingman went on about my "control," looking for the divisions between ego, superego, and id, and presently got on to the subject of love, sex, and so forth, and was pleasantly startled to hear from me that I had no inhibitions, had had few all my life sexually, that if I wished to masturbate, I did so without qualm, if I wished to make love to a member of my own sex, likewise, if I wished to make love to a woman, again likewise, the only condition being that sexual pleasure must rise from love or at least a deep and genuine affection. He seemed much relieved, at which I divined that though he might be a virgin insofar as women were concerned, he was certainly not so in masturbatory or homosexual experience, nor was he at all, evidently, aware that my forthright statement was a leading one intended to persuade him into some revelation, however negative, about himself. Elvira Vecsey, meanwhile, was enchanted to learn that she had appeared in tonight's Rhinelander Daily News between Studs Turkel and myself, in a photograph taken at the autographing party last night.

The voluble conversation went on at either end of the table, while I sat largely silent, save for a few exchanges with David Klingman, Alice Hill, and Elvira Vecsey. At the conclusion of the repast, Bob Gard got up and made a little speech, then introduced the faculty, calling upon each member to reply with but one word. He began with Tere Rios, who said "Pax" (though Marie Kezeli, knowing no Latin, subsequently responded with "Peace"). Edna Meudt blew a smoke ring, and I -- not very much to Kay's surprise -- said "Love". Studs Turkel gave a short speech -- as visiting writer -- and presently the room so filled with smoke that Kay and I, having our fill of it, took our leave, returning to the Claridge where after a while we joined Studs Turkel, Dorothy Guilday, Dorothy Litersky, Elvira Vecsey, and Jeri Peterson for a drink in the bar-room. Studs much exercised by the contrasts of Wisconsin -- La Follette vs. Joe McCarthy, recalling the Joe Must Go movement and made some reflections about my work, of which he really knew very little, if anything, managing to suggest, to Kay's indignation, that he knew more of me than she did. We did not stay long, being anxious for bed and the delights of sexual indulgence.

A walk in the park today, and a pause in the railroad museum. The day was sunny but not hot or humid. We walked from the Claridge to the park, sat for a while on its farther edge, then walked along the Pelican River for a way and returned, smelling the musk of the linden trees in full bloom, and, after an interval in the muesum, where Kay bought a doll for Lisa, returned to the Claridge.

25 July 1969: Woke to loving -- almost two hours of it before breakfast and class, which

continued to be extremely, almost painfully dull, and returned to the Claridge for luncheon and yet another hiatus for love and lust. Late in the day, after dinner, we went to Eagle River, in search of a movie to go to, and found one there -- The Boys and their Jaunting Jalopies, which proved highly entertaining. Eagle River a bustle of activity; the streets were filled, even after many of the shops had closed, and after we came from the theatre there was no lessening of activity, all the parking spaces were filled, etc. Returning to the Claridge went for another walk by moonlight, again along Frederick Street, where there was relative quiet -- no pedestrians met, and few cars passing by -- a balmy, pleasant walk, pausing in each patch of moonlight to kiss as if indeed we were two adolescents, and then returned to the motel for more sexual pleasures, before falling asleep in each other's arms.

26 July 1969: This day being Saturday, I rose early and got off to Luther Norris an introduction to a collection of poem-pastiches he had asked me to do, "revised" George Marx's on Judge Peck, and retyped Edna Meudt's review of A House above Cuzco, which, with a duo of letters, I mailed before lunch.

This afternoon, since Kay wanted to swim and sun-bathe, out to Holiday Acres and Sara Rath's cottage (misspelled "Kildeer"), where sat for a while in the sun before repairing to the beach and entering the lake (Thompson) for a brief wetting and a little swimming. The water very clear, and a considerable number of young and old in it, though a water-skiing operation off the pier seemed to me the kind of annoyance the owners of the site ought not to have permitted. The two Lindsay girls (Marsha at 18 and Sara Lindsay Rath at 28) offered both some similarities and some contrasts; it seemed uneasily evident, just as Kay had said some time ago, that Sara nourished some interest in me that was not wholly related to my role as teacher or as writer, though the disparateness of size -- she being small and petite as against Kay's svelte proportions (36-25-36), with her interesting but fundamentally not warm eyes, again in contrast to Kay's liquid warmth, and her oddly twisted mouth in repose, as if she were constantly suppressing some kind of disapproval, in contrast to Kay's soft, yielding, and perfectly formed mouth -- left me comparatively uninterested in Sara as anything more than this summer's most promising student in a class that was fundamentally dull. Once Kay was out of earshot, Sara proposed to come to Sac Prairie and go for a hike with me; I temporized. We returned after swimming to the cottage, and thence to Rhinelander.

This evening to walk the streets of Rhinelander, pausing to watch the nighthawks wheeling and sky-coasting, and again walking along the streets on the hill, sudh as it is, past the old houses filled with age and mystery in the moonlight. So back to the Claridge and to bed for all the pleasures of making love and sleeping together.

27 July 1969: A morning of rain, though by the time we were ready for Mass, the rain had thinned. Off to St. Mary's, only to find it packed; so back along Highway 17 to St. Joseph's, where we got in just as Mass began. Opposite us, across the aisle, sat Tere Rios Versace, all in yellow, and scrayed; observing her, saw that she seemed much troubled -- perhaps about her son lost and presumably "executed" by the Viet Cong in Vietnam. Some curious additions to the ritual at St. Joseph's -- a congregational hymn before and after the service, and a shaking of hands initiated by the priest and the ushers. Communion was taken standding, the pastor and his assistant each facing a line of communicants, and moving with dispatch. Thence back to the Claridge to spend the day reading, writing, eating, fucking.

28 July 1969: Began a new week of classes this morning, and found the attendance down by fifty percent. One auditioning student proved to be a teacher of English in Wisconsin Rapids who did not know who August Derleth was. In attendance still were Verge Karow, Sara Rath, Genevieve Turk, Phyllis Marking, Isa Larman; new students included Bea Blomquist, who wanted a "conference" next morning -- and there was plainly little material to work with. I was even less enthusiastic than I had been last week and spent the hour listening to manuscripts being read, and spurring the diminished class to some kind of criticism.

After lunch to Studs Turkel's room to do a tape with him. He had managed to inform himself a little more, but needed actually no more information than just enough to draw me out for 45 minutes, and, as a professional, he did an able job of it.

He was, however, even more interested in my "companion", much to my amusement, and would certainly have made advances to Kay had I not been present, beyond offering her a Scotch on the rocks. Kay sat listening with a critical ear, occasionally approving, sometimes disapproving, though saying nothing until after the tape was done. Studs proposed to run the tape over his radio outlet in Chicago sometime next week.

Thence to our rooms -- 100-2 -- and once again, losing no time, to make love with a pleasant variety. In late afternoon to drive out to the trailer park where Genevieve Turk had her trailer, and to sit there for half an hour talking with her -- she being interest principally in talking about her love life, with a good sense of humor, though she had revealed more of it to Kay than to me. At five o'clock back into Rhinelander, and to Onson's Inn for a mediocre dinner, after which back to the Claridge for the customary pursuits of our evenings.

29 July 1969: The class work becoming steadily more onerous -- but the occupation of our leisure hours at the Claridge going far to offset my boredom with class.

In late afternoon with Edna Meudt to Holiday Acres for dinner, Edna treating, and there had a fine meal, though I ate too much and would rue it later. Thence to the senior high school for the second autographing party of the year, in the course of which I sold a few more books, sharing the tables with Bob Gard, Mel Ellis, Studs Turkel, the Wisconsin Regional Writers Association, T. V. Olsen, and others. Thereafter to the ground floor of St. Joseph's Catholic church, where the young people with the aid of the pastor had promoted a kind of junior night club named Bali Hai, and where this evening Helen O'Brien had promoted an Indian program featuring Gerti Sennett in some Menomonee and Winnebago dances and songs, together with a sose reading by Helen and another by Studs Turkel. The room was kept half dark, and a good many people sat at the tables watching the performance, for which Chris Meudt drummed. In the course of it, however, I took ill with a sudden and violent attack of gastritis, and had to leave; but within the hour I had recovered sufficiently to go to bed with Kay and make love for over an hour.

30 July 1969: Hugh 60 today. I had sent him a brief note earlier.

Following a very thinly-attended class today , went with Kay and Edna Meudt to Verge Karow's for her customary luncheon -- far more a dinner than a luncheon. Verge was her usual self, half modest, half bold and saucy, which ill became a woman of her age and general appearance, but her meal was, as usual, excellent -- ham, chicken, various salads, fruit compote, angel food cake, wild rice, etc. I sat next to Mel Ellis on the one side, and Annabelle MacArthur on the other, with Kay beyond her, not too far from Gwen to talk occasionally across the table. Dorothy Litersky, Frances May, and a handful of others were there; Gerti Sennett helped serve, and Bea Blomquist held the attention of the table's far end. Many pictures were taken, as before. We made our escape at one, and repaired at once to bed for two hours of unalloyed sexual pleasures. It seemed to me today that our sexual activity has grown more intense, that Kay's warmth and love have brought me to such a pitch of pure delight that I have never known its equal. I can no longer with equanimity conceive of life without her, however much I know I must face it and ultimately accept it.

At three, picking up Chris Meudt, off to Sara Rath's and Lake Thompson to swim and sunbathe. Once again Sara's subtle invasions -- she confided that she was at Rhinelander for my class alone -- would I return next year? -- She planned to come next year "alone" -- of all of which Kay was fully aware, but not much disturbed, since the quality of love and the intensity of our sexual life were such as to diminish her doubts and to assure her of my devotion; and for my part I managed, not too subtly, to convey to Sara my profound allegiance to Kay. We returned after two hours, took a light dinner, and then went off to the high school to watch the Wisconsin Idea Theatre's Town Hall Tonight: A Musical Memoir conceived and directed by David Peterson, featuring songs of the 1880-1910 decades, and brief scenes -- played melodramatically -- from Blue Jeans, East Lynne, Ten Nights in a Barroom -- as well as minstrel and medicine show scenes, altogether a delightful and nostalgic program played to a good crowd. After the performance to the Claridge, where joined Mel, Gwen, George and Ruth Ellis in the dining room, drank with them and sat talking until after eleven, and then repaired to bed and made love until after midnight.

31 July 1969: Rain in the night left pools and puddles in the roads this morning and on flat roofs. I rose early and went to work, but at 7:30 returned to bed, woke Kay, and made love until almost nine. Thence presently in to the Claridge dining-room for lunch, and afterwards to the school for the day's class, which was somewhat more animated than usual, but still very tiring, very likely because I myself was tired after an orgasm at midnight and another at eight this morning.

After lunch and a hasty glance at a novel handed me for reading by Dolores Pinkerton, off to the high school again, this time to watch a little ballet and theatre program under the general guidance of Helen O'Brien -- this proved very dull indeed, save for the ballet -- in the course of which Dolores Pinkerton appeared, and sat to listen to me advise her to throw away her novel manuscript -- as I had done its predecessor, only to be told that the book was already twenty years old! "But this is what I like to write," she protested. "Then write it," I replied, "but give up all hope of selling it." Dorothy Guiliday, who overheard my firm but negative criticism, said "You're a bastard -- dashing her hopes like that." I said I did her a kindness. Thence to Studs Turkel's class, to listen to a tape he had made with Edna Meudt -- in the course of this I was called out again, this time to meet a woman with a manuscript for me to read. She said she had had an appointment, from Merrill, to meet me and show me the manuscript, but she had not had time to meet it -- unhappily, the appointment was at Green Lake fully seven or eight years ago! I took her manuscript but would not promise to give her any report on it until I was home from hospital again. Thence to Edna Meudt's class, but remained there only twenty minutes, finding it necessary to go back to the Claridge and rest for half an hour or so before readying ourselves for a faculty dinner at Pinewood Lodge, off C -- a pleasant restaurant looking out over a lake, reminiscent of the Dells country along the River Road. Much talk with Marie Kezeli, Mel and Gwen Ellis, so on. Presently back to the Claridge to perform the fortnight's last task -- judging narrative poems handed in to Edna's class. This done, to pack against tomorrow's trek home, after what is certainly the most prolonged indulgence in love and lust in my entire career. I said to Kay that going our separate ways at home was a kind of divorce. Lay for a long time in each other's arms tonight, alternately aroused and sad, before sleeping.

David Klingman came to life in class today long enough to hand in a piece -- hardly a poem, and he did not call it that:

> "Your tears would flow and glisten the
> strands and curled locks --
> Pains --
> recede --flows browns shimmers in the
> dusk
> haze --
> fiery
> dancing black liquouer (sic) sapphires
> upon the ambers necklace -- shimmers
> of brandied rocks --"

and with Marie Kezeli sent another note to the faculty dinner. "The imagery need thought. I have a greater perspective on the concept of impressionistic flesh -- eliminating the carrying over abundant greenery of Keats Ode to a nightingale yet compacting and flowing the images into the thought and vice versa ~~///~~ used by Coleridge in Ode to Dejection. With the elements I have in my mind I can fuse these two authors indistinguishably, the best of each -- but what about me?"

1 August 1969: Woke at five and rose to spend an hour at a letter to Kay, for her to read after we had parted; and then repaired to bed, waking her, for two hours of love and passion; and then to rise, to breakfast, to pack, and finally to take off for the high school, our adventure almost done. At 11:30 set out for home, pausing at the Mead in Wisconsin Rapids for lunch -- as heretofore -- another anniversary of a sort -- a fine if somewhat melancholy drive, since it brought us to parting. Everywhere the abundance of bergamotte in full bloom. The day, begun cool, warmed rapidly, but there was little humidity to contend with. At four o'clock home. Kay came in for a little while -- the children helped unload -- but in an all too brief time Kay was gone, and for the first time in almost two weeks we were separated.

Driving into Sac Prairie an hour later, I saw that many changes had taken place -- on Madison Street old St. Aloysius and the old public grade school had been razed; at the corner of Phillips Boulevard and Water Street the old elm that had stood for so long there -- and for which I had fought almost 40 years ago -- had fallen victim to the Duthh elm disease and been taken down, leaving that corner empty indeed -- before the onetime Schwenker house the last elm in the row planted there many years ago stood dying of the same disease. In the warehouse the new workbench that Hugh had constructed stood ready for the move into the warehouse; the floor had been sealed at last, and the place was now ready for use, though it would very probably not be used until I returned from the hospital.

I sat for a while with Hugh in the harness shop, but was unable to get out of him a price at least for the lumber used in the making of the workbench; he bucked, temporized, and finally declared that he had not yet had a bill for it, und so weiter; so I knew he would not take any money at all if he could avoid it. He deprecated the destruction of the old grade school -- his school, as unnecessary -- "and for what," he went on, "for a parking lot!" He spoke of George Behrendt, who had been taken to the hospital here because of some little difficulty in breathing; and while there had suffered a cerebral accident and died. He was 78. "We buried him on Wednesday." He had served as a pall-bearer.

At home to work, though Kay telephoned several times, lonesome already -- but no more so than I. Among the slough of letters demanding answer was a set of galleys of Concord Sage -- now retitled, weakly, I thought, Emerson -- Our Contemporary, and a letter from Joe Elder asking that they be returned by the 8th, which meant that I must proof the entire book in time for tomorrow's mail. Worked tonight until after midnight.

2 August 1969: Up at 5:45 this morning and at once to work proofing the Emerson biography. Worked steadily at it until mail-time, and after a light mail -- and Frank Utpatel's visit -- had been processed, I returned to it, though the morning had many interruptions -- Leroy and Grace Gore with their friends, the Offerdahls, in to buy some books -- Doris Gasser, in from Japan, Alice Conger, and so on, together with several telephone calls from Kay; but by early afternoon had finished the task and packed the galleys. Rikki packed the jacket-drawings for three Arkham House books and got them off, andRoger finished packing the week's books -- 470 of them.

Kay down for a while this afternoon -- an hour or less -- melancholy with longing, a mood I shared. Undeniably we had both been spoiled by our fortnight alone together. Helen O'Brien came in, interrupting us, but both of them left shortly. ... Myself to the harness shop twice today, but for the most part worked throughout the day at the mound of mail.

3 August 1969: A hectic morning. Kay out this morning, reluctant to see me leave for the hospital and gall-bladder surgery; while she was on her way home Greg drove in, and, finding Walden outside, trapped him into admitting that Kay had been here; so telephoned her to make sure that she tell him she had been down to bid me goodbye. Effie telephoned to wish me luck, and presently Don and Lucy Hillestad -- now of California and friends of Orvie's and Hildred's -- came in to visit, after which I completed work on the manuscript of New Poetry out of Wisconsin, and prepared it for mailing to Banta. After a light dinner, at 1:05 off to Madison with Rick in his 442. Just beyond Springfield Corners discovered, in time to avoid a fatal accident, that the rear right wheel of the car was coming off; had I been a believer in omens, I would have turned back and cancelled the operation; but we went on to the hospital, where, after a while, I was registered -- and widely recognized by hospital personnel, except the nurse's aides -- Donna Lynch, who conducted me to Room 300 NW ("Joe Dean's room", he having furnished it), Peg McRedmond, and Alexa Carlson, who had attractive eyes, and who were all three attracted to Rick, understandably. Rick stayed for well over an hour before taking his leave. He had hardly gone when Fr. Leo Rommel came in to greet me; learned that he had been chaplain of St. Mary's since 1920 -- almost 50 years. He in turn was followed by Dr. Fritz Joachim, who came only to assure himself that I was ready for surgery. He was. Presently Kay came on the telephone for an hour. Meanwhile, outside rain fell, and a great rainbow crossed the sky. I read Winfield Townley Scott's notebook, and, as evening came on, watched nighthawks flying overhead outside, and wrote a poem for Caitlin, and soon, abed, in the dark, listened to a long freight train passing by along the lake not far away.

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4 August 1969: Woke at 5:30, and lay watching a roseate sunrise. Some clouds lay across heaven, and the temperature soon rose to 85°, though it was little noticeable in my room. Today came the first red "I love you" rose from Caitlin, who also came to visit this afternoon. Laboratory work began, with blood being drawn from my arm. Fed very lightly, and given the castor oil routine. Dr. Mark Foster in to announce that he had delayed the operation from tomorrow to Wednesday, the day after, because he wanted to compare today's elektrocardiogram with the last taken in 1966, during the course of my coronary. Fritz Joachim in once more. I telephoned home to apprize them of the change of date for surgery.

5 August 1969: Dr. Foster in to announce that there had been no cardiac changes, and that surgery would take place tomorrow, and Dr. Joachim presently followed to set the hour at 2-2:30 tomorrow. .... Kay telephoned three times in the course of the day. .... Observed through my north window the many birds that flew by -- grackles, blue jays, robins, nighthawks, cardinals, robins -- and heard all day long the small sounds of crickets and the stridulation of a cicada not far away. In to visit came Bob Gard, Fr. Leo Rommel, and Marie Johnson Vandenbrook. ... A second red rose from Kay today, which meant that she intended to send one for every day of my confinement.

6 August 1969: The day of the ordeal. Kay came well before the hour set. I went up to surgwry at 3:15, meeting Dr. Bill Tormey, who was assisting, and, outside the operating room, met George Marx's cousin, a nurse. Came down from the recovery room, still unconscious, and Kay left soon after. When I came to consciousness presently, vomiting, found the nurses trying to put a tube down my ø¼øñæçñ/¼ñ¼ø// nose and throat into my stomach; I fought it violently, would not have it, and finally Dr. Joachim assented to its removal, with reluctance I didn't share. Ceased vomiting and presently slept.

7 August 1969: Slowly recovering. Got up on my feet during the night to urinate. Edna Meudt telephoned, and Kay came to visit. In the Times tonight appeared Edna Meudt's laudatory review of A House Above Cuzco.

8 August 1969: Kay came again to visit -- and her rose came not long after. ... The mail today brought, among other cards, a Happy Birthday card from Frieda Koenig, with a note to say that she hadn't "anything else" at hand to send, and thought this would do as well. ... At dawn today the sickle of the waning moon, near to the new, and Venus shone brillliantly in heaven before sunrise.

9 August 1969: A miserable night and day. ... At evening came Rick to visit before going on from Milwaukee to Sac Prairie.

10 August 1969: A quiet Sunday. Linus and Teresa Ballweg stopped briefly to visit, having visited her sister in another wing of the hospital. Fritz Joachim came in later to catheterize me, much to my disgust; he professed himself satisfied with my progress, which I was not. ... George Marx telephoned from Chicago to inquire about my progress.

11 August 1969: In to collect the menu for tomorrow came Lorine Pings Smith, a onetime parochial schoolmate. I thought she looked familiar, and when she asked whether I recognized her, I ventured to guess that she was a "Pings". She told me at once, briefly, about her life since she had left St. Aloysius. .... Today's mail brought in a Christmas card from Frieda Koenig, as well as a warm letter from Fr. Raymond Roseliep. ... Tere Rios Versace came to call, bringing me flowers from her garden. ... Kay on the telephone, and Iris Ford, callin from Rhinelander -- and Kay's daily rose. ... All night hear the long freight trains pulling away from Madison, heard the drivers clicking, the rails sighing, the hollow sound of trestles being crossed.

12 August 1969: Dennis Mack in to visit. I sent him out to buy me some fresh peaches, but he came back with green fruit I could not eat, and with a second sack of peaches the fruitstand owner had assured him were nectarines, since Dennis knew no better. Donna and Ron Hering also came to visit. Myself uncomfortable today.

13 August 1969: Dr. Joachim in to take out my stitches today. In too came Sister Mary

Antonella, a thin woman in her 70s. She meant only to pay a brief visit, but finding me capable of talking about the condition of the church, she drew up a chair and sat talking for an hour about the conflict between the conservative and liberal elements in the church, the church as institution, the changes in ritual, etc. Leaving, she promised to come again. ... Colonal Schowalter telephoned today, and Kay came over to visit; so too Sherry Gingras, who brought me some tea! ... Finally came Karl and Kay Ganzlin, who regaled me with their daughter Julie's account of a visit with Mark and Ruth Schorer in Berkeley. Mark, she said, had gone hippie -- he wore his sparse hair long, tohis shoulders, "pasted" on to his neck, he wore three chains of beads around his neck, and dressed accordingly; and Ruth went along with him. Moreover, Ruth had not yet learned to cook, and the meal served Julie and her companion was as inadequate as that o e served us in 1966. Undoubtedly Mark's direction rose from his innate homosexuality as much as from the struggle against age, as if 61 were a disgrace.

14 August 1969: George Vukelich in to visit. He stayed for an hour. I asked him about the progress of his new book, but he was so evasive that I knew at once there was no book worth talking about in progress, and would probably never be one. ... Both Rick and Kay in to stay for some time.

15 August 1969: Woke at three in the morning and watched Venus and the Heavenly Twins in the morning sky. ... Up for x-ray this morning and became chilled, having been left on the table for forty minutes inadequately covered. Rushed back to 300, with Mary Lou Wilson packing me in covers. Ate breakfast at last at 2:40! ...Gus Hetzel in briefly to visit, while his wife and sister-in-law were shopping.

16 August 1969: Another day of recuperation. Very quiet, save for nuses and orderlies.

17 August 1969: Dr. Fritz Joachim and Dr. Bill Tormey in this morningwith bad news. They carried x-ray pictures and these, they said, showed that there were still two stones in the common bile duct. They showed me the "stones" -- which I recognized later were ridges left by stones they had taken; but at the time I did not recognize this and so assented to a second operation -- one of the worst mistakes made in my life. Very depressed. ... Sister Antonella returned today for more talk, bringing a rosary made at the St. Louis Mother House -- of a peculiar charcoal color. ... Bob and Maryo Gard in to visit, and Rick on his way back to Milwaukee. Mother locked herself out of the house, so that Rick had to come into Madison for my keys before he stopped en route Milwaukee; they had gone to Mazomanie to buy vegetables.

18 August 1969: The day of the second gall-bladder operation -- the unnecessary one, for when I came out of sedation Dr. Joachim announced blandly that "they" had not found any more stones and that "they" had made a detour in the bile duct. Rick and Kay waited for me to come down to my room, and seeing me smiling and apparently sturdy, took their leave. Slept.

19 August 1969: A day of recuperation. No pain.

20 August 1969: A day of disaster. Attempting to rise from bed, collapsed on the floor, and thereafter, on being lifted to the bed, taken immediately to an intensive care unit. I had no idea what had happened, but something had obviously gone wrong. Kay had just gone, after visiting for an hour or two, and at intensive care Effie and Joan appeared. I became muddled, thought it already the following day, then presently became unconscious. When I woke, the room was darkened, and I saw what appeared to be tufts of light floating in the air from me away and back again, heard chanting, smelled incense, but heard the nurses in the corridor; so I knew I was awake, and, listening, presently heard, in Latin, "I, Leo, by the authority given me by the bishop, do hereby absolve you, August Derleth, of the sins of your whole life" -- I was receiving extreme unction! I was briefly shocked, but soon resigned myself; if I were dying, there was nothing I could do to prevent it. Seeing me awake, Fr. Rommel offered me communion; I preferred not to take it, promised to take it later. Thereafter I drifted off to sleep, not without a visit from Dr. Joachim, who spoke of having to go east and transferring my case to another doctor's care. He mention Dr. Bothon, but seemed uncertain, and presently fixed upon Dr. Kenneth Lemmer at University Hospitals -- and old teacher "of mine", to whose wife's niece Dr. Joachim was married. But this loomed in the future.

21 August to 29 October 1969: Almost a total nightmare. For some days remained in intensive care at St. Mary's; then Dr. Joachim announced that he was having me moved to University Hospitals and to the care of Dr. Kenneth Lemmer, to whom he referred as an "old teacher" and colleague -- obviously for two reasons: he was alarmed by my serious condition (though I was not aware of being in serious condition), and he was going east with his family for a holiday. Presently, ca the 28th, taken by ambulance to University Hospitals -- watching along the route for sight of flowers on the assumption that I might never again see blossoms. Taken to a double room, where presently I was waited upon by Tony Curreri, Helen Dickie (both old U. W. classmates) and Dr. Ken Lemmer, the three of whom studied my charts, examined me, and took their leave, sending in their assistants -- among whom I liked best Dr. John Penta and Dr. John Pulcini, two young Italians from the east coast come to work under Dr. Lemmer, and least a Dr. Edwards, who, on my refusal to take a tube into my stomach, told Hildred that I couldn't live -- occasioning much lamentation among Mother, Hildred, April and Kay. ... For many days I hallucinated, though even in my hallucinating stage I realized that the large bats, spiders, and owls I saw floating across the walls could not exist in the room; for the most part my hallucinations were orderly enough -- I rose daily and made my way to my desk and sat all day writing letters. When Rick came for weekend visits, I asked whether he noticed the pile of letters to the right of the typewriter; he soon learned to say "yes". Jim Bowman, the night sitter, asserted one day that he had just passed me in my room when he met me coming into the hospital at the front. I assured him he had seen my astral self. The period of hallucination lasted well over a month. ... Kay's devotion shone like a star in a dark night. She came to visit at least 50 of the 87 days I was confined, often stayed for many hours bathing my fevered face. So, too, to a lesser degree Rick, and somewhat less than that, Edna Meudt. And every day without fail came the "I love you" red rose from Kay. ... Dr. Paul Bishop and Alice, visiting with Karl and Kay Ganzlin, said on his way out to Karl, "He'll never make it" -- so stertorous was my breathing, so critical my condition, though the hospital finally released a bulletin to say I was in "dangerous condition but not critical." The result was a spate of cards from all over the state, though on many occasions I was too weary to look at them, and they were put, sealed, into my bag for examination when and if I reached home. Included among them were letters from Gov. Warren Knowles, and some sprightly notes from Bob Zimmermann, as well as letters from Myra Poad Pilling, a considerable portion of the Rhinelander class, etc., etc. Mark Schorer wrote, appending, "I meant what I said over the telephone that day." ... Drs. Penta, Pulcini, and one other came to bore a hole into my chest — presumably in connection with a collapsed lung, though I did not know it at the time -- using a very thin augur in a glass tube --through flesh only partly sedated; I moaned with pain, but did not lose consciousness, as perhaps they thought I might. Leaving the room, one of them said to the others, "Jesus, he's a tough old bastard." It picked me up all day. ..... Rosalie Seifert became, finally, my steady day nurse, coming at 7 in the morning, leaving at three in the afternoon. For a while private nurses around the clock -- $2800.00 worth! Jim Bowman customarily took the midnight shift, 11 to 7 -- a soft man of 35 whom I thought homosexual, for all his talk about his women. He was voluble whenever he had the chance, and told the most abysmally dull jokes ever conceived by man; he was also highly critical of the Catholic church, not on today's grounds, however, but in the vein of the 1890's, i. e., priests and nuns fornicating, etc., invariably ending up with, "Oh, there are some good priests and nuns, too," as if these were in a dismal minority. After a night with his right-wing philosophy, the sight of Rosalie was a distinct relief; she was an efficient as he was not. ... Flowers and a bottle of wine from "the Kirchsteins" -- a beautiful green and white center piece from Helena Lien. ... For the most of the time at the University Hospitals my bed was surrounded with so many machines that it was almost impossible to approach me and it was often necessary to move a machine before I could be reached. I had innumerable tubes etc. in me, and received, 3,500 calories through intravenous feeding daily. .... The nurses seemed to me particularly helpful in the main, particularly Hila Coursey, Lois Fields, Donna Massa, Belinda Krueger, and some others. Of the orderlies, Bernie Catrioni was the most thorough. Joe Pfiffner had a penchant for lemon and orange peel, regularly devoured anything left on my tray in this division, and ate the bananas I was given, since the medication I took spoiled my taste for that fruit. He obligingly squeezed out orange juice for me, perhaps solely because he could devour the peelings. .... Bob Gard and Felix Pollak in frequent visits. Bob asked so many times what he could do for me that I finally asked him to obtain a Madison telephone directory for me, explaining that mine dated to 1957; I had it within the hour. Felix was much concerned bout the proofing of his poems in New Poetry out of Wisconsin, the galleys of which finally came i

... Edna Meudt talked for over an hour about the intense affair with Caitlin (Kay), advising that it continue but that we not marry. I set forth some of my own opinions, which more or less coincided with hers, much to her obvious relief. It seemed to Edna that marriage would not be good for either of us -- not for Kay because I could not live long enough, or else she might be saddled with an invalid;not for me because a wife would disturb my pattern of living and ultimately interfere with my creativity. But of the affair itself -- and she was fully aware that we were not continent -- she approved. ..... Mother and Hildred appearing one day with a hot apple pie -- after I was again permitted to take food. This, unlike the bananas, tasted as it should, largely because much of the medication had been removed. ... Tere's owl-like green-white flowers from Latin America; these I sent home, lest they deteriorate too rapidly in my room. .... A visit from the new minister of the United Church of Christ (formerly the Reformed Church). He seemed very earnest, quite conservative, though he was younger than I. I learned subsequently, much to my astonishment, that at a recent Sunday service he had called for a period of silent prayer for me -- considerably more than I could have expected from the pastor of St. Aloysius, though Msgr. Van Berkel did visit one day to say he was on his way to see the bishop and request to be given the small parish of Briggsville, because the "lake is close by andthe fishing is good." With him spoke only of his personality, of the difficulty he experienced in facing and talking with people, which he admitted readily enough. He told me that Fr. Leo Rommel had telephoned tosay that he had "taken care" of me. ... The cook, Dorothy -- a neurotic individual who had a "nervous breakdown" because the "supers" criticized her and her work. "I told them where togit off at," she said, with evident satisfaction, "and I felt better." I advised her solemnly to keep right on telling them "where to git off at." She intended to. She grew much concerned when she felt that I was not eating enough, and constantly appeared at odd hours to give me advice as to what to eat and what to ignore on the menus, advice which, being according to her taste, did not always jibe with mine. ..... Mrs. Mary Schrader, the most attractive of my private nurses, and her indignation at my having to wait for x-ray pictures, after having been hurried up to x-ray. ... I refused one morning to go for x-ray, on the ground that I felt unwell -- actually, I was experiencing painful sigmoidal cramps, and was unable to defecate -- with which decision Dr. Lemmer went along, postponing x-rays for two days; after the long waiting period, I protested any further x-rays whatever, and they were duly cancelled, as were other medications -- eight terramycin daily, and potassium in my orange juice, both at my demanding to know why early prescriptions had not been cancelled after the need for them was past. ... Dr. Pulcini's comment: "People who know so much about medicine ought to stay home." ... The attempts at walking -- how difficult at first, and tiring; the need to actively struggle against wanting to stay abed. At first but around the room, with a nurse and an orderly on either side of me -- but 50 steps, then gradually to 100, then to 150 -- and at last up and down the corridors outside. The first sight of a yellowing elm tree, its leaves almost uniformly yellow with autumn! How it delighted me! Joe Pfiffner, who was escorting me around the corridors, was baffled at the intentness of my gaze and the way I drew in the fresh air at the open window there. ..... Hildred's persistent pursuit of the doctors -- at first Dr. Joachim, then Drs. Lemmer and Curreri -- demanding to know my precise condition, about which she knew far more than I, since I was told nothing until I was deemed "out of danger", and then learned, on successive days -- principally from Kay, who, too, knew -- that I had had pneumonia, a collapsed and punctured lung, pleuritis, hepatitis, peritonitis, moniliasis -- at which, since I told Kay this one, she laughed heartily, having been cursed with it herself so many times: the "yeast" disease, -- proteus, and perhaps more. ..... Dr. Curreri saying that in 30 years' experience he had never before had to open a patient on the left side for an operation on the right. ..... From Sac Prairie came the word that Pasha had been ill, and, after malingering for three days, had trotted off toward the woods; he had not come back and had presumably died; but no search revealed his body. ... George Marx, visiting, informed me that Miss Irma Bartnick had died -- "Eldora Berkwin" of <u>Walden West</u> -- in the county home, to which she had been sent when her work ended and her money was gone, she having given too generously to the church, which had now not a hand to extend to her in her need. ... Dr. Curreri making an appearance with elastic stockings which I must wear day and night. George Marx subsequently said that these stockings would cost me $14.00, since that was the price the VA Hospital in Chicago where he worked had had to pay. ..... The perplexity of the nurses at my easy sleeping, my continued refusal of a "sleeping pill" which they were in the habit of handing out to patients without cavil.

In the course of the last weeks at U. W. Hospitals, got in proof of Caitlin, which I read [illegible] many of the proofs proving too tears in my weakened condition, unable to contain [illegible] personally. Some of the nurses read from the proofs also; of them only Mary Schrader, [illegible] openly disapproved what was clearly set forth in the book as an adulterous affair. [illegible] the second and last book to come in galleys was Nan Cooley out of Wisconsin, much delayed by Bantam. I went through the 108 galleys in two days, but was certain that the proofing was inadequate, knowing my shortcomings in this regard even when in perfect health; so on Anna Hewitt's offering to help, let her take a set of galleys for her and Isa Larmon both to proof. ..... Kay managed to mark our September 13th anniversary against high odds. She had been unable to escape home for Madison by means of any plausible reason, when suddenly came Genevieve Turk, whereupon she used her as an excuse to see me -- presumably to take Gen over, though I could not recall later her being there. .... Kay said also that Verge Karow had come to see me, but at a time I had gone to surgery; she had seen her sitting disconsolately in the waiting room, and had paused to speak with her. .... Rick's account of how, in the middle of our conversation during his visits earlier in the course of my confinement at U. W. Hospitals, I had frequently interrupted our talk to grasp vainly at something in the air, or to brush away some phantasm -- which I remembered as masses of floating cobwebs, part of my hallucinations. .... Kay's frequent visits left most of the staff in no doubt but that she was far closer to me than any secretary, though for a while she was taken for a very devoted daughter!

29 October 1969: The day of my discharge. Rosalie Seifert came ahead of time, but much of the accumulated books, etc., had already been sent home with Hildred, and the packing amounted to little. Shaved laboriously, but could not clear my face as I wished to. The nurses came in, one by one, sometimes two at a time, to bid me goodbye and good luck, and presently the doctors came, too -- Dr. Penta and Dr. Pulchini first, Dr. Lemmer and Dr. Curreri last. Dr. Lemmer asked, "Was everything satisfactory?" I assured him it was, and then, dead-pan, added, "But I had one disappointment." "Oh, what was that?" asked Dr. Lemmer soberly. "I never did get that woman I thought I was going to get when Dr. Curreri removed my rib," I said. He burst into laughter, his face reddening so that the nurses inquired after the reason, and, being told, immediately responded. Hila Courcey came to my room and adjured me not to go yet, because the nurses wanted to bid me farewell "in a body", which struck me as curious since they had all been in individually. Hildred and Kay had come, meanwhile, and all was in readiness for my departure then came Myrtle Plenke with some chocolates -- marshmallows covered with a thin film of chocolate -- and then came the nurses, in a body, carrying a pillow partially stuffed, with a face drawn on it, a mop attached to the top, and two breasts to the bottom. "Here's your woman, August," said Hila. I took it along out of the hospital.

Home by way of Highways 14 and 78. Observed that the country was uncommonly sere, as a result of some very cold nights, with the mercury down as low as 15°, browning the leaves. The hillsides were various shades of brown, for most of the leaves still held to the trees there, being largely oak. In some places along the hills grass still shone green; and on open hillsides the broom sedge glowed pale pink. En route 78, cut off to go through Dunlap's Hollow, so that Kay could pick up Lisa, and went on over the hill, so that I could see the new building Jim Kirner had put up. Reached home at last. I almost failed to get up over the threshold, but Kay and Hildred kept me from falling. I went in to look at the newly-decorated kitchen, finding it lighter and far more pleasant than it had been, and then made my way slowly up the steps, with difficulty, and supported by Kay and Hildred. In the studio I was faced with the accumulated work -- 500 books in for review that needed to be sorted, over 500 letters waiting to be answered, all the cards I hadn't looked at in the hospital to examine. Floor, desk, windowsills, window-seat -- all were covered. I looked at a few things, but had no energy for much. So repaired to the bed. Kay stayed through much of the afternoon, brightening my homecoming. April presently brought up supper on a tray, and soon after I went to bed and slept, very tired.

30 October 1969: Kay spent the afternoon helping me go through the books sent in for review, a process interrupted only by the arrival of Pete Blankenheim to cut my hair and remove from me the appearance of an over-age hippie. Perhaps 30 books were set aside against the possibility of review, but the great majority were conveyed to the hall to be disposed of later to various libraries. This process took the entire afternoon. Pete looked better than usual; I wondered whether he had given up drink and drugs, but did not ask. Kay remained until supper time. ... Late today Howard Hicks came out to visit. He too contemplated gall bladder surgery, and discussed the subject. He said he was going out of the grocery business; most of his old Roxbury customers, who had been wont to come in Saturday night and buy heavily, had now retired to the village, and were no longer so much in the market. He intended now only to handle frozen meats, to cut up animals for the farmers, und so weiter. ... Less tired today, perhaps because most of my work could be done on my back on the bed, while Kay brought over books from where April had piled them on the window seat east and on the floor nearby.

31 October 1969: Once again Kay spent the afternoon, this time to help sort the accumulated correspondence into two piles -- those letters that ought to be answered soon, and those that could wait, which proved to be the larger amount. Nevertheless, I viewed with dismay the number of letters demanding an early reply. Kay's presence beneficent; her delight at having me home once more was infectious.

1 November 1969: Hildred off for California early this afternoon, being taken to O'Hare by Ben and Eva -- who arrived in time to meet Kay, who had come down to help proof the galleys of New Poetry out of Wisconsin -- correlating my corrections and those of Edna Meudt and Isa Larmon. Working from one o'clock to 9:30 tonight, Kay and I finished the galleys, in part because Greg came down for Lisa and took her with him. ... George Marx came in to stay, bedding down in the next room, determined to "take care" of me, under the impression that I was more seriously incapacitated than I knew.

2 November 1969: George Marx announced, after taking a telephone call for him, that his uncle Andy (Heck y'know, goggone it, et al) Weber was dying at the county home in Reedsburg. He went up to visit him with his uncle and aunt this afternoon, during which time Kay came down; we had both got so used to each other that itwas difficult for each of us to resume a normal course without the other.

In the course of looking at a sheaf of manuscripts submitted to Arkham House, I discovered, to my dismay, the page proofs of Emerson, Our Contemporary (Concord Sage) with a letter asking for an index by September 30! April or Hildred had assumed that it was just another manuscript, and had added the packet to the pile.

3 November 1969: Telephoned Crowell-Collier this morning, to ask about the index -- specifically whether someone else had been assigned to prepare it. No one had. In fact,the editors had forgotten all about it; so I promised to prepare it at once and deliver it by Monday of next week. .... Hugh out this morning with a heavy mail. He took back packages to be sent out, prepared by Roger Luder late ~~last night~~ Saturday. ... Napoleon Murat telephoned from Paris -- flustering George, who took the call -- to say that the Lovecraft issue of L'Herne was now out, and would Arkham House want copies; I ordered 100, but would not commit myself further. ... Kay came in for a short visit today.

4 November 1969: My weight had moved by this morning from 175 to 181. ... Finished the initial third of the index for the Emerson biography. ... Kay in this evening with a shrimp cocktail -- no less than a dozen shrimp, which she helped eat; she had stopped at the Pines, where no one seemed to have known of my hospital stay.

Andy Weber died today. Though he had not been seen in Sac Prairie for some time,ever since he left his home on the Lower Mill Road and repaired to the county home, his death nevertheless left an opening in the little group of town characters remaining from that count Hugh and I had made thirty years ago or more. Not more than 25 out of 200 remained. His curious interjections -- "Sugar! ... Goggone it! ... Heck y'know!" -- still lingered strong in memory. He had some years ago abandoned his once normal desire to work -- having been disappointed in his being let out as gardener at the old Governor Phillep estate on the upper prairie -- and being, he fancied, mistreated at the canning factory, though working on the railroad, at first assisting his father there, later on his own, (George reminding me that my own father had worked there at the same time, had once brought old Nick Weber home in a wheelbarrow when George's grandfather had got hurt on the job), had evidently satisfied him, for he constantly when walking the tracks, identified the work he and the men of the section crew had done -- and simply vegetated until the money he had saved -- less than $3,000 -- was done; then he had sold his car, and sat contentedly on the stoop at the side or front of his house, letting the world go by; and at last he had no alternative but to sell his house also, though he left this for his family to do, and go to the county home -- once the "poor farm", where he soon settled into the routine and enjoyed it. His death, however, put George into a quandary; with characteristic ebullience, George assumed that no one could manage things as well as he;moreover, there would be a wake, andGeorge could not view with equanimity the prospect that he might not be there for hanging to "take care" of me, he might miss all the small talk usual for such an occasion; I told him at once that he might as well go, I could very well take care of myself. He was patently relieved.

5 November 1969: Kay went into the hospital today to have some surgery on her nose in the hope of preventing the sore throats which had plagued her during previous winters. She telephoned from there presently, lonesome -- both during the day and at evening. Her mother had taken her over. Surgery was to be done in the morning.

Late today came Carl Lachmund with a filetted pike -- a Great Northern or pickerel -- "I thought you'd especially like it because I caught it in the Spring Slough," he explained. "I was fishing in the upper part of the slough. I ate part of it to make sure it tastes all right, and it does." He sat for a while to talk, saying that he and Evvie were bound for Florida for the winter before the month ended.

George Marx busied himself today ordering flowers for Andy's nieces and nephews -- one display not to exceed $30 in cost, which irritated some of the relatives, who objected to his taking this upon himself, however characteristic it was.

6 November 1969: George Marx went into Sac Prairie today to take his place at the wake for his uncle Andy Weber, representing, he said, his dead mother, Andy's sister. He waited until after lunch, however, since the wake would not begin until early afternoon. ... For some fathomless reason, ~~this Thanksgiving~~ -- perhaps because of a teachers' convention or district meeting -- there was no school today, which made it possible for Roger Luder and April to catch up on book orders at last. .... Worked at the Emerson index throughout the day. ... In Madison, Kay's nose was operated on. She telephoned late today, very uncomfortable, complaining of hospital service at Madison General. .... At supper tonight ate Carl's fish -- the Spring Slough pickerel, which proved to be a very tasty and succulent meal indeed, fresher than if it had been taken out of the Wisconsin.

7 November 1969: Completed the Emerson index today and began the final typescript for delivery on Monday in New York. ... Telephoned Kay twice today. She felt somewhat more comfortable, but "not much".

8 November 1969: Kay came home today, still uncomfortable, but relieved to be out of the hospital. She brought along back the roses I sent her. .... Rikki home today, and George Marx out. The two of them, particularly Rikki, induced me to dress and come out for a ride, but the roads proved to be so fog-bound that we turned and came back down PF into the village and paused at the parking lot behind his place to call on Pat Oehrlein. He said he would have come out to see me, but since he had a lingering cold he did not want to expose me to it. He kept his distance. I observed that he too had lost some weight and looked thebetter for it. ... April home 40 minutes later than her deadline. "Oh, what's a half hour or so!" she cried. I said, "I'm glad you feel that way about it. Hereafter your deadline is twelve o'clock instead of 12:30." ... Sent off the Emerson index today.

9 November 1969: Hugh came out this morning with the Sunday papers. Fog still covered the landscape with medium density. Hugh sat for a while to talk. He had been down to his river-edge property, and had been astonished to notice that beavers had cut down many trees and bushes along the island part of his land. "Nobody disturbs them there. I'm glad to see it," he said. "They'll keep the brush down along the river." He said too that the Wisconsin was changing its course along the island, presumably cutting a new channel, as it had once been almost forty years ago, for sand had been filled in by the river since then, and most of the old "fishing holes" Pete and Hugh had used when they were wont to camp on the island years ago had been made too shallow for fish. ... Spent the day at work.

10 November 1969: Into Madison this morning with Hugh, and directly to the Simon House for lunch. There the waitresses made some todo about my long absence, and Trish Adams came over to sit with us and tell us about her own experience with a collapsed lung, which had collapsed while she sat waiting for her doctor in his office. A delicious lunch. Afterward to the University Hospital and to wait at Dr. Ken Lemmer's office for him to come; he came presently, half an hour late, checked my incisions, bestowed a few more bandages upon me, but did not think it necessary for me to come in again unless trouble developed; he foresaw none. Afterward to meet briefly with Drs. Penta and Pulcini, who came down from surgery to talk for a little while. Thence upstairs to the nurses' station, where Joe Pfiffner and Hila Courcey held sway. While I stood talking with them, Belinda walked past, recognizing me only at second glance. "Why, you're actually handsome with your teeth in!" she cried, much to my amusement. From the hospital to shop at Kohl's, andthen out along 14 and 78.

At the Four Corners in and to pause at the railroad crossing on Y, the Yellowbanks Road. Walked slowly up the tracks to the oak grove. The day was grey -- a typical November day -- but a fine fragrance held to the air, fresh and exhilarating. Of birds heard only blue jays and crows, distantly. A dandelion blossomed along the tracks. No wind stirred, and there was no hint of sunlight in the overcast heaven. So home, quite tired.

11 November 1969: Kay down this afternoon, and for the first time in months made love. A fine afternoon. ... Outside, golden-crowned kinglets and a brown creeper foraged among the white cedars. A little flock of kinglets was evidently en route south. ... This evening heard a flock of wild geese over the house, also southward bound; their wild honking fell to ear very pleasantly. The night not cold, rather warmer than usual for this time of the year.

12 November 1969: Talked to Carroll Coleman on the telephone this morning, and learned that Caitlin was in print, waited only upon the binding. ... Frank Utpatel up from Mazomanie for 300 prints of his jacket drawing for New Poetry out of Wisconsin, these having come in from Banta. I retained 200. ... Kay down this afternoon. Made love.

With Kay late this afternoon to Frenchy's for dinner -- which for me proved less than satisfactory, my steak having been burned to tastelessness for the first time. Then on into Madison to watch The Sterile Cuckoo at the Strand, but this proved boring, and, as is so often the case, unreasonably puffed in advance, and I grew restless, not alone at the film's shortcomings, but also in part because I sorely missed the flesh I had lost from my nates, leaving me to sit on bone. ... On the way over rode under the new moon low in the west, very beautiful to look upon, seen now over a pond with its wan glade on the water below, briefly reflected in a brook, riding a barn gable, peering over a window-yellow house, rising -- andsetting -- behind hills all along the way: a jewel in that lambent evening sky with the afterglow still a sullen red fire along the dark rim of earth below.

13 November 1969: Into the village today to pay accumulated bills, to fit new trousers at Kundert's -- which proved far more difficult than I had anticipated, since I could not get up very well, once having sat down. Effie Bachhuber brought me in and took me backout. ... Kay down this afternoon for two hours. ... Completed copy for the sixth issue of The Arkham Collector, while outside the season's first snow began to fall.

14 November 1969: Worked all day --- for the first time, without resting between -- at the desk. Outside snow lay on the ground, but thawing was already taking place, and it was manifestly not going to last long. ... This evening came Kay with Lisa and their cat, really still but a kitten, and stayed for almost two hours.

15 November 1969: Dennis Mack out. He seemed a little depressed and finally said that his girl had given him "the gate". She had come home from college for the weekend and when he asked to take her out one night, she had told him simply that, her "boy friend" at college didn't "want her" to go out with anybody else. Dennis, who had thought that he was her "boy friend", was hurt and astonished. "I just felt awful," he said. "For two, three days I never even jacked off -- that's how bad I felt!" I could appreciate that. But in less than a week he had grown philosophical about it, and agreed that it would be best if he went out with more than one girl. "Then I wouldn't get so stuck on one." I could not assure him that he would not, but I agreed that playing the field was better.

16 November 1969: Sunday, and a day of much company, so that I got little done. Hugh came first, with the morning papers, and visited briefly. ... Ben and Eva showed up, and Eva came upstairs filled with curiosity about Caitlin, a copy of which she had coming to her as soon as books arrived, for Hildred meant to give it to her, as shehad already given her Evening in Spring, which she and Ben had hugely enjoyed. ... Then came Ron and Donna Hering to stay for almost two hours. So the day went.

17 November 1969: With Kay into Madison today -- to shop, to watch a comedy at the Majestic written and starred by Woody Allen -- to dine at the Simon House, and later to stop for shrimps and sauce at the Pines, carrying them along home. Myself very tired for all the unwonted exercise. ... In mid-evening Rick telephoned to say he would be home for Thanksgiving.

18 November 1969: Frank Utpatel came up this morning. He complained about his daughter, Sandra, now home from the middle east, where she had been teaching. "She's going backto Israel," he said. "She'll probably marry some damned kike. Oh, she gets wild when I refer to them as 'kikes' -- I do it just to get her goat. She ought to stay home. She could get just as good a job in the states as she can get over there -- but no, she likes it in Turkey and Greece and Israel." So he went on. Nevertheless, he was proud of her, however he hated to admit it. "She's playing the stock market," he said. "She got a check for $200 just the other day -- dividends on some stock or other."

Kay down later this morning. Made love, she persisting upon bring me to an orgasm no matter whether I wanted it or not. I rode into town with her to go to the bank, et al, and was brought back out by Hugh, very tired, after walking but six blocks.

Karl and Kay Ganzlin down to visit tonight. They were followed by Greg Mulcahy, who sat for two hours and talked. He said he had visited me twice in the hospital, but I had no memory of it, though I had evidently spoken freely and told him something of my experiences. An amiable, slow-talking fellow, animated enough when he spoke about something in which he had a genuine interest, but otherwise tending to be silent, which would not suit Kay at all; they were plainly mismatched, and his admission to her, during a recent conversation about divorce, that for the first two years of their married life he could "hardly stand the sight" of her, was significant.

19 November 1969: Don Anderson came out from the State Historical Society for books this morning. Not long after he had gone, Kay came down for two hours. Spent the remainder of the day at work.

20 November 1969: Hugh took me into the village to shop this morning, and Kay presently picked me up at Kirschstein's store and brought me back out, together with a trio of little girls, including Lisa, who raced through the house, upstairs and down, while Kay paused for amorous dalliance.

Snow fell during the night, but only a light covering whitened the earth this morning. The day cold, but slowly warming.

21 November 1969: The sky clear, and the sun soon melting most of the fallen snow. ... Into Sac Prairie in late afternoon with Denny Meng, to shop and go to the bank. Paid Banta for the Keller collection today. ... Found Dela and Joan Hetzel at the house when I returned. They came up to the studio with Mother, and sat talking -- of life in Washington, of Gus Hetzel's broken ribs, the weather ("I couldn't stand a Wisconsin winter anymore," said Joan, after a decade or more in Washington). While we were talking, Effie Bachhuber came on the telephone to say that Carl Lehmann had died, evidently but a short time ago, for he had eaten supper and then quietly died. Some speculation about how Esther would "take it," she having hitherto shown little sympathy for the widowed; presumably she would now demand all the attention she had failed to give others.

A beautiful roseate sunset among low-lying stratified clouds this evening, holding to a smouldering old rose long after moonlight lay bright on the countryside. I watched it for some time, both from the car, traveling homeward, and from the west window of the studio. Along the southern rim shone the artificial Christmas star put up on the hilltop by Mazomanie.

22 November 1969: Denny Meng came in late today, fresh from hunting deer with a party setting out from Mosemann's along B, to hunt chiefly Mosemann property and adjacent wooded areas. He was disgusted. "We saw only seven deer -- and I saw most of them," he said. "They were too far away to shoot." He intended to go out again, "tomorrow," but he was not at all sanguine about the results to be achieved, for "there aren't many deer -- or they aren't around here."

This evening came George Marx. He brought some persimmons, and together we ate one. He made the customary small talk about the necrology of Sac Prairie, and said that his brother-in-law, Roman Breunig, had taken to drink again, for no reason that he could guess -- unless it were that he was dissatisfied with himself, for he had plenty of work and there were no visible irritations at home.

23 November 1969: Rick in at 2:45 this morning. He had come up from Milwaukee, paused in Madison, and taken out Judy Buell, to whom Kay had introduced him, one night while I lay in the hospital.

This afternoon with Kay and Rikki to hike in along the brook and up to the Spring Slough. Rikki and I had planned the hike, but Kay insisted upon coming along -- and we invited her to do so. We had only proceeded a little way up the tracks, when Joan Bachhuber called and came briefly to join us. She had come down to gather seedpods to "spray" for a winter bouquet. I pointed out the many climbing false buckwheat pods, the wild cucumber fruit, etc., though she had had only milkweed pods in mind. She turned back, since her car was at Heiney's Crossing, and we went on to the Spring Slough, observing that the water was frozen over to a thick-

ness sufficiently strong to resist easy breaking or ready melting. Saw that the section crews had erected a new and lengthier trestle south of the Spring Slough Trestle, and that the Spring Slough Trestle had been virtually entirely reconstructed -- and less satisfactorily than the old, for the cross-ties were uneven and irregular, making the crossing of the trestle less easy. Here and there shone carrion berries and bittersweet. Out of the south came the sounds of hunters' guns. We did not walk far out on to the trestle, turning back soon, and so home.

Spent most of this day compiling the annual list of outstanding books.

24 November 1969: A fine, sunny day. Kay came down for two pleasant hours, at which we were interrupted by Karl Ganzlin, in to borrow a book in haste, for he was bound for Carl Lehmann's funeral. "What's going on here?" he demanded, seeing Kay. I assured him that nothing was "going on," but Kay was sure he had other ideas. Fortunately, we were not abed when he came.

Les Hicks telephoned today to say that he had recently seen eight bald eagles in one small flock, and on another day four immature eagles.

Went into the warehouse for the first time to view the stocking of books there, finding that there was ample wasted space. From the warehouse rode out to Riches with April, for the night was very mellow, and the moon -- with a great ring around it -- rode high overhead, silvering the landscape.

25 November 1969: Kay down today. Made love.

In late afternoon with Denny Meng to hike in along the brook and the railroad tracks. A fine, sunny day, with a south wind veering westward. The temperature stood at 48°, but with the lowering of the sun, the day cooled. There was little bird sound -- chickadees, tree sparrows, juncos, crows, blue jays -- and few birds gave voice. With Denny subsequently to the Pines for a shrimp dinner, and then over to the Middleton theatre to view 2001, which I found confused and indecisivie, however brilliantly colored.

26 November 1969: With Kay into Madison late this morning. Shopped briefly, then to the Simon House for lunch, after which we went out shopping once more. At Carmen's, where she found a dress that pleased her, and rejected another she liked better because it was too costly, at which I signalled Ada, the clerk, to put the dress aside and let me pick it up next week for a Christmas gift, she having enough jewelry, and cologne -- I had picked up at the Perfume Shop already two new colognes for her today -- to make a dress a likely better gift. Home in late afternoon.

~~27 November 1969~~ School was not kept today, but I could not learn why an extra day had been given school children for the Thanksgiving holiday. I spent the evening at work on the list of outstanding books, taking two calls from Kay.

27 November 1969: Thanksgiving day. Worked all day at the final ~~list~~ manuscript of the outstanding books list. Rick came in during the late morning hours, and out this afternoon; he was home for the long weekend, having worked evenings earlier in the week so as to make the holiday possible. ... In for the mail late, but Vern did not put out even all the first class, though he claimed that he had.

28 November 1969: With Kay to Ski-Hi for golden delicious, cortlandts, and sugar loaf apples. Florence Kitzke and her daughter were in the apple cellar, enjoying its fragrance; her daughter told me she had got an "A" in her English course, presumably on the strength of her interview with me. The Bassett women were there, and so too an elderly couple from Illinois, in from their Lake Wisconsin home; they proved to be readers of my books, particularly the historical novels, and also friends of Artha and Don Chamberlain, for they met frequently at the University Club, he teaching, as Don did. Coming back, Kay stayed at the house for a pleasant hour, after which I went in to Ferbers with a half bushel of golden delicious, and on to the harness shop. The temperature now 34°. In the east Orion was striding into the heavens, not far from the moon.

29 November 1969: Into Madison today, Dennis Mack driving, primarily to shop -- for boots for Walden; since April had a pair, he needed one, too -- to pick up the Christmas dress for Kay -- to lunch at the Simon House. We were home by 2:30. ... This evening with Rikki, Forrest Hartmann, and George Marx to the Pines for dinner, then over to the Middleton theatre to watch The Midnight Cowboy, which was a grim picture of the seamier side of life in New York, unrelieved by much more than a little comedy, but well done. Home late, ca. midnight, riding along highways 14 & 78 by the light of the moon, when it looked out among the clouds crossing the heavens: a fine moonlit countryside, dotted here and there by the yellow glow of windows in distant farmhouses.

30 November 1969: Worked throughout most of the day at the mail, and in part at this journal. Ron Hering came out to visit, but left when Kay arrived to stay for an hour. ... Watched a beautiful sunset -- all saffron and old rose among flocculent clouds, diminishing to a crimson band along the earth's black rim.

1 December 1969: Kay down to make love -- an indyllic two hours. ... Afterward I took myself off to the brook, and walked in along it to the Brook Trestle. I observed that in the softer ground along the brookside path, new earthworks had been thrown up by moles. A very pleasant afternoon, with the sun lowering westward, and a little wind blowing out of the north. I walked up toward the Spring Slough and down toward the Mid-Meadow Trestle, then turned homeward, leisurely, savoring the sweet air-- fragrant with the perfume of sun-warmed dry grasses. ... The sunset tonight a great glow of saffron well up the western reaches before it diminished.

2 December 1969: A singular beautiful dawn, with two fleecelike bands of clouds above the sunrise showing first old rose, then cerise, then peacn and fading to lavender with the rising of the sun, each color being briefly reflected on the countryside. .... Arranged thirty poems for the manuscript of Love Poems for Caitlin, against the possibility of 1970 publication for it. .... Discovered this evening that my left ankle andleg were swollen, after a week of a troubling and sore knee, and immediately suspected the presence of a blood clot at the knee, which depressed me.

3 December 1969: Kay down. Made love, in the course of which I brought her to three maximum climaxes within ten minutes. We parted after two hours in a daze of deep and disturbing pleasure -- the power of passion, evidently, pure sensuality superseding the mind's control. It held for hours, filling me with the desire to have her near.

April Rose came home this afternoon with a little black puppy -- water spaniel or cocker, I could not be sure which, though I much preferred the former. Mother erupted in anger, tears, and recrimination. The dog would be the death of her -- it would run between her ankles and upset her and that would be the end. I held my ground, however, and said April could keep the dog, at least temporarily, in the basement, and there it was presently put, and, apart from some early whimpering, was quiet all night.

4 December 1969: Learned this morning from Dr. Paul Bishop thatin all likelihood I had a blood clot at my left knee, and immediately repaired to the local hospital for a shot of heparin and some blood letting.

Kay's story on the 30th anniversary of ArkhMm House out in the green sheet of the Capital Times tonight, while my list of the year's outstanding books occupied most of the editorial page in the same issue. I bought enough papers so that I could take five of them around to Kay; she and Greg looked the article over with some satisfaction, after which she cut me a piece of hot cake made from a recipe Edna Meudt had sent her. I found it delicious, but very rich. Presently home and to work.

5 December 1969: Into Madison with Kay this morning, reaching the Simon House too late for speedy service. While we sat in the foyer, Congressman Bob Kastenmeier came to sit with us. Presently came, too, Maurie Pasch and Judge Jim Doyle, with former governor John Reynolds, and former Justice Fairchild. From the Simon House, after we were served at last, to Moseley's, where I left the car with a box of books, and then, leaving Kay, to Manchester's to wait for Kay, and found there Ronnie Strand's Karlsruhe-born blonde wife demonstrating

a scarf-dance manufactured in her native city. Presently came Kay, fortunately, for I had had some difficulty keeping Bff my game legs with her then down State Street to Victor Music for Mahler's Second symphony, though the recording I wanted -- by the Concert Hall Orchestra of Amsterdam -- was not available, so I had to settle for second best by Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. Thence to Hilldale so that Kay could get a prescription filled, and then [illegible] myself early to bed, very tired.

6 December 1969: Went around to look at the decorations put up for the Hospital Charity Ball at the Riverview -- especially Carlyol Bartholomew's tacky "professional" banner, which had had to be cut to matching size, shehaving neglected to do so. Kay Gamalin, Alice Bishop, Jane Stenson were all there, and presently came Alice MacFarland, who confided that she was now 77 though she did not look it, and told me she had been hospitalised for a fortnight with the gout. "I'm almost ashamed to confess it," she said, as if she had had some social disease. From the Riverview across to the harness shop, where I sat for a while with Hugh indulging in the past. .... George Marx out tonight. He was much concerned about my medication for the blood clot in my leg.

7 December 1969: A wet snowfall during the early morning hours made all the trees beautiful, weighing down the branches with several inches of snow, and enclosed the house in winter. Snow continued to fall steadily throughout the day, to a total depth of five inches, and Francis came out with his jeep to open the driveway. .... Hugh out with the Sunday papers in late morning, having experienced some difficulty on the way because of the extreme slipperiness of the roads. .... Spent the day at work, without interruption, apart from two or three telephone calls from Kay.

8 December 1969: A heavy mail opened the day, with orders for 190 books; I had expected orders to begin slackening this week.

A small comedy/ opened the afternoon. Kay intended to come down to make love. But at 12:50 Greg came to check the heating unit in the warehouse; I had just barely time to catch her on the telephone and warn her away before he was in the studio; and here he sat, as if he had not a care in the world. When at last he went out to the warehouse, I telephoned Kay; she was momentarily convinced that he had become suspicious and was "checking up" on her, but had that been the case he would have given her time to reach here after delivering Lisa to/ nursery school; so his visit was purely fortuitous. I suspected that, since he planned totake his family to Madison at three, he would go directly home; and this presently he did, so that Kay had to stay at home son.

Denny Wang came out to help pack books today. With him in late afternoon to the Pines for dinner. Go home and to work.

9 December 1969: Paul Mayer this morning, wearing a black beret, came to sit in the car beside me and tell me that he had one night recently gone over to Roberts's (Fifi Holden Roberts) to sell insurance. "The lights were all on,and the shades up, so I knew somebody was at home. I knocked, but there wasn't any answer; so I looked through the window. There was Fifi vacuuming, and without a stitch of clothing on. She was stark naked. She didn't even have slippers on!" I asked him what he had done. "I went home," he said. I chided him. Had he so little curiosity that he had not had even the impulse to knock again just to see whether she would come naked to the door? "I just thought I'd better go home," he said. He still seemed a little shocked. I told him, adding to his shock, that not long ago, when Fifi had taken her first lover, the neighbors had seen him, likewise naked, and with an erection, chasing Fifi around. He thought at once of Elizabeth Boehmer, the religious neighbor on the north side. "No wonder she keeps her shades pulled and looks so pale!"

Kay down this afternoon for two hours of loving, so intense, so passionate that we were both afire, and it seemed as we could not bear to part, ever. Passion consumes us equally; it cannot be denied; it grows stronger, grips us with insidious persistence, and will not be denied. "Marry me!" she cries -- but lacks the strength to make it possibly by seeking divorce. I grieved at her going.

10 December 1969: Hundreds of sea gulls floated on the Wisconsin today, and some others flew overhead. If they foraged there, off Third Island's upper reaches, I could not see, being too far away; they were silent, and rode the water like ducks.

With Kay to Baraboo this afternoon to deliver books to Taylor's, where I learned from Olive Taylor that "the whole county" had been in during the period of my hospitalization to ask -- if they knew -- how I fared. "You have no idea how many people asked about you," she said. "You know we had pictures of you and your family, together with your books, in the window -- we sold all the books we had and there was a lot of interest in the window, especially from the townists." She discovered that the shop's copies of Walden West and Wisconsin Earth had been sold since she had placed the order,and suspected that she would now need to reprder in a week or so. ... To the bakery for cinnamon rolls, then to join Kay at Francine's. So home.

In the harness shop this afternoon Joe Matousek had no idea of the meaning of his name, knowing only that it was pronounced "different" in "the old country" -- i. e., Bohemia. "We're Czechs, though," he said. "It's all one now." He spoke of meeting Jan Benes, Eduard's son, while Jan was on a lecture tour after World War II -- in Baraboo. "I shook his hand," he said proudly. I could not forebear asking him how long it was before he washed his hand.

Seeing a hawk perched on a treetop over the highway this afternoon, Kay said that she had just recently seen a large hawk near the house -- presumably my winter-dwelling red-tail.

11 December 1969: A thin coating of ice this morning made driving difficult -- but it soon wore off, and the temperature rose slowly until the sun broke through the grey overcast at last. The morning mail brought in 60 copies of Caitlin -- 10 days en route from Iowa City, testifying anew tothe deterioration in mail service. It made a handsome book, as usual with any designed, set, printed and bound by Carroll Coleman at his Prairie Press.

Kay down in mid-afternoon for her copy of Caitlin, inscribed beneath the dedication. She and Lisa stayed for an hour. Later, on the telephone, she said she had taken time to read the book -- as apart from the manuscript she had -- and she had reacted at first with romantic sentiment, "and then I progressed in stages to cold fear". I suggested she read it yet again and progress backward.

Took the children in to shop for their grandmother's birthday tomorrow. Rode out of the village into the evening sky where the thin cusp of the new moon shone pale yellow, darkening as it entered the treetops after we were home. The sky clear for the first timein many days.

Late tonight April went downstairs to bake a chocolate delicate cake for Mother on her birthday, setting it on the kitchen table so that it would be the first thing she saw when she turned on the light in the morning.

12 December 1969: Mother 83 today. She was pleasantly surprised at sight of the cake April had baked for her. She meant to eat some ofit, diabetes or no, and planned on having Effie Bachhuber out for lunch this afternoon.

At ten with Kay into Madison, myself to deliver books to Moseley's and Nelson's, Kay to shop for Christmas gifts. A chill day, with occasional sunlight among clouds. Paused first at Hilldale, where, even though she attempted to avoid a meeting, ran full tilt into Glenda Schwartz and her gossipy sister-in-law, who, Kay felt, would be sure to make the most out of seeing us together. To Gimbel's, and then on up into Madison, and to the Simon House for lunch; we were served with dispatch, and then went on to Moseley's, where I left books, and to Nelson's, thence to Kohl's, then to keep Kay's appointment with her doctor-- who sprayed her throat and tongue, assured her she did not have moniliasis (contrary to Dr. Galarnik's diagnosis on the telephone), and sent her off. Back to Hilldale to continue shopping; there I ran into Janie and her mother, both laden with packages; luckily she did not see Kay, who had been left behind in Gimbel's. By 3:50 we were en route home.

Kay on the telephone tonight for almost an hour, much exercised about women's rights etc. I bore with her,with some difficulty.

13 December 1969: Into Madison today with the children, Kay driving and bringing Lisa, [illegible] to shop Saturday first so that I could pick up some new volumes of poetry [illegible] University Book Store, then to get a stereo for April's Christmas. Then we went on [illegible] Hilton House for breakfast, and afterward out to the [illegible] K-Mart, a sprawling [illegible] offering for sale virtually everything useful in a home or small shop, save of course books. I grew very tired, and presently took the children and repaired to the car, to which Kay followed. Unfortunately, as she came down along the line of cars, she saw a man abuse a woman, his companion, by kicking her, and was immediately outraged; it brought back to her mind at once all the arguments made by the new feminists; while I did not hold any brief for the brute who had abused his wife, or companion, whatever she might have been, I tired rapidly of Kay's tirade, related as it was to her telephone conversation of last night. Thence to Gimbel's to shop a little more, and so home. Kay and Lisa came in for a little while. Unhappily, Lisa, flashing past the studio door, saw us kissing, and took some dissuading to convince her that she did not see what she saw.

The mail today brought in two missives of more than ordinary amusement. From one Phoebe Ty Barnum of Wauwatosa came this missive: "Hi! Mr. Derleth: I have met you several times at Wisconsin Writers dinners -- and now I have my novel ready for you to see, set in Milwaukee of our own state. ... I'd like you to read it, and I think it being a Wisconsin Story I should have a Wisconsin Publisher. How about that! It is titled Sue-Teen Long. A Chinese girl from Hong Kong who is an exchange student, in Milwaukee. It has intrigue, love - suspense - and interest of life for a Chinese girl, trying to fit into our way of life. Purely fiction it is. And, I'll bet Ross Hunter, who produced 'Thoroughly Modern Milly' would snap this story up for production if it were in book form. Shall we aim for this? Now, how about it, shall I send it to you for my reading. It is about 41,000 words, double spaced, typed. And, it is good! Not pitched to hippies -- but to good teens and even young married, with families will love it. Let me hear from you! (and, don't take too long.)"

The other, anonymously sent, purported to be a tribute to the late Irma Bartnick:

Ode to Irma

"Was she a Saint, Ma, was she?" Bobby asked me after her funeral. "Yes, I'm sure she is," I replied.

Her humility shone thru this moderate middle aged lady as I remember her clearly fresh scrubbed look.

It took courage to stand each Sunday while others sat. All the "Goody goody" peoples eyes followed her to her little corner of the church. Looks of scorn, sneering smiles, didn't keep her down for years.

Was it a vow, that Prompted her to do this?

She had the look of "I believe" don't care who knows it.

Ben and Eva Schuster out, for supper and the evening, which they spent playing cards with Mother and George Marx. Nikki in for what remained of the weekend, bringing a blender for Mother's birthday.

14 December 1969: Spent this Sunday -- apart from a long telephone call from Kay -- finishing the correspondence that had accumulated during my hospitalization. Much relief. Took time, thereafter, to begin the typescript of Love Songs for Caitlin. A grey day, though with occasional wan sunlight -- typical of December -- some snow flakes, but no snowfall; though the temperature stood at 30° and slowly fell, the day was raw with north wind and thaw. In evening the waxing moon among clouds. Into Sac Prairie for the holiday Sunday evening mail -- a heavy one, containing orders for 197 books.

Among letters on my desk one from Mr Ernie Osterfund -- a letter from his ballet dancer friend, retold in his own language, with multiple dashes. Now that I am home, he writes, "i am not prayen quite so much."

15 December 1969: A cold but sunny day, and with some light thawing taking place. To Kay's in late morning to bring her and Lisa some medicine from Witwen's Drugs, and remained there for lunch. Observed a strong resemblance to her mother. "I could get used to sitting opposite you at the table," she said, a sentiment I reciprocated. Thence home to work, at

which presently interrupted by the arrival of Irene Wagner Wos, who had brought her mother, Margaret Wagner, down to visit mine -- the two being old school-mates, before they left for Marinette and from there for Florida, where Margaret would spend the winter with her younger daughter, Florence. Sat to visit for a while, until Kay called to talk.

In late afternoon sat with Hugh in the harness shop. He spoke for the first time of his reason for attending Marquette University for the one year he did -- "I was going to take up dentistry. There I was out of school and Pa was asking, 'What you goin' to do?' And Marquette was the only college that offered a course in dentistry." --and of his loneliness and nostalgia there: "Think of it -- cooped up in the hart of a city from September to Thanksgiving! I just about went crazy."

Jack Stratton called me in today to say that when Fr. Van Berkel moved to Briggsville, someone had stolen an electric typewriter, a tape recorder, and one other object, and that his son Greg was being rumored to have taken the tape recorder. He was incensed, and meant to discover and punish whomever had started this unpleasant rumor, which had been brought home by Greg himself, mightily perturbed. I could not help him; I had heard nothing.

16 December 1969: Kay telephoned today to say that her friend Ruth Wyatt had received her copy of Caitlin. Her first words were "I - GOT - THAT - BOOK!" She had read it in the bathtub, "and I almost drowned!" Then she had asked her companion, Elmira, to read it aloud, after which she read it a third time. She thought it sexy, lustful, lurid! How could that man publish it when it might hurt Kay? Hers seemed to me an over-emotional reaction, and not sound -- but it depressed me in that it suggested the typical reaction not only to the book but to the affair, were it known.

Sat for an hour at the Hamness shop with Hugh this evening by the mellow light over the north wall workbench, making small talk of the past years and the present, of the town characters who had lived here four decades ago, of the paucity of town characters today -- we could think only of Betty Meng, Fifi Nolden Roberts, Edgar Speth, and a few others.

17 December 1969: A slowly warming day, though the sky remained overcast. In any other year I would have hiked the railroad tracks today - but my swollen left leg precluded my doing so. A day of thaw. I remained at home for most of it. In mid-morning came a representative of the local telephone company to install 15-ft. cords on both telephones - "A gift for you," he announced -- and I knew at once that this was Kay's doing. At noon came Mr. Heaps, looking for more science-fiction bargains.

April, Mother and Walden combined to make Christmas cookies -- the familiar sour-cream cookies -- after supper this evening. The house was aromatic with their fragrance.

Kay on the telephone several times today; she sounded very hoarse, and caughed. She had seen Dr. Galarnik at the local hospital, and he had again gone beyond the condition of her throat and bronchial tubes to probe into her sex life.

18 December 1969: Woke to icy roads after a drizzle in the early hours. The ice coating, however, was not thick; it was already worn through on the highway when I went into Sac Prairie and to the hospital to have blood drawn at eight. Dr. Bishop reported that my blood-clotting time had bounced back up from 30% to 40%, despite the cumedon. "Your body must be manufacturing a lot of K" --- whatever that meant; I did not ask, but evidently his reference was to the natural clotting agent.

Edna Meudt wrote today about Caitlin -- a far different reaction from Ruth Wyatt's -- "some of the most moving and powerful poetry you've written. ... These poems have thrust -- especially in their endings. ... such cleanly beautiful erotic poetry. ... And Caitlin herself is a kind of Isolde -- a girl who might consider the world well lost for love." I read her letter to Kay over the telephone.

Mother baked more Christmas cookies this morning, filling the house again with their fragrance; this time she used buttermilk instead of sour cream; so that a large batch of cookies was ready for April and Walden to frost after supper this evening.

Home for the day, the mail being comparatively light. Read a manuscript by Basil Copper, but felt compelled to reject it in favor of a collection of his macabre tales, this one being primarily science-fiction on more or less conventional themes, however well done. Kay still sounding very ill, and coughing a great deal, though Lisa, by her account, was now somewhat better. Ill or no, she said, her "bottom" was fine and ready for action; I assured her I was eager to perform.

Telephoned Don Wandrei tonight to assure him that all was well at this end and to be told that all was as usual at that -- that is, confused and difficult, what with Jeanette in the hospital, and his mother ill abed, now in her 92nd year, and promising to make her 92nd birthday in February. He spoke of a certain sympathy with Hugh's condition -- of being unable to bring himself to work at cabinet-making; I pointed out that he subconsciously recognized an affinity -- Hugh was prevented from doing what he liked by some inner block, while Don was kept from creative work by his obligations to sister, mother, and household.

The Star out today, with an account of the 30th anniversary of Arkham House. Into this account Kay had inserted a further "cover" against anyone who might have observed her coming here or seen us together in Madison -- in reference to three "local ladies" who typed manuscript, "one of whom serves as a part-time secretary." Greg, reading the account, immediately accused her of writing it and pointed to this addition as something she had authored because "it makes you feel good."

19 December 1969: A cold day with some light snowfall quickly melted when the sun shone, though the mercury remained just below 30° and a chill wind blew out of the north, diminishing at sundown. Roger Luder came in, still suffering a bad cold -- somewhat pale, and limping as an effect of a shot of penicillin he had been given in one hip - and packed the books waiting to be shipped. Frank Utpatel up, too, late in the morning, talking of his daughter -- now in Athens, of his stepson, of Jack Bachhuber's artistic pretensions. I had no reason to believe that Frank did not on occasion make life difficult for Phil, difficult enough to spur Phil to murderous rage. Kay on the telephone three times in the course of the day -- and at last I went up to her home with some further Steve and Sim books she wanted to read, staying but a little while.

In evening, after taking Walden to Ted Baumgarten's for the night -- the occasion being his son's birthday -- myself to sit at the harness shop with Hugh. While we sat there Stanley and Burnetta Sherwood came in to get an old radio cabinet Hugh had refinished for her cup collection ("I don't think they'll all go in there, though"). He asked but $2 for the job; they insisted on paying him $5. Some talk of Louise Blankenheim's cerebral, and a harking back to Irma Sherwood's. "She had several of those small strokes," said Stanley. "And then the last one. That hit her at the Park Hall." "I said to her she oughtn't to go to the Hall that day -- she didn't look god and she'd been so tired - but she said, 'If something happens I'd just as soon it happened while I was doing something I like!' -- and it did." She had lived, said Stanley, from that afternoon to four o'clock the next morning. So home and to work throughout the evening.

20 December 1969: A sunny day with clouds. In late morning with Dennis Mack driving, to Madison, taking April Rose and Sandy Frosch. The countryside particularly beautiful with a light covering of settled snow, leaving the definitions of the fields and woods clearly set out, framing the groves and the individual trees, with all their character -- all the way from Sac Prairie to Middleton; thereafter the prospect was urban rather than rural. In Madison Dennis took me directly to the Square at ~~Madison~~ Wisconsin Avenue. Myself then directly to the Perfume Shop, where I found some pieces of jewelry that caught my eye, bought Dennis some Christmas cologne. There I encountered Dr. John Penta, who came at once to inquire about my fitness; he had just bought his young wife some gold pieces for Christmas, and was soon to go to Philadelphia for the holiday week. We were mutually glad to see each other, and stood talking while some of the clerks crowded around. Parted at last, and myself then to Victor Music for records for Walden, and to Moseley's for a book of Hemingway's short stories to bestow upon Kay. Thereafter in leisurely fashion to Snappy's and then on to the Simon House where Dennis waited, and where the two of us took lunch, while the two girls continued to shop.

With the arrival of the girls, off to Hilldale to finish shopping. Bought some candy for Hugh and Dennis, picked up Emily Price's glasses at Kay's direction, and then went into Gimbel's to look for Dennis, taking my stand near the door. While I waited there, Cleo Coenen came in; as her eye caught mine, I hailed her, and we began to talk -- for the first time in years. She had been to her uncle Carl Becker's funeral, but she and her mother "were hardly talking; we haven't got anything to say to each other any more" - - presumably, though she did not say so, because Jo Lindemer continued to work in Mrs Shimmel's office, and she 82+. She looked a little tired and worn; she was living, she said, with her older daughter Joan and her husband, "until I can find an apartment of my own." She was also going to school, "to brush up in case I find something in the commercial line I want to do" -- but "I won't take just anything," the inference being that the divorce settlement Shimmel had had to make was ample enough so that she would not need to work for a while. With Dennis then backto the car, pausing only at Victor Music to pick up an album for Hugh -- two Mozart piano concerti he did not have, the 21st and 24th --and there to wait for the girls to come, which they did at three. So home, the sun sinking into a thin cloud bank rising out of the southeast and presaging snow.

Jack Stanton in this evening for an hour. On Wednesday last, he said, he had become the father of twins, a boy and a girl; he was both proud and disconcerted, for, just having bought a new house, he had lost one of his jobs, and now had two children instead of one to care for, making Mavis's return to work less likely. He sat talking for a while -- of Tootie Tabor, of Myra, of his ex-wife, Betty,and their son; but then Kay called to tell me that Greg was gone for the evening, and could I come up for a little while? I went, finding her in negligee with nothing under it, though, being in her menses, she did not have sex on her mind. She had prepared a lunch for me -- in spite of her constant adjuration to me not to eat too much! -- and sat down, and afterward we repaired to their fur covered bed to talk and neck for an hour, after which I took my leave, despite her protestations, lest Greg come in and find us there and be hurt, which must be avoided at all costs. After I reached home she came on the wire for an hour, and then settled to typing Linda Frayne.

21 December 1969: The day of the winter solstice. Three inches of new snow lay over everything outside. After I came home with the Sunday papers, woke Walden to shovel snow,and April with the ultimatum that she either rid herself of her pierced ears, giving them opportunity to heal, or she would be grounded for the time it took to heal her ears. After some balking, she did so, removing her ear-rings and putting them on my desk together with a letter expressing her disappointment in her father, who was now, in her eyes, turning into the conventional father, etc., etc. I explained to her the necessity for discipline, but being too much her father's daughter, much of it fell on deaf ears. A depressing day, though Kay telephoned to talk for half an hour; I wrote letters until evening, then went in for the mail -- on the way to take Walden and Joe Ehl to the skating rink -- and resumed writing letters. Outside, the sky cleared, the moon shone, the landscape glowed.

22 December 1969: Learned this morning that I may well have an abdominal hernia or rupture -- and one of major proportions, necessitating surgery ultimately, in the area of the initial gall-bladder operation incision. Paul Bishop made the diagnosis, and a telephone call to Ken Lemmer, making an appointment for next Monday at one, more or less confirmed the possibility of such a rupture. Myself depressed by the prospect of more hospitalization, however advisable. Dr. Lemmer, however, discounted the likelihood - short of an emergency - of surgery before late next Spring or Summer.

A chill day, begun with the year's first sub-zero temperature -- 3° below. No wind blew, however. In mid-morning Frandis came to clear the driveway and parking area of snow. At the same time came Dennis Meng, who was impressed into service to get the two Christmas trees into the house -- and Florence and Beatrice von Wald. They had been to the cemetery to visit the graves of Buff and Elsie, their parents, and stopped here "for old time's sake". They spent but half an hour talking with Mother and with me, and then were off -- Florence for Madison, Bea to meet her husband and go on to Mexico. Neither showed her age.

Kay on the telephone three times today, despite going to Madison to shop.

In late afternoon came Alphonse MacGuire of Highland to buy five books for his family.

He divided his purchases between ghost stories and The Moon Tenders.

Snow again tonight, while Dennis Mack was out to pack books in Roger Luder's absence. It came down promising a considerable fall, quietly and steadily, gleaming in the glow of the garage post-light.

23 December 1969: Woke to four inches of snow, and more coming down. Got the children up by eight, so that Walden could get out and shovel the walk, and April could prepare for the wash, which she insisted upon doing before Christmas. ... A heavy mail this morning, which I had no time to answer, other than to prepare labels for the shipment of books, over 100 of which were ordered this morning, much to my surprise, for I was held to the telephone by Kay for half an hour, then paused at Millie Ninman's for some/er/ of her perfection candy -- the familiar penuche of past years, and then went up for the children at the washerette or laundromat, in Upper Sac Prairie. So home to shave and prepare for the Christmas party with Kay slated for this afternoon instead of tomorrow. By noon snowfall had ceased, by 12:40 I had a fire lit in the fireplace, sherry on the ready; by 1:25 Kay came, laden with gifts.

After sherry, to the opening of gifts -- Kay like a child taking first the largest box with her name on it, and astounded to find in it the dress I had bought for her at Carmen's. "A hundred dollars!" she cried. "I've never had a dress that cost so much." She handed me a package, after she had conquered her delight; it proved to contain a new 25-jewel Gruen wrist-watch -- uncannily, I had planned upon buying a new watch after the holidays, should finances permit. She opened next her Joy cologne, then her opal necklace and ear-rings, then at the last her anniversary gift: a fire opal ring, all of which pleased her. I, in turn, found a new knee-length robe in dusky green velour, and a waste-basket I sorely needed. Thereafter another glass of sherry, and then to bed to while away two hours or more in each other's arms, satisfying our needs, physical and spiritual, filled with happiness, however stolen. She seemed to me today never more beautiful, never more possessive, though she did her best to vex me with wondering whether her natural weakness for men (whom at other times she pretended to scorn) would cause her to be unfaithful; I told her only that love had always disillusioned me, and that when she in turn betrayed love, I would only have been expecting it/, which in turn disturbed her -- though not as much as my saying that her infidelity would in turn give me the right -- indeed, the obligation -- also to/ be unfaithful. This play continued until she tired of it without wearing me down, and presently the pleasant afternoon wore to an end. Downstairs the plumbers finished their work and left, and soon Kay left, too, another Christmas for us over, and drove off into the full moon, myself following. She telephoned late this evening to say that she was still in a haze of dream about the pleasures of the afternoon.

The full moon brightened the snowy landscape tonight, the sky clear, and the mercury slowly falling.

24 December 1969: A sunny morning, with snow following in late afternoon, adding almost two inches to that on the ground. Rikki in in late afternoon, and George Marx out with gifts, and Eileen's delivering chrysanthemums for Mother, andDennis Mack out to finish packing books, including those for England. In early evening the snow ceased to fall. Kay on the telephone twice. In the course of the evening Karl Ganzlin called, pretending to be Fr. "Fox" -- he having a bad cold so that I did not immediately recognize his voice, much to his amusement. Told him I was going to communion to spoil some of the faithful's Christmas, to which he responded, "Oh, you're going all the way back into the Christian camp!?" I assured him I was not, that I meant only to shake up some of the faithful. At 11:30 in to St. Aloysius, finding a place well to the rear, and sat listening to the choir under Ruth Straub's direction, singing Christmas hymns quite pleasantly, though, as usual, there was a notable absence of boys' voices.

25 December 1969: At midnight the choir still sang -- evidently well pleased with themselves and the sound of their voices, for each hymn was protracted through every verse, some of which I had never before heard -- while the priests, Fr. Cox and Fr. Fueger, waited with the acolytes at the rear of the church; but presently the choir finished, and George Marx stepped up to the microphone to serve as "reader" for the Mass. I noticed somewhat less his tendency to swallow his words, but his enunciation was still not as clear as it should have been, and slightly nasal furthermore, but that nasal overtone could be heard clearly

throughout the service. The priests and acolytes "processioned" to the altar and began the Mass. I observed at once that the assistant was in the habit of occasionally directing the pastor, who did not seem to mind, and that one of the acolytes, whom I took to be a Weynand boy, stared at the congregation with true priestly arrogance, while the other sat usually with eyes downcast. The priests shook hands with the acoyltes and with George, and, another innovation, gave out communion to standing communicants, all coming down the side aisle and making a great jamming there, though it would have been more expeditious to process section by section, instead of half the church audience on one side and half on the other. When I went up to communion with Walden, a good many people were visibly shaken; I enjoyed their discomfiture/~~at/this~~ and their indignation that a divorced Catholic should so boldly step up and take the sacrament, all of them being totally unaware that Fr. Leo Rommel had arranged matters with the bishop.

From the church after Mass to stop at the Mulcahy house and take in the liquor I had bought for their New Year's Eve party I planned to attend, and remained long enough to look over their gifts, and to drink a Tom & Jerry, mild, put together by Kay. So home and to bed, where Rikki already slept, looking as beautifully handsome as always with his eyes closed, whereas, with them open, he is handsome only.

Berbers out to dinner, as well as Rikki. Aunt Gene reminisced about my childhood. "I can still remember -- like yesterday -- how you used to come down to Deininger's corner across from the bridge and stand there with your arms and hands behind your back and wait for me to come from Guhl's store, where I clerked, waiting for that little sack of candy you knew I'd have. You never crossed the street. You knew what time I was coming, and you were always there." She recalled, too, caring for me when I fell from the second floor of the blacksmith shop and lay unconscious for 36 hours, and hearing before all else when I came to, the tinkling sweetness of a music box. "I'd give anybody $25 if he could tell me where that old music box is," she said. "It's gone. It's just gone!"

Rikki back to Milwaukee at four, just before I went in for the mail. He had signed the stipulation papers for his divorce from Chris, and now believed that her sudden decision and haste had been motivated by the fact that she was pregnant. His mother had thought so, and so did Forrest Hartmann, but the fact itself had not yet been established. Nevertheless, thought Rikki, if it were true it would account for her sudden move after so long a period of delay.

In the day's early hours, heard through gently falling snow the soft cooing hoot of a long-eared swamp owl, somewhere to the south. I thought it called from the river bottoms, but it might have been in the cedars along my south line fence, since the ventriloquial quality of most owl calls is deceptive. Stood with the children listening to that soft call for a few moments before going into the house.

While I waited at the Post Office for the distribution of the first class mail in the late holiday delivery this afternoon, Paul and Barbara Meyer and three of their children with their dog came to wait also. Paul was able to make the dog obey him briefly, though he had less success with the children. He had been given a five-pound box of candy by Barbara, "and he sampled every kind in the box," said she, while he stood foolishly grinning. Hilda Becker and her husband and son came in to talk, having seen me;she had just come from visiting her mother, and wanted to know "Why, when they get old, do people either get mean or maudlin?" Her mother had been "mean" today, and they had been glad to get away; I assured her she could find it easier to get away from a "mean" mother, with relief, than from a maudlin one, with a feeling of guilt. The mail, processed by Verne, took interminably; it was not until 5:45 than a modicum of the first-class mail had been distributed. So home and to work at the mail.

26 December 1969: Sat in the harness shop with Hugh and Louella Cork late today, while waiting for the mail, talking of Sac Prairie people, in particular the ailing. Found among Hugh's snapshots some I had taken of the rear of the shop and the back yard through the west window, with the pussywillows in the foreground, vased on the windowsill as always at this time of the year, and took them along to show to Frank as possible subjects for a wood-engraving to illustrate Return to Walden West, now once again on my desk for completion.

Some discussion of the lack of seamstresses in Sac Prairie today, as against the plethora to be found 40 years ago. There was no lack of women to sew, but only the lack of a need or desire to do so because of the coming of social security which encouraged the lazy to remain lazy and eliminated from those willing to work the desire to do so. Delia Schlungbaum still sewed for others, but sewed only what she wanted to sew -- she might repair cuffs, but would not take in trousers, for instance, und so weiter. Presently for the mail, and then to take Louella home.

George Marx at the house for dinner tonight. He confirmed that my taking communion at the midnight Mass had astonished some people, and confused others.

27 December 1969: In going through some of his parents' papers, Hugh had come upon an obituary notice of Great Grandfather Peter Henry Damm, which he handed me in the hamness shop this morning. The year of his death was not given, but it was probably 1912 or 1913 - on March 21, at 80 years, 7 and a half months, following a cold he had caught while chopping wood. He was otherwise "lusty and strong, and took daily walks" -- among them, said Mother later, a walk for his dinner and sometimes supper to his daughter's, Grandmother Derleth's house, in the course of which he would stop in at the house where we lived to see his great-granddaughter, Hildred, because she invariably smiled so sweetly at him. He was born on the 3d of August, 1830, in Alsterweiler, Bavaria; in 1853 he had come to America "to seek his fortune," living at first in Albany, New York, but within a year, in 1854, he had come to Sac Prairie -- the very year in which his future son-in-law, August Derleth Sr., had been born in the Derleth house along the river. In 1855 he had married "the widow Barbara Knittil" who had one daughter, Mrs. F. Halbleib; they had three children, one of which died at 3 years of age; Genevieve Damm Derleth and Carl Damm of Eau Claire (later a suicide) survived him. On the first of February, 1861, Peter entered Company R, 45th Wisconsin Regiment, and served the course of the Civil War until the first of July, 1865, at Nashville, Tennessee, as a corporal in his Company.

Late this afternoon, in the library, Bernice Karberg Zauft/ said she had read A House above Cuzco, and "I figured it out. I got that one, all right." I wanted to ask what she had "figured" out, but I forebore, since there were others in the library, and I did not want to embarrass her. I said only that the book was a subtle comedy, but this passed by her.

Tonight to watch a Disney filming of Sterling North's Rascal at the Midway -- a pleasant, nostalgic film, which, despite many typically Hollywood alterations, nevertheless caught the mood and spirit of North's novel very well. Afterward paused in the lobby to talk with Donna Grass Pickardt, who had slenderized her figure and looked very attractive, indeed, no older than she had looked when first she had come to the house; and, a few moments later, stopped on the street to talk to Arnie, her husband, who said he had bought all the effects of Emil Morter's shoe repair service -- "For only $300 -- and that included the machines," said Arnie, "and only a little while ago he was offering just one of them machines at $500." Donna was making the payments, he added, since "all the money I make we put to new equipment, so I can pick up more money repairing shoes," though some of them were not worth repairing, people expected miracles after buying cheaply made shoes and seeing them "go to pieces" too soon. He seemed pleased with his enterprise, and so was I. So home and to work on the final typescript of Return to Walden West, writing a brief new introductory portion.

28 December 1969: Woke to another three inches of snow. Nevertheless drove into town for the Sunday papers, and then, having glanced through them, did two columns of book reviews, and resumed work on Return to Walden West. ... April had some friends out, and in evening came briefly Denleigh Meng -- in from Ripon to sign his unemployment check -- and Forrest Hartmann. Some discussion of Chris Meng's presumed pregnancy, not yet proven. Outside the night overcast, the temperature a mild 27°, and snow again impending. Francis out to clear snow from my driveway, and Walden and Denny both to shovel away the leavings near the walk. The night not particularly cold, keeping to the 20s in temperature; the countryside iridescent, moonlight filtering through thinning clouds, and a very light wind blowing out of the south. No sound outside.

29 December 1969: Into Madison late this morning -- at 11, an hour after the time set by her -- with Kay, and directly to the Simon House for lunch, after which to Karstens and then to University Hospitals, where Ken Lemmer examined the hernia in the incision area, and dug up a belly-band I could wear before surgery set for early June, telling me to lose 15 more pounds before surgery. Kay sat in the office, putting in interjections of her own, which could have left Ken with no doubt that she was considerably more than "my secretary". It did not seem to matter. Ken talked about his pleasure in reading mystery novels, and suggested I send him some, which, in view of his refusal to send a bill for his services, I agreed to do. Some small talk of the financial arrangements of the experts at the hospital -- "Bills are sent out by affiliated physicians -- I could stop work July 1 -- I've got all I can use by that time -" which accounted for his freedom to take a month in Europe last summer, having Tony Cureri take his place, and his going to theBahamas in ten days or so, and to Scottsdale later in winter. The same thing held true of Tony, and presumably of Helen Dickie. We waited in vain for Dr. John Pulcini to appear. John Penta, said Ken, was no longer on his staff, but working elsewhere in the hospital, but Dr. Pulcini was "a very good man"and would be resident surgeon next year.

From the hospital down University Avenue to Hilldale to shop, and there, try as we might, we could not avoid seeing Sac Prairie people -- first Elsie Kessler, who, seeing me standing at the head of the escalator, surmised that I waited for someone and calmly planted herself at the entrance to Gimbel's to see with whom I came down; second, Linda Theisen, Kay's niece Barbara's "best friend" -- and so on, so that, if Kay were wise, she would explain to Greg that she had taken me to the hospital. Thence to the Hoffman House for a drink, and on to Kohl's to shop, seeing more Sac Prairie people there, though we were not much together; however, Lois Koenig must inevitably have seen us. So presently home by way of 14 and 78, along which the customary Christmas decorations shone out of the darkness -- the hilltop tree at Cross Plains, the cross at Black Earth, the star at Mazomanie.

This evening to stop in at Effie Bachhuber's, bringing her a box of frango mints. She managed presently to work the conversation around to Kay, and in the course of the hour I spent there gave forth her opinion that a) Kay is dumb; b) Greg must be blind; c)Kay is not "good-looking"; d) Rikki is not very desirable -- and so on, adding that "all your friends keep wondering why you're so dumb about women" -- an expression it seemed to me of dislike against the two people, apart from my family, I love most, and who certainly manifested their devotion to me while I was in the hospital. Her "people are talking" I discounted; it was solely Kay's coming to the hospital "and ordering people around" that irritated her, apart from a vein of jealousy, which amused me a little, in that her reflection on my "dumbness about women" inevitably included Effie. From there to the harness shop to sit for half an hour with Hugh, recounting Effie's criticism. So home and to work.

A form letter today from Paul Fargis at Hawthorn Books, confirming the sale of all Meredith author contracts to Hawthorn Books.

30 December 1969: A persistent red squirrel gnawing away at the frame of the west window of the studio, inexplicably. It can hardly be the wood itwants -- it must be the paint. But why? I frightened it away, but it returned twice, only to be shooed away again.

At the feeder this noon -- eight red finches, evenly divided between cocks and hens - a pair of cardinals, four blue jays, a brown creeper, two chickadees,3 nuthatches, several slate colored juncos, one Oregon junco, four nuthatches.

In the great spreading elm on the north line-fence today saw fully two dozen mourning doves, which presumably fed at the Huerth corncribs, since none approached the feeder at the house. They flew in from the white cedars in the cemetery, and very probably roosted there.

31 December 1969: The mail this morning brought in a "get well" card from Howard Hicks, with a long note appended. "Wild life is sure in need of help to get food," he wrote. "I sure have a paradise down by the pheasant pens. I put out feed under lots of crude shelters. It is a treat to see all the different kinds there are. That heavy snow we had a couple weeks ago almost ruined my pens. Th re is 2 inch holes in wire ov to, but the snow didn't get thru. So e place the wire was almost on the ground.It pulled the wire apart, let some of my birds out and in one an opposum I think he was after the suet, more than the birds.

Woodcock sure are interesting birds. They were here throughout the summer and late fall. We do meat processing and it keeps us working late some nites to catch up."

Into Madison in late morning, going no farther than Hilldale, myself driving, and taking April, Walden, and Marcia Price. Dennis Mack had intended to drive, but involved himself in an accident last night on his way home from a evening of card-playing and beer-drinking, losing control of his car, presumably because he had fallen asleep. Shopped a little -- a pineapple for Kay's New Year's Eve party, some chocolates for her mother, etc. Ate at the Patio with Walden, a downstairs Rennebohm cafeteria that proved attractive and expeditious, instead of the Hoffman House, where the service left too much to be desired. Once we had finished, and the girls had returned to the car, off for home by way of 14 and 78. The landscape under sunlit snow very beautiful, the hills like sculpture against the blue sky -- so rare in this past fortnight, the trees like starched lace flung up against hillsides, along fields, on sky. Few birds, however, were to be seen -- some crows, sparrows, etc. At the house crows cawed, flying westward over the prairie, and a golden-crowned kinglet joined the birds at the feeder.

To Kay's with pineapple and later with two hams picked up for them at Harold's IGA Store -- Jones hams, unwatered, on order there, and come in but an hour before I picked them up. Karen Luher there, dotting the pineapple with hors d'oevres, and Emily Price in, flustered because her youngest, Colleen, had just sprained both ankles in a toboggan accident, in to take Barbara and Lisa away for the evening. Did not linger.

At the house April discovered a note on the TV, presumably written by Walden a week ago. "Hi, Santa! You can watch TV if you want or you can go out in the kitchen and eat something! Wally. P.S. My Dad or sister doesn't believe in you." Walden denied writing it vehemently, but his denial rang false.

The year closed with a total of 33 titles published, 121 titles written (in 223,550 words), 26 placed (inm among others, 7 new markets), and a total of 17,883 books sold (averaging 344- per week). The hospital caper cut the wordage to almost half the customary total.

Observed that Mrs. Crow had prepared for Christmas decoration a very large painting -- ca five by four feet, of two deer in a pine forest, with snow, framed it loosely and stood it up before her home, lit by floodlights. -- At the old Baker house, the present occupants had decorated two smaller pine trees instead of the very large one so long a feature of the village decorations when Steubers had owned the building. Presumably that tree has now grown too large, so that the Hall tree, formerly in second place for effectiveness, is now in first. Told about Mrs. Crow's art, Forrest Hartmann assured me that she "does that every year" -- which was a reflection on my ability to notice. April, animated by unaccustomed energy, took down both Christmas trees and cleaned up studio and living room.

George Marx came first -- and early -- for the annual New Year's Eve party; he sat downstairs for some time, almost two hours, talking with Mother, Walden and April, though presently I took Walden to the skating rink for the evening. Then he came upstairs and read what I had written about his uncle Andy Weber, and we made small talk until Forrest Hartmann came, followed shortly by Ron and Donna Hering -- she bringing me a tasty chocolate marble angel food cake, baked from scratch. Not waiting for Rikki, we went on up to Kulcahys, where the party was already in progress, most of it in the basement where a makeshift bar had been set up. Judy Buell and her husband were there; it was evident almost at a glance that Judy was extremely shy, and I could understand Rick's attraction for her -- she patently waited on his coming. Nor was she particularly attractive, contrary to Carol Bartholomew, from from nose up reminded me very much of Myra Food Filling, though her mouth was small and considerably less kissable; her figure was too slight, her legs too thin, she did not show off her breasts to advantage and part of the time looked flat-breasted. She was plainly available, though I thought her husband, John Bartholomew, on his own terms more attractive than she; he was much given to talk, and talked constantly, though not without occasional flashes at his wife, as if to see what she was doing, but Ron Hering had taken a shine to her and was busy flirting, much to Donna's annoyance. Indeed, Ron did nothing but drink and flirt all evening, even with Kay, who managed to keep her cool, and in the end made a nuisance of himself passing out and in for no good reason but that he hoped to liss one of

the girls again, however much kissing he had been doing. Vi Schultz, clad all in a loose green dress, came upstairs to where I sat near the hors d'oevres, eating steadily of cheese fondue and other edibles, kissed me and announced, "Augie, I handle your books but I never read a damn' one of 'em." She turned out to be a Thursday librarian at a Catholic library. She was not, however, sufficiently inebriated to take her clothes off, as Kay had warned she might do. Eileen came up for a New Year's kiss, and so did several others, which might have annoyed Kay had she seen. I spent a considerable amount of time talking to Lionel and Emily Price, and to Karen and Carol. Kay coolly dominated the party, and her beauty shone among her guests like a star of first magnitude among those of far less magnitude. It was soon evident, however, that too much food had been provided; Kay had baked both hams, but only one had been partly eaten; the other remained untouched.

1 January 1970: At midnight the customary round of kissing, though I avoided most of it, as did Kay -- with considerable expertise, though I could hardly avoid being kissed under attack. It was evident that Ron Hering was much smitten with Carol Bartholomew; he kept himself close to her, while her husband shot glances in their direction. "High school principal," snorted John. "He won't be that long -- they'll have to let him go on a morals charge." I observed that Ron had been told so often he resembled Gregory Peck that each time he had a little hard liquor to drink he felt he had to act like Peck. Donna was displeased, but tried not to show it, though she herself was the object of attention by Vi Schultz's inebriated husband, who thought Rick was her husband, and continued to address Ron, after the error had been corrected, as"Rick". Slowly, after two o'clock, the party began to drift apart -- Luhers went home, Eileen and her husband took their departure, George Marx and Forrest Hartmann led all the rest; at last even Ted O'Dell and the Herings took off, though Ron came back in several times, until I told him he was drunk and had better go home, for his eyes were all for Carol, who had certainly made an impression on him. So at last he went. Not long after Rick and I went to, and directly to bed, once home, postmorteming the party briefly before going to sleep, he and I agreeing that of the two Bartholomews, both of us preferred John to Carol.

Slept late -- to 8:45, then up to work desultorily. Kay telephoned ca. 12:30 and suggested that I come up and collect some of the leftover food, of which there was a great deal, and, after dropping Mother at Ferbers for the afternoon, I went to the Mulcahy house, and sat there talking for well over an hour, until at last Greg repaired to the television to watch the football games of the day, leaving Kay and me alone in the kitchen, though I did not stay long thereafter. However, in late afternoon, while I stood in the post office waiting for the holiday mail, the Bartholomews, driving past, caught sight of me, and John came in to invite me back to Mulcahys to "clean up the food left over from last night". Once at home I checked with Kay by telephone, and then went up, and sat for two hours talking and eating with Luhers, Mulcahys, and Bartholomews, the house aswarm with children. Once again at home, soon to bed, very tired.

2 January 1970: The morning mail very heavy, an accumulation of mail held-over at one of the terminals, since some of it had taken 5 and 6 days to reach me and should have taken 2 or less. 131 books were ordered, bringing the week's total to 251, an uncommonly high number for the first week of the year, and with another day to be counted in. ... The day mild, with some sunlight, some small thawing, and windless. ... Ron Hering telephoned to confess being "obsessed" with Carol Bartholmew, which amused Kay when I told her later; he fully intended to telephone her, and arrange an assignation at her home, if possible, while John was on his rounds selling books to the schools. I neither encouraged nor discouraged him, though I pointed out her all too obvious shortcomings. He was not dissuaded, added that he and Donna might come out tomorrow night, since George might be here, too. .... George telephoned to invite me to the Rathskeller for dinner tomorrow night. I agreed to go. ... Sat for a while in the harness shop today, on two or three separate occasions, talking with Hugh, who was not working. Louella Cork there on one occasion; she joined me in berating him for asking too little for his work -- ironically, just after he had recounted how little his father had asked for the harness repair he had done! ... A light snow again this evening. .. But one telephone call from Kay today; the day seemed painfully empty. ... Teased about his note to Santa Klaus, Walden said, "Well, sure, I knew better -- but I wasn't taking any chances!"

3 January 1970: A cold day, with sunlight for most of it, and the mercury falling rapidly from sundown into the night. The day now noticeably lengthened at evening since the solstice. The mail heavy this morning. From Taplinger another $200 for the introduction written for The Satanists, much to my surprise. ... Kay on the telephone four times today, like myself wild with love and desire, the need to be together, thwarted because Greg had taken the car and was, moreover, in and out all day. Too much of this is likely to send her to the divorce court, without any further protest from me. Myself however strangely depressed all day. ... In late morning came Bob and Bruce Heracle, Bob's younger and more handsome brother, to pick out some books; at noon came Dale Darling from Upper Sac Prairie, one of Steven Roos's "converts" to Lovecraft to pick up three books by Lovecraft.

With George Marx to dinner at the new Rathskeller below the Riverview Ballroom, where found the decor somewhat better than the food. A dozen diners were present, and the owner was hunched at the bar talking with a leather-coated, hard-looking woman, though soon his wife came to sit behind him, as were he about some mischief. We took ourselves off directly after dinner and came home, where George sat to talk with Mother, and April undertook to do the invoices left after Roger Luder, home from Washington, had packed the books stacked for him to process. Outside, the mercury dipped toward zero, and the cold penetrated as not before this winter.

Ill this evening and for most of the night.

4 January 1970: At home throughout the day. When Roger Luder came to finish packing books, sent him in for the Sunday papers, while I resumed work on Return to Walden West. Weak, but no longer ill, and with little appetite. In late afternoon with Kay and Greg Mulcahy to the Fines for dinner. Florence Bennett was there, and she immediately regaled us with her account of what I had done in the hospital, from one of her doctors there who had also attended me, evidently while I was hallucinating, for I could not remember him. Ate sparingly, and then off to see Cactus Flower at the Capitol in Madison -- an amusing entertainment. Thereafter home, under starlit skies, the night very cold, and almost directly to bed.

5 January 1970: -12° this morning, the air still, crisp. Low in the southeast the sickle of the waning moon, pristine in the frozen morning. Sirius still shone, and Orion, but both were already dimming before the dawn. The mercury climbed slowly to 12°, then fell again, by mid-evening, to zero. ... The morning mail brought word of the paperback sale of The Lurker at the Threshold and The Shadow out of Time (including The Survivor & Others) to Panther Books in England. .... 121 books ordered, and Alphonse McGuire came in to buy two more.

Kay down for two wonderful hours this afternoon. After an opening about her wants vs. her needs, giving me the usual difficult time while lying possessively on top of me -- all the easier to do since my maximum strength has not yet returned, she became passionate and we made love; I brought her to five climaxes, and shared the fifth with her -- a wild, perfectly timed act of love, for the first time with the intensity and violent pleasure and delight of the Rhinelander days and nights. We lay as long as we dared naked in each other's arms, eager that no moment of this ecstatic two hours escape us, before she needed to go; I saw her go in some distress, after which, perversely, all her opening talk of her material wants and needs returned to plague me; and I foresaw that marriage to Caitlin would be no bed of roses without thorns. ... Wrote her another letter and put together the set of them to send to her when she went west to visit on Thursday, including also a copy of my letter of last August first, crowning our fortnight in Rhinelander.

Kay on the telephone tonight for an hour. ... Very cold outside.

6 January 1970: Another very cold day, begun with -12° again, and with the mercury not going above 9°, and that but briefly. ... In the day's early hours Louise Blankenheim, Pete's mother, died in the local hospital, succumbing to a cerebral accident she had had some time ago. She would very probably have been paralyzed, had she lived; so it was better that she died. She was in her 85th year. At lunch today, with Aunt Gene and Uncle Lou Ferber, Mother and Aunt Gene agreed that they had liked her "best" of all the Kirschner women. "She shouldn't have left her home," said Aunt Gene, -- which ~~[illegible]~~ Mrs. Blankenheim had done within the past year --. "She said to me herself, 'I sit here and I can't see anything -- at home I see people going past all day long. But not here. And Irma goes trotting off and I don't see anyone." Home-made vegetable soup, Concord grape jam, etc., etc. at Aunt Gene's, after

which myself to the bank, thence to Upper Sac Prairie to order flowers for Louise Blankenheim, thereafter to shop, and so home, where this afternoon I read over the entire body of letters I had written to Kay -- an experience of some impact. Some paragraphs seemed to me strong enough -- and some entire letters -- to be published, as Kay had suggested, in a private, limited printing.

7 January 1970: Valli Block down town this morning industriously sweeping the snow off the walk at Zimmerman's Funeral Home -- formerly Dresen & Littel. He has become increasingly familiar on Water Street these winter mornings, with a broom over his shoulder. "I swept off the library already," he said, and edge of pride in accomplishment in his voice. Evidently the broom over his shoulder invited jobs, which he was delighted to take. A decade or more ago it was Circ who carried on his shoulder a shovel, proclaiming snow his "element"; now Valli promenades the same street. I wondered whether the lazy and parsimonious Bob Curtin would avail himself of Valli's services to clear the small walk in front of his law office, but I doubted that he would.

Another day of business -- 100 books ordered, though all the mail was answered before Kay came down to make love on her last day before setting out for a three weeks holiday on the west coast. Spent a marvellously moving two hours with her -- fark far too short a time, her repeated climaxes drove me wild with passion. "Oh, you've recovered all right," she declared, when she had got her breath and lay relaxing. As always, the beauty of her naked body filled me with a kind of helpless rage against the fate that kept us apart save for such stolen hours. The two hours passed as in a few moments, and she was gone, promising to telephone from California to let me know of her arrival there. Myself much agitated at her going, though in a little over an hour she was on the telephone to say that Carol Bartholomew had called to let her know that Ron Hering had called Carol and they were planning to meet in Madison on Friday. Kay was troubled -- about Carol's rapidly turning into a tramp, for she was already preparing to dismiss her present lover, her husband's "best friend", and would in turn separate from the casual affair Ron had in mind (if indeed he had), and thereafter go steadily down from one man to another, losing all self-respect in the end -- and worried that Ron might be persuaded to tell her something "about us". I assured her he would not. "Oh, there's nothing like a bed in which to worm things out of someone," she said. I laughed. Nevertheless, telephoned him and warned him to guard his words, predicting that within a week after he had dined her, he could have her abed in her own home if he so chose; but I cautioned him, telling him she was an expensive toy, a spoiled, pretty girl who believed she had a right to whatever she liked in life. Kay called again later -- she, like myself, still in a daze of ecstasy as a result of our love-making this afternoon, she, like myself, despite our mutual doubts about life together on an hour to hour, day to day basis, more than ever eager to be married. Love beyond reason, passion driving out all rationalization.

George Marx telephoned tonight to inquire after my well-being. He assured me he had today had two pounds of frango mints sent to Ruth Hansen by Marshall Field & Company, as I had asked him to do. ... Outside, again tonight, a thin snow fell, and the northwest wind blew, drifting it across the shoveled paths and cleaned roads and streets. The temperature below zero.

To look in at Schwoegler's Funeral Parlor late this afternoon, where Lou Blankenheim was laid out. Observed what a homely woman she was, with her face in repose, and not lit up with her laughter so integral to her. Orva, her only daughter, said that in addition to the paralyzing stroke she had suffered, she also had breast cancer; though she did not know it, she suspected that "something" was wrong. "She couldn't talk, but she could communicate, all right," said Orva. "She took my hand the other day and brought it up to her breast -- asking a question, wanting to know why the doctors examined her there so much." Spoke briefly with Irma Kirschner Behrendt, and took my leave.

8 January 1970: Kay telephoned this morning, despite the pressures on her to make ready for the flight to California, to say goodbye, to assure me over and over of her love, as I assured her of mine. "I miss you already," she said. "I'll call you tonight from out there -- but it's such a long time." She was on the telephone half an hour; I was reluctant to let her go.

A cold day, with the mercury -- this morning at -10° -- not once going higher than -1°. A west wind blowing and drifting the thin snow that fell.

In late morning, Rusty Hoffland came in from Madison. Now 38 with a fine figure despite having had six children, she took my arm intimately and hurried to the car with me, raising Stub Lang's eyebrows, as he watched from the window of the restaurant. Took her directly to the Firehouse for lunch; there, with my coat and scarf off, she saw the hickeys left low on my neck by Kay, and, looking at them, said, "When you finish with her, you can have an affair with me." -- my first indication that something troubled her. At the table, where we watched three bald eagles high over the Wisconsin, it came out -- she was divorcing her husband, and though she had their six children, she was turning them loose on their own cognizance, without the imposition of disciplines, which I thought she would regret. From a pleasnt lunch to the studio, where over sherry she confided that though her husband was satisfactory in every way, she was bored, she wanted freedom -- "even at the price of insecurity" -- she had had three affairs already. I made it clear that I would not be her fourth; I was committed to Kay, and meant to stay so. She seemed somewhat confused, and spoke several times of experiencing life "to its fullest" but could not quite explain what she meant. She was "high" as if on an LSD "trip", etc., etc. It seemed to me that she was abandoning a solid foundation for an irrational reason, and when she spoke of insanity, I was quite ready to believe that she might decline into that state, for sanity was lacking in much of what she said and professed to believe, though I refrained from saying so. She remained an attractive woman, and I tried to imagine her enjoying being bedded by the "not very attractive but nice" Alan, whom she had gone to Hong Kong to meet! -- or the young Negro writer -- "At first I didn't like him, but I could see he was interested in me, and one night I decided to let him have me." She proposed coming over once a week to "study" under me; I vetoed that idea firmly at once, for writing was only incidental to what she meant to study. She read a few of the Caitlin poems, but declared that Psyche was much better, possibly because it came to her in the middle of her affair with Alan, which was now over, after their brief bedding in Hong Kong. Some talk of spiritualism, prognostications, etc., of sexual technique, of her directions -- "I have direction," she insisted, but did not say what it was. I thought her in serious trouble and in a deteriorating mental condition, if I did not say so. Took her in just in time to meet the bus to Madison.

Kay telephoned from California late tonight, ca. eleven. She and Lisa had arrived safely, and she was astonished to find 20 American beauty roses waiting for her -- Ruth Wyatt had brought them along from the house in Newport Beach to which they had been delivered at my order through Rentschler's yesterday, arriving there just before they left for the airport to meet Kay and Lisa. "You never let me get ahead of you," said Kay. The florist had included two gardenias in the box of roses. "I thought of you every second of the day!" No one, however, neither Ruth nor either of her sons, had "said a word" about the flowers. Lisa had been "hàâf-laughing, half-crying" at takeoff in Madison, but was soon delighted with the flight and was chatting happily with everyone who would listen. Plans had been made for her entertainment -- sailing in the bay tomorrow -- "We're on a sort of isthmus here," she explained -- her sister Jeanie's visit over the weekend -- "So I won't be able to call you until maybe Sunday night or Monday morning." She talked for twenty minutes, and then rang off to call Greg.

9 January 1970: Another very cold day, begun with a temperature of -1°, and rising but to 16°, falling rapidly after sundown. ... Very little mail this morning, indicating another blockage in the Chicago terminal, which the federal postal department seems unable either to clear or get around. ... Resumed the typescript of Return to Walden West, bringing it to page 26, or perhaps 10% of the total.

In afternoon came Kay Ganzlin, who sat visiting with mother before coming upstairs, waiting on Frank Utpatel to take his leave, he having come in briefly after some days of absence; and, once in the studio regaled me with an account -- which she had also given to mother -- of how everybody unloaded troubles on her -- "Aunt Cora -- and she can't hear anyway, and all I hear is 'Ja, Ja -- so it goes!' after everything she says." -- Erne Cunradi "who thinks she's dying -- all the more so after Bruno's death" -- and Myrtle Ganzlin Witwen -- "I can't stand that whining voice." Told her simply to take her telephone off the hook when she needed to rest or get some work done, as I frequently did. Having finished this complaint, she took the opportunity to castigate me for my "affair" --

it was evident that she believed the object of my affections, correctly, to be Kay Mulcahy -- did I not realize that I was glutting my emotions by hurting someone else? How could a man like me indulge his emotions so? How become enamored of a married woman? Und so weiter. She did not, however, have time "to pursue" the matter, and took her leave.

This evening up to watch Chitty, Chitty, Bang Bang, which was mildly entertaining; but in truth my thoughts were so troubled by Caitlin that I could not watch the screen with continuing interest, the persistence of the songs annoyed me -- I had not been aware that the film was a "musical comedy" -- and presently, perhaps a little more than half way through it, I left and went back home to work, which I could do with more concentration and less of a troubled mind than I could watch a film that did not hold my attention. ... Began this evening the "editing" of the letters I had written Kay for a privately printed slender book to be titled Love Letters to Caitlin.

10 January 1970: At 8:30 this morning off for the Musaoda crossing on Highway 60, Dennis Mack driving, to meet someone from Howe Printing of Prairie du Chien with four boxes of The Arkham Collector No. 6 -- a fine, sunny morning, with the landscape almost painfully beautiful, all snow-covered, with the hills against heaven's blue, crowned by dark masses of trees. En route along the road south of Gotham, passed many frozen stretches of the Wisconsin; in one place, however, steam rose from a considerable open stretch, and at that place the trees on both sides of the road were heavily hoar-frosted, very beautiful against sky and water. The driver from Prairie du Chien already waited at the crossroads; in a thrice the boxes were loaded, and we were off, reaching home again at ten o'clock, 30 minutes before I had thought we would manage it. On the way home saw two redtail hawks -- one settled to a post directly in our line of vision, so that we had a very good view of him as he took to wing again immediately before him, making his back to look very black against the snow, and his russet tail to look a dark red; the other perched high in a tree up the hillslope not far from the road.

At 10:15 off for Madison with April, and the two Price girls, Marcia & Melody, and a box of books for Moseley's, which I delivered soon after I left the car, and then walked back to the Perfume Shop to buy some jewelry -- rings, chiefly -- for Kay, and some necklaces and a bracelet for April; then on to the Simon House to join Dennis for lunch. Parted directly thereafter, Dennis to seek out some girl he had met, myself to watch the film of Oliver, which Dennis had already seen, and which I found myself enjoying as much as the stage play. Then to rejoin Dennis at the car in the Simon House parking lot, and to collect the girls, who waited in the lobby, and so off to the Pines for dinner. The seven meals, including tips, cost me a whopping $50.00, which is an adequate measure of what inflation has done to my personal economy.

Home to find Mother upset because the furnace would not work; the temperature in the house was 55°; she had, however, already called a repair man, who came soon after -- but it soon developed that his was the fault for the furnace's failure, for, having come out three weeks ago to check the furnace, he had been unable to find the oil filters, and now had to find them in the pump, after cleaning which the furnace ran once more, and the heat came up. Had he dutifully found the filters and cleaned them three weeks ago, as he should have done, the stoppage would not have taken place. Sat talking with George for some time, then went after Walden at the rollerskating rink and took George home. So to bed, the night slowly warming.

11 January 1970: Caught up on yesterday's mail, and edited a little more of Love Letters to Caitlin before resuming the writing of Return to Walden West. Late tonight completed the former, envisioning a book of perhaps 25-40 pages, since only a small percentage of the letters could be printed, if woeful repetition is to be avoided. ... A cold day. Home all day, and to work all day without interruption. Return to Walden West shaping up much more firmly and effectively than I anticipated, once yesterday's mail had been answered. Worked until very late, almost midnight. No telephone call from Kay, which indicated that her sister Jeanie was still at the Wyatt apartment, and she could not safely use the telephone. Some lessening of the cold late in the day, and the sky cleared, promising a cold night but a warmer day tomorrow.