

Loves:

Get ready for what I'm sure will be an inspired letter. Unreadable, perhaps, but written with madness (and clumsiness), because tonight I ~~am~~ am insanely happy. Insanely so because I have no particular reason to be.

Thank you very much for the presents. The Freeps were exactly the ones I had missed in making the move and the poster is on our wall in our shrine corner, which has sort of unconsciously evolved and contains all the ~~best~~ beautiful things we find and bring home, etc. We were fixing you and other tribesmen some very neat ~~xxx~~ xmas presents -- dried Dwarf Mallow leaves, from which you can make Mallow Water, useful as a hand lotion, confection ingredient (in making marshmallows), antibiotic, fungicide, cough syrup, pancake syrup base, and a number of other things -- but apparently some of the leaves decomposed in drying, for they had a funny "grass pile" smell to them and when Cara and I made some ~~xxxxxx~~ "hot chocolate" with the mallow water, ~~xxx~~ milk, and brown sugar it gave us the shits. (We're making it a custom to sample whatever wild foods we send to people for precisely that reason.) Anyhow, I'm now working on some other, inedible, groovies -- which you will probably get after some time, as I work in a disorganized and slow manner -- but I carry though, by Gawd. The passport data I have placed in my bureaucracy drawer for future reference. (Do you know that the reason the passport law was originally passed was to enable Americans to get into other countries that required them, since American until then did not issue such things. The idea of revoking them or not granting them was unthought-of, until later. If I leave, quite frankly, it just might be without one. For that matter I'm seriously thinking of renouncing my draft card as well, but I'm not going to play martyr and send it to the FBI if I do -- it is none of their business what I do.) It is mind-blowing what subversive thoughts you get once you realize you do not have to put up with that shit if you are willing to take a few chances -- and fewer I suspect than you do in tolerating it and playing the game.

The Love thing and the Hate thing, I've decided, is a phoney issue. The Be thing is where it is at. I mean, take it as it comes and never expect. Expecting is the great illness of Americans and other naive peoples like 19th Century English aristocrats who have never been washed over by chaos. Just know.

I've been doing some bitching writing since we got down here. One of the pieces Cara just final-typed today. It is called "The Vast Minority" and is an introduction to the libertarian capitalists for the kind of people who read HARPER'S. I'm sending it to HARPER'S.

Still eating weeds. All kinds of them by now. Found some Creeping Cucumbers the other day -- called this because they taste like cucumbers (but resemble ~~xxxx~~ robin's ~~xxx~~ eggs, but are green) and grow on a vine. The ripe purple ones taste like a cross between ~~xxxxxx~~ a tomato and an olive with no pit -- and look exactly like the latter. I found a mess of 'em, and I guess I'll go back tomorrow for some more. I'm trying to pickle some, too.

Have you ever tasted chicory coffee? The best "chicory" can be made from dandelion and sow thistle roots, both close relatives of the chicory plant. All you do is roast them till brown clear through.

We have crabs down in the river, and every time I go down there without a net they are all over the place - but when I TAKE a net, forget about it. Well, one of these days...

Did I tell you about Malachi. We found an orphaned kitten by the side of the road and took him in about three weeks ago, and I must admit (despite my initial reservations) he has turned out to ~~be~~ be well ~~worth~~ worth the price -- in fact I'm inclined to believe we got him at a bargain. Yos and Maraiia did not like him at all, at first, but Yos took to swatting him every time he got to close and this keeps Malachi away sometimes and Maraiia has learned to rather like the little bastard. He is the most affectionate cat I've ever seen, who loves to sleep on your ear at purr at full volume. And when he is not sleeping or eating (being too young for the sex scene) ~~he~~ he is ~~involved~~ involved in some kind of game with a piece of loose string or a slipper or whatever happens to be lying around -- Yossarian's ~~tail~~ tail. Absolutely fearless, too. Pushes the big cats out of the way at the food dish and that sort of thing, up with which they put, fortunately. Sometimes we call him Supercat, because he is always leaping from ~~fantastic~~ fantastic heights with a single bound. He's orange like Yos, -his hero whom he follows around and, so help me, imitates, -but with longer hair, which is always in a mess. We call him Malachi the Little Guy.

Hey, send me Don and Barb's address if you have it. I have ordered a complete backset of INNOVATORS and expected (never expect, see) to ~~get~~ get in out of one of the ads they ran, but these still have not arrived. I'm thingking (not to be confused with THINKing) of starting a Survival School somewhat along the lines of what they had in mind, but oriented to a broader spectrum of types and involving actually living off the land as you learn -- no overhead that way. And I'd like to see how they're doing, *besides*.

Idea time. Think this over. I've been kicking it around some time and decided if I could drum up enthusiasm on it from someone else for them to take over 50% of the organizing I get into it: a summer community. For, say, the length of each August we all get leaves of absence and so forth and take over a resort or something like it. (Resorts in Florida are probably cheap in the summer time, and I understand it really isn't all that hot here, either -- ~~people~~ people are just in the habit of coming to Fla. in the winter. Each person could have a job in the community relevant to his abilities. I could forage for food -- by next August I ought to be so good at it ~~I'd~~ I'd amaze even myself; I'm doing quite well so far, still bringing home some new find every couple of days. The kids of the tribe could help me forage, for one thing, and somebody like Larry could hunt, etc. Really do this thing!) Anyhow, it seems to me like a possibility. I'm sure if we got it set up the Mac/Eachrons in Atlanta, who are really nice people, and another couple they know would be interested. And like it wouldn't take near as much planning and committment as an ordinary community because it would be temporary, not like something we're getting into above our heads. If it worked, we could maybe after a couple of years start doing it for three months. If U.S.A gets intolerable, which it will sooner or later and, ~~judging~~ judging from the papers, sooner in all probability -- we can do the same thing someplace else. Well. Cogitate on it.

So much for now... Cara sends her love.

PS - Hey, I would like to do that childrens' Me, too, book thing with you. Maybe me and Cara collaborate on the writing. Also, why don't I get some of Grace's ^{kerry} childrens' stories and see how you like them. There's \$2,000 in that game.