

BERNADETTE MAYER & CLARK COOLIDGE
THE LETTERS, 1965–79

[handwritten]

Nov. 28 [1965]

Dear Bernadette Mayer,
Thanks for sending poems. + Thanks for waiting!
I like them, + will select one or two to use in Jog #3.
Hope to let you know definitely by Xmas + send back what I don't use.
Jog #3 out in January—hopefully...

Best,
Clark Coolidge

P.S.—Could you send me a few more to look at?
—CC

3:I:66

Dear Bernadette Mayer,

Sorry delay; Xmas horrors caught me. Thanks for sending extra poems. I'd like to use House Cap & FBI (as it stands, if you allow). Newer batch tighter, better "poems" perhaps (especially ESSAY), but I like the more open feel of the earlier things, wider range of sound/forms leaps & connections can be seen there. I like to get in among & move around, grab a hold here & there. Don't let this bug you though, you'll do what you want. We can agree on House Cap though, at least (?) So I'll plan to use that. Let me know how you feel about F.B.I. (!) Sorry not to be more particular help, rushed & distracting jazz in ear. Maybe better later. Best wishes, thanks, let me hear

Clark Coolidge

**[Postcard of the New York Public Library
postmarked 23 Oct 1968
handwritten]**

Dear Clark, we haven't really gotten very far on the next issue but why don't you send us some recent things too. Yours,

Bernadette

June four [1969]

Dear Bernadette,

Thanks for your note, & return of mss. Glad you're using Suite V.

"For

Godard" is a collaboration 'tween Larry & me. We did alternating pages. OK to use that, or parts thereof. Consult with Larry on that. / Looking forward to the new issue, as ever.

Good to see you in City; sorry we didn't have more time to talk. / Hi to Vito too, & remind him to write me when he gets time!

all best,

Clark

**[Postcard of “A Dramatic view of The New York Public Library”
postmarked 28 Feb 1969
handwritten]**

Dear Clark,

Please send something for No. 6. We’ve asked most of the people you’ve mentioned + also Larry Weiner, Jos Kosuth, Douglas Heubler + others like that. Rosemary’s in Iowa. Since Aram Saroyan came back to NY it’s been snowing. We’ll start next issue in about a month maybe less

Love, Bernadette + Vito

January 1 [1971] [ragged margins. running down the middle of the page]

Dear Clark,

Is it snowing? Anne & Larry are arranging a reading for us at the church sometime in February. I have a little tv camera & deck for ½" tape & I thought we could make a ½ hour tape to show instead of just reading. What do you think?

If you like the idea we could think about it for a minute & then I could come up for a weekend with the equipment. I was thinking of something outdoors. the only thing is, we cant really edit without alot of trouble or just make simple edits. Let me know what you think, i'd like to visit anyway. My address is 74 Grand st., N.Y. 10013. If we do it, there are some video people who show things at the church & they could help us set it up so everybody could see it. It's snowing here.

Love,

Bernadette

[early 1971]

Dear Clark,

Here is the piece. do what you want with it.

If you don't like this piece, we can work out something else for the tape. If you still want to do it like we planned, send me yours! We can either use our own as they are or work them together, I don't care which, I guess I'd rather put them together. I feel a little down about this piece right now but that doesn't mean anything. I still like the idea for the tape – there's only one complication: I don't know if we can get hold of another tape deck -- we'll need two to show it. we could rent one but it would cost about \$50- maybe which is impossible right now, so if we can't get one, we may have to think up a different tape or a variation of that idea or even read out loud!! or sing. Maybe for the second half of our reading, we could sponsor a little known poet of distinction. He could read our works.

Or we could read from the works of our namesakes – Calvin Coolidge, Louis B. Mayer.

Anyway I think we can work a way of doing that tape, walking back & forth with both of us. As I came toward the camera, very close – a blur – I would be replaced by your blur, then walking backwards, away from the camera.

It would seem like a rite. So does Gertrude Stein.

Let me know.

We should spend at least Tuesday on the tape.

Something about melting.

Love,
Bernadette

It's raining!

monday nite 15th [February 1971]

Dear Bernadette,

Here's something toward what we were talking over. I've had a lot of false starts (to the tune of about 20 pages). Then got onto this thing, after having to stop for flu for two days blahblah excuses. It threatens to go on for some great length, but this's as far as I've got now. Have to go down to Providence for a couple days tomorrow, & time getting short I figure I better send this off to you so you might have time to do something with it, or whatever.

Have you been able to do anything? Maybe you're running against similar problems. Give me a call if you can.

I'm planning to come into town Mnday(Monday) or Tuesday latest (the 22nd or 23rd). Will be staying at Larry's.

Hope camera-sound fixed & everything OK.

Time: 4 A.M. and fading...

Hi, Ed!

love to you both,
Clark

P.S.-- If it turns out we don't have time to mix the two works we can always each read our own whatthefuck...

thursday 26 august [1971]

Dear Bernadette,

Are you back in twon(town)?

Many thanks! for MOVING!! It's the prose-move of the year! My only disappointment(sp?): I wish it were longer.

I never was any good at double-letters...

Here's a thing I've wanted you to have for some time now. Thought I'd see you & hand it over this summer. Too bad we didn't. I started this as a thing (in Feb) to go with our [**"r" in "our" added by hand**] TV show. Discounted that (it), but later it got all reworked changedaround & refurbished into present form: sort of a "portrait" of you (looked thru a lot of your works to write it) filtered through me.

So what happened with you guys this summer? We sorta sat around & some people came & then they left & I got back to writing & then some more people came & then they left & I got back to some more writing & then some more people came & then they left and so. Celia wrote some poems. Heat came & went. Cool past few days. Fall in air. Postcards from Anne/Michael, Larry/Joan in paradise...

Did you ever get that book of yer poems printed up (as was rumored)?

Write when you get a minute.

Dannon Yoghurt disappearing off shelves.

love from us,
Clark

**[Postcard of “The Trial for Witchcraft of George Jacobs, 1692...”
postmarked 7 Sept (?) 1971
handwritten]**

Dear Clark, A crazy summer – we worked! + worked! Not time to even eat yoghurt, lived in Alford but were never there, loved a friend near Eastover but never got to see him, involved with actors + actresses – only time to dream about them + not enough. Summer vacation! liked yr. portrait, thanks. strange. so now we’re back here – with **[added above]** the lunatics not so bad. Exciting even. I’m working on a long project with pictures. Ed involved in his city life + the rest will follow. Love Bernadette Hello Susan, Celia

**[Postcard of “George Washington Bridge,”
postmark unreadable, 1972
handwritten with different colored markers]**

DEAR CLARK,

GERTRUDE STEIN MARATHON READING WILL BE APR. 28 from morning til next dawn
YOU BE AROUND?

B. Matisse

march 21 tuesday [1972]

Dear Bernadette,

Ape Twenny-Ate? I'll be there. Probly be in a day in advance of that. Can't come 2 days in advance: the 26th is Celia's 4th birthday!

Imagine you've got amazing people lined up by now. Cage? Jean-Claude Killy? Moe Howard??

It might be interesting to get Virgil Thompson. Anychance? Ray Bremser comes to mind too: a truly zany Steinmouth...

Larry & I've been cooking up an idea for my StMarx reading (Ape 5): 10 people to each read 10 pages of my 100pp-work, The Maintains. I'd like to have you read 10 if you would. Larry's my producer there & 'll nodoubt get in touch with you about it, if he hasn't already. Trying to get Cage too(!)

I'm sending my "portrait" of you to Alice for her Chicago mag.

Tons of busy here oflate. Carpenters putting finishing touches on acres of shelves downstairs...

Hi to Ed! & see you both soon...

love,
Clark

[drawing at bottom of the page]

26V72

Dear Bernadette--

Just to say thanks & how incredible is Unnatural Acts!!!! Greatest rewrite job of the century! Really worked out, sheerest genius, etcetcetc. Have to talk how you did that someday... Meanwhile LOVE to you & Ed. Let us know when you be up this area,

Clark

**[Postcard of “North Street, Pittsfield, Mass.”
postmarked 16 Aug 1972 (?)
handwritten]**

Dear Clark Big Sky #3 is wonderful I read it all the time a great variety of work is as mix with
one you. Loaves.

Love,

Gertrude Stein

**[Postcard
postmarked 1972
handwritten]**

Dear Clark –

I wonder if you could write me a kind of “reportage” version / run-down / story of the day we went to the cave. It doesn't matter how it's written or what information you include, but I've written something + I need an adjunct.

Love, Bernadette

[Sept/Oct 1972]

DEAR CLARK,

Took a while to get this typed xxxx up cause I was waiting for my brand new electric to get here.
Here it is.

All this was written before we went to the cave, as is (?) obvious.

& I'm hoping to mess around with it combined with yours which is terrific (both) just what I
needed wanted hoped for etc.

& more.

& I dont know exactly what that messing around will involve [spelling corrected by hand], but
maybe you do when you read this.

That whole cave thing was timing incredible for me, if you know what I mean, which is hard to
explain but

I sort of did when we talked,

anyway,

Its really elating delighting to have something coming back & forth in terms xx of writing that is
something really going on,

& not just the usual, by no means.

& a terrific time we had.

I've got so much writing written I dont know what to do with it, how do you do?

LOVE TO YOU BOTH,

& see you again soon hope.

Bernadette

NOTE: From Ed soon coming: further notes about cave movie (I've secretly seen them being
written, addressed to you).

tuesday 17 october [1972]

Dear Bernadette,

A new electric sounds (& looks) like a good idea. Hmmm, now to figure how to promote one. Tho I sometimes worry those machines'll get ahead of me(?)

Anythway. Here's the "mix". Of your piece & my two. Seems like it took me longer to type the copy thanit originally did to write the thing! Always lengthens things when I worry about spelling things right. A lesson in there somewhere...

Things.

The piece looks to me now like sorta a "take" on your writing motion. But innaresting blend in spots. Maybe you've already done a parallel mix already? Or if you haven't (or even if you did) maybe you'll be able to rehsp .. er reshape this stuff further. I always get the notion at points like this that a certain piece could go on getting changed forever(!) Like traslating...translating tween languages etc.

Already.

Lemme know what you think/what you do. Ed mentioned a possible writing-track for the movie & this stuff is probably it. I thought it might be good to wait tho & see how the miked-body-track sounds by it lonesome as sufficient track. In which case we go on with the writing anyway & "use" it for whatever eventual. Maybe it'll be a whole huge collab book???

I dig your piece a lot by itself too. Couldn't resist seeing what would happen blending it tho. See what you do to my stuff etc. This is great & we should definitely go on wherever it leads us.

Cave movie is great project & we should do it (we should do everything!!??!) soon's we can. As I wrote Ed you should come up here again befo de snow flies & we take the "compleat tour", take it from there. Hope all this can be arranged soon.

Got a copy of R.L. Gregory's The Intelligent Eye (follow-up to Eye & Brain?), going over it with 3-D glasses etc. Great inroads...

Looks like I'll be reading at 98 Greene loft under Greenwald auspices Jan 11. Maybe stay with you folks for a couple?

Reading up at Franconia College thursday, & also give The Maintains another run-thru with the kids there. Thinking of maybe reading it myself first time in toto solo at Greene Gal (?)

Temp in 20's here tonite, an icy moon just sank.
More soon, & you too.

love,
Clark

Oct 28 [1972]

DEAR CLARK,

This is the covering letter, the other is the letter, both are letters but the covering letter covers the other letter so as to make it seem real since the other letter is not real letter exact. It started out as one but not one. So here you are. The writing will arrive soon.

I mean the cave writing. These xxx two covering letters will cover me or you until the cave writing can be covered thoroughly. The way you covered the cave situation with your writing was incredible, you blew my cover.

However, I didnt read it twice yet so's the being able to complete mine. Nevertheless, as you can see, I havent yet got got back to being used to writing as I did at the typewriter.

Tried to get up there this weekend but failed.
We'll see what we can do & what happens.

Loveloove,

Bernadette

[handwritten, both asterisks centered: *

Sure can stay with us in Jan. but maybe before to contribute to UNNATURAL ACTS (?)

*]

**["3-D" postcard of the World Trade Center
postmarked 18 Dec 1972
handwritten]**

[In the postcard text, "tallest twin towers," "soar," "lower," "open," and "six subterranean levels" are circled]

Dear Clark + Dear Susan!
Keep on truckin.
We're with ya.
Love,
Bernadette + Ed

Workshop anxious for Clark Coolidge weeks!

[handwritten, early 1973]

Dear Clark –

Ed says I should write “Dear Chuck”

Dear Chuck,

How are you? Did you get my postcard I mean could you read my postcard or did it get rained on? Those were the days of the great New York. Winter Rains there hasn't been a visible flake of snow + the only ice is frozen water – no good for the potato crop. Today is 60 degrees + sunny.

I am sending under separate cover a brand new revised, covered, + secured-by-bolts copy of the script the complex + insane financing of which is looking good but I wont go into until its looking better. But I'd like you to check out, at the end of Scene 17, one of my finest steals, and, see if you recognize the source of Scene 27, another coup for scientific + illuminating thievery by self + Ed.

Enclosed here are some poems by Peter Seaton, a guy in my workshop – after I read them a couple of times, I suddenly remembered about your following or imitators, see what you think of these, cause I think they're good to boot.

The workshop people are really anxious for you to come + do some sort of thing – all fans. So as soon as your mechanical troubles are interrupted try + get down here. Just think, you could have to live here.

We got a \$750 grant for Unnatural Acts, so, see what happens. Got to 'talk' to you about that too. Somebody asked me the other day if you + I were 'grouped' together in the same 'group' of writers. Who are the others in our group, please let me know

The main thing I find myself working on now is dream projects, trying to get up a plan for a 'cooperative reverie' for an issue of the magazine (by the way the last issue was awful wasnt it, how did we get a grant? Somebody said 'Ashbery'!) + also in the workshop, really interesting to see how people's level of distraction increases when the topic goes from poetry to dreams + also level of intensity – when the class is over everybody runs away. They seem to think there's more at stake when in fact I can prove there isnt. In the workshop dream project so far, there's very little 'product' which is interesting – I'm planning to try to write up what's happening, but now I'm too steeped in it, self.

Love to Susan (Tom's on crutches too) + Celia + you

Bernadette

tuesday 23 january [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

I guess it's about time I quit allowing you to keep up both sides of this correspondence all by your lonesome. I must owe you about 4 or 5 letters/postcards by now. I got off the letter-track pretty much the last two months. What with all the folk who seem to want to write me (me to write them), I spose it's not eggsactly unnatural I'd have to interrupt the continuum at some point for a while. But I feel most badly about handing you this silence. Laziness has had its innings too.

A lot of mere reality interruptions since November, it seems. Gotta learn to deal more evenly with the dailyness push/pull. Car troubles seem at this point like a true automated nightmare. We're now told that we'll have to wait another 2 or 3 months for cylinder-heads to be ordered from the vaterland. So much for VWs (no longer in any sense a "peoples' car"). We're now trying to get rid of the bus in trade for "something" presently sitting on a local car lot (proably a compact wagon [blotted pen mark] of some kind), to tide us over until we can get something we'd rather have (Chevy Blazer, which we're also told would take till summer to order). Incredible nonsense. Typical King Exxon America 1973.

Yes, did get your card! It was about the best thing that happened to us since November, no kidding. Boosted our spirits terrificly. & at just the right moment. That was just at the time when Susan banged up her leg, Celia had bronchitis, the cellar was flooding, etcetcetc. You must have (somehow) known... I haven't forgotten about our rewrite project, believe it or not. It's still sitting here in its own special pile on desk just awaiting. I got so slowed down in work these past months that what little writing-energy I did scare up had to go firstly onto the long work I've been trying to get out since last May. At this rate I may finish it by this coming May. But, the other day I finally go the whole-form of it forthefirsttime firmly in head, so it should go quicker from now on out. I think it's gonna be titled Quartz Hearts.

Yeah, the 2nd Unnat Acts seems to suffer from particularity of the Pros. It seems to work out better when the participants aren't Writers. Or aren't yet. I also think mebbe the thing goes better when it makes a smoother continuum throughout. This (2nd) one seems more divided up into X's work Y's work etcetcetc. I find myself helplessly playing name-games with it. It's interesting, tho, to find all this out. & in the doing of it. I wonder what would happen if everybody used the same source material? Or dream material? "Cooperative Reverie" sounds like a great notion! How ya gonna do it? I've been paying more attention to my dreams lately for some reason (tho I haven't gotten to the point again of writing 'em down-- maybe [indented space] I will). Had one dream where Ron Padgett was introducing the first American reading of J.G.Ballard, only "Ballard" turned out to be Glen Baxter in disguise & his first words were "Coffee, tea, or vermiculite?" (!)

Also been reading the Compleat Works of Kafka, really for the first time. & apropos dreaming. I think the "social-religious-nightmare" aspect of his writing has been greatly exaggerated. More interesting is how he was able to get a dailyness quotient into dream state through his almost lightless (unspotlit) narrative. For instance: the guy who comes home to find two little balls bouncing up & down in his room & immediately starts pragmatically figuring how to put rug under them so he can sleep, etc.

Haven't received your script yet, but remember it well & looking forward to reading again & seeing what changes/additions you've made in interim. Lewis Warsh wrote me that seeing you & Ed & reading the script were the undoubted highlights of his recent visit in NYC. There's been a lot of taped-transcribed-talk vibration in the air lately. Interview Barry Watten did with me in Oct (& sent me transcript). Tape-talks with Guston & subsequent typing up. I've been reading Kerouac's Visions of Cody to Susan (the great tape sections of that). & now comes a mag (VORT) with interviews with Hollo & Berrigan. A focus presently floating over the map.

Peter

Seaton's stuff is good, interesting. Tho these days I find it hard to "judge" stuff that's in any way "like" mine. Or even judge my own, tho I always know when it's good to me. Seaton's Delaware reminds a bit of the sort of thing I was into back in 1966-67. & I can see he's awork in the interstices.

Actually I've read very little "new writing" lately, find myself reading Melville, Kafka, a book on Piero DellFrancesca (Roberto Longhi), or stuff like Duberman's book on Black Mountain, or Charles Ives' Memos (& listening to a lot of his music) (also a lot of Glenn Gould playing Bach).

Good on your grant. Guess they're really spreading the bucks around (heard Bill Berkson got one too). Maybe **[indentation]** it'll pay some rent or something anyway. Did I tell you I applied for a Guggenheim (which I'm supposed to be trying to forget about till March, when they "decide")? Whatever that might come to mean...

I didn't realize that you & I were in a "group". But then somebody's always trying to do that to us (& everybody). I don't think there are any "others". That makes us a "duo"? It'd make more (some) sense if anybody paid us to do one-niters together?

Incidentally (very so), & speaking of "pay", I heard from Jan Herman (a guy I met in SF who's taken over Emmett Williams' job at Something Else Vermont) that "Dick is interested in" The Maintains. Trouble is, he wants to "get all chummy" with me in front (that's praps a suitably awkward way of putting an awkward situation), doesn't like printing people he's not "old buddies" with, etc. As I recall Dick Higgins I feel that's a matter to be avoided (he's a crazy bastard). Tho I would like the thing published, nobody else's asked, etc. Also I have no way of xeroxing my only copy up here. Naturally of course I've heard nothing directly from him, think I'll wait & see just how interested he is. Wasn't he interested in doing a book of yours? Ever hear anything further?

The longer we live up here the harder it seems to want to come to NY. I'm beginning to feel like somebody living up above the Arctic Circle who reads Time/New Yorker et al, knows all "the latest" etc, & doesn't give a shit for any of it. Hmmm. However! One of the few things I really do want to come in for is to see you, do the class thing. So, as soon as we get the car deal straightened out somewhat I'll let you know & come down. I promise!. Meanwhile I feel The Larry about to descend on us, armed with 30 St Marx reading-tapes to be edited (?!?!?!). Man the Valium!!

all love to you & Ed (& Tom's crutches),

Chuck

[handwritten, early 1973]

Dear Clark,

Poetry really stinks. I hate it. What a load of shit.

Now, before we do the dream issue [wavy line, music notes] Glad to get yr nice long letter FAST FOOD is moving on [long arrow] interesting problems ahead. It's all we think about. *¹ I think writing scripts is my only chance to remain Shakespeare – have to get out of this precious environment (I'm trying to convince Larry to publish MEMORY instead of a packet of poems!) In the last 2 weeks I have heard from 3 2nd-hand sources that she (me) doesn't write "real poetry" – hooray! You do the Dadaists proud + what do you get – a racing mind: "maybe I should!" Anyway, just some bourgeois problems from this end. + Two days ago we owed our landlord 800 dollars + God came down from the sky + laid it on us, as they say, maybe we'll merge with some authority, like St. Marks Church.
Hello!

So, besides everything else you have to write, you have to write for our next issue, which can be done by mail. We'll send you 10 photographs to work from, then we'll send you (4) other people's writings, then photo-collages, + it'll have 3 stages. More specific instructions will come with the snaps. Are you up for it? Let me know as soon as you can. The other writers will be me, Ed F., Michael Brownstein + Jerry Rothenberg, unless they say no. Ed B. will be one of the visual workers along with [crossout] our friend Tom Jung who did the cover + drawings for FAST FOOD + 3 other artists (?!). The final issue will include final-stage writings + visuals, unless something really interesting happens along the way.

Dream issue, I'm completely confused for the moment. It's a giant idea so I guess the best way to come to it is meek + small. We might just begin by trading (among a group) written records of dreams + play it by ear. My work with the workshop on this stuff has been so confusing + ear-opening that I don't know what's possible any more. But – best kind of thing to try – no? Lots of energy. Soon as I get more copies xeroxed I'll send you a little anthology of writings about dreams (+ dreams) I made for the workshop (including the "Ballard dream" you mentioned in yr letter. The "anthology" just loosely outlines a direction in regard to dreaming + writing. Everybody hates it, like a lead bolt. I love it.

I wish we could get up there some time but probably not for a while cause the movie business is right at its peak. Spring? Soon?

Anyway, plan on doing a workshop when you come + let me know about everything you know about.

Love to you, Susan, Celia + Chuck
from
Bernadette
+ cool Ed (who has his Id, is getting our movie financed, a genius,
+ has a new leather jacket, a hood's jacket 2nd hand from Barry
Upstairs)

NOTES: (1) Tom's on a cane.

(2) If you send him your manuscript, I'll type up mine.

|
|

¹ [bottom of page 1:] * Except for big mud-puddles of poetry all around. if only it would've snowed, real hard

THE DICK [circled]

What the fuck? We have to prepare them for longer + longer works. Its our Arctic duty. See ya.

tuesday 13 february [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

Pardon if I write right back so immediate, but if'n I don't it'll take me forever. Country Time (ahem) & various & sundry work & brain loads. & don't expect you have to drop anything & write right back to this (me). Just answer in time (hoho)...
What is all this...

Good Lord, my typewriter's full of hair I just noticed.

Mine.

Lemme thank

youse for the tremendous Fast Food printed state! Yeah! It's great. & the bolts are the only book-design breakthru since whoknows. Genius idee! The only thing that book (can) remind me of is a parts-manual to some forgotten auto lying in back of some garage full of data. I can't believe it! Did you "do" 'em all that way? Doubtless.

My white-wall included is perfect. But I fear I missed the secretsource of Scene 27. Gulp. Can you tell, or will that ruin something (everything)? Feeling dumb...

Wouldn't be surprised if you snuck some Hawthorne in there, on me, who never "really" read the gent. Probly not...

Anyway you sure is right about the poetry stink. Yaghh!
Never truer. & not just “our crowd” (who?). I was listening to a record of Pound reading in his
80’s at Spoleto t’othernite & thought Jesus what am I listening to this crap for!!??? Realizing
fullwell that he’s one of the pantheon (God how I hate that concept!) we’re all sposed to know &
love etctcetcetctcetcetctcetcetctcetcetctcetcetctcetcetctcetcetctcetc. I never really wanted to write
“poetry” anyway (true). &another anthology (God how I hate that Concept) just came out that I
sent into 3 years (easily) ago & forgot completely about & so here it comes repeat with title
(“New American Poetry”, huh???) & old moonface-pik of yourstruly in there too (for which
consult your local book-theft area). So what & so what & so what.

Well, I've had lots of thoughts about all this muck of late, which will relate to you at appropriate time & place soon. I even wrote Bill Berkson a letter dumping on a bunch of the local greats (& not so local I guess) & heard later (not from him, maybe never again?) thru Larry (the merrygoround) that Bill "explained" it all to himself by saying Clark must've been sick, depressed, etc. But no, (surprise), I'm in my right mind. As I was saying to Guston the otherday, I'm discontented with their lack of discontent...

Hell with all that. I'm thinking about your script, how you'll shoot it, et al. Wish there was a part within for a Chuck! Or maybe I could be a "grip" or something??? Worcester?

Dream procedure sounds interesting. Not sure I get all what I'm supposed to do (not sposed to yet?), but sure send the data & I'll have a go. Specially if Ed's gonna be on vizzuals. Count me in (anyway). Been keeping some track of dreams lately somereason anyway. Here's part of lastnite's:

Ron Padgett & I in “Germany” to check out vast “Documenta” exhibition there, which is spread in different buildings throughout the whole town. We enter a big auditorium, curving rows of seats

jammed with thousands sitting, except where the stage/screen would be is one gigantic plate-glass sheet window giving onto the lawns in front of the building, people streaming in. We go to the back of the auditorium where against the backwall in semi-darkness are a few exhibits. One is a plaster mockup "lunar landscape" covered with tiny marbles we get up & roll around on. Later outside Ron & I somehow get separated in the mass of people.

Funny everybody hates the dream work so much. Why? Interesting to figure out, maybe. In my experience almost everybody seems to enjoy hearing a dream or two...

Just saw a TV-movie (another "William Shattner Classic") had a girl in it reminded me a bit of you (think she was English, dunno her name). Movie could have been good a few minutes, but wasn't. Horror at 37,000 Feet.

And, speaking of unnatural acts, Susan seems to have managed to grow huge blossoming daffodils indoors in February.

Daffodils?

Reading a great book (from the great Lenox Library!) on cave-art: The Eternal Present by S. Giedion (huge Bollingen thingee).

Fee Dawson has some pretty good dream stuff.

Yeah, the "Dick Higgins Problem", hmmm. Well, OK, I'll do it if you do. But (ugh) it means typing up another copy all by these my fingers, since no xerography around here. Guess there's nothing to lose?? Tho wish I could stop fantasizing that soon's I send the thing in I get a call from Dick to come up & chat...

Notice SomethingElse is publishing Stein's How to Write (finally) & As A Wife Has A Cow (or whateverthehell it is)?

Larry was here & I was helping 'im dub tapes from St Marx evenings. I sure got a hate on re poetry from all that stuff! We had a big argument about John Weiners, who I never could really see. So, I'm sitting on (slmost) all (that's almost in permutationary) the St Marx cassettes from the last 3 years (the one of you & Jackson is missing, you have?). Dug the Cage one. Also the Maintains reading(!) The poe-tree reels onward...

Celia did a great new painting called "The Biggest Star".

Got our "car" back yesterday (3 months). It runs. I can say nomore. (we're gonna order a Blazer)

Check out a record called Spring (United Artists label) for the pop-muse sleeper of the year (sounds like Larry?). Picked up a new Monty Python maniacy too (their latest English).

They're gonna run a super highway thru the Berkshires, heard? Hope they don't dig up Eldon's 'fore we get at it!

Sedn(sned?) send all dreamins. Soon. Soon. love to both ya's,
C.

sunday 10 june [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

Here's the ten pieces. At least I'm not late with these! But maybe this is the easy part?

What now?

love,
Clark

P.S.--traded the bus for a brandnew "Tang"-colored one, the VW dealer coming out & hauling the old hulk out of the trees & taking it in trade (\$700). Here's hoping, & lots of knock-on-wood!

And--signed contract with SomethingElse the otherday.

sunday 12 august [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

Here's the stuff. I started with elaborate numerical plans for a structure for it, but that seemed too tedious (matching every section with every other one etc.), so I ended eyeballing it in an afternoon. Couldn't figure to "use" the visuals (or if I was posed to?), so didn't. Anyway, a sorta stratified tale among Edna & the skunks, etc. Hope it goes...

Izzis the "last stage"? Thought we might be going to go thru a few more flip-flops, but then that'd probly be too much for everybody (?) Be great to see how it all looks enmagged!

Everybodything fine all here. Did we tell you we got brand spanking new VWbus (orange)? It's OK so far (approaching 3000 miles). Knock on desk. Had a roof-seal job done too which we hope'll hold come winter. It's raining like hell here right now actually (thunderstom)...

Saw a not-bad TV-movie otherrnite, A Cold Night's Death, with Eli Wallach Robert Culp as scientists working monkeys on artic peak & what happens. Somereason I've always been fascinated with artic/antartic movies, anything on. Little wooden halls covered in all that white sheet. Anyway, put me thunking on Alone. Again. I go in & out of those thoughts alot these days, ever since Ed put it to me about writing a script. Hmmm... "Problem" seems to be how to enact all that journal-entry... I don't really dig all that voice-over they usually do, do you? Must be otherway. I figure silence must be big factor (major state) of this flick. And, best, no more talking/humming/singing/screaming [**spelling corrected by hand**] than Byrd would have done (did) through that time alone. I'll have to reread it from this point: see how much of journal-entry can be done visually/audially. I think a lot/most(?)

Wish I had my own copy of the book (sick of having return it to library). You know where dig up one for me? How movie (\$\$\$) projects coming? Izzat a groan I hear? Hoping not. Look up.

I found another cave north of here (Lanesboro), [**spelling corrected in type**] similar to Eldon's (same marble) but smaller, more water through it. Funny zig-zag crawlways along dip & strike of beds. Crawled around in there for a few hours looking and came out to hot & mosquitoes. Typical. Eldon's still our best bet...

Just read Burrough's Exterminator! Pretty sharp, no matter what they tell ya... Allen S called goombye from Pa. (to Europe) otherrnight, with strange stories of seeing you guys, which I automatically try transform back into useable human reality as I see it. To him everybody is "strange"?

OK, wanted get this off to ya righto. Lemme hear what's up.

Love to
you & Ed,

Clark

Wednesday [1973, handwritten]

Dear Clark –

Your reading has created an explosion in New York, as expected (I – you did) + I thought you should know about it. All my workshop + Ed Friedman are off + myself, so, you must come + do a “lecture” as soon as possible. The available dates are Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 (Fridays) – or Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25 (Sundays): this is pressure. All of December is also free.

Ed is asleep from working so I am writing in pen. Outside they are re-paving the road still for the 2nd time at 4:30 am just steam-rollers. It was real good to see + talk to you + Ed + I just wish we had a car² right now for more travels + visits.

I read at the new open readings last Monday + the reaction was total stillness, stunned audience, Ed F. described as if I were “shrieking” for hours at an audience that only expected “immersion” + this interests me. Interests? I am fascinated by the idea that your writing can explode an audience without overt rhetoric + mine, with nothing but persuasion. And I think its just some convoluted permutation, by way of explanation, of experience of intensity intensity of experience, in it, out of it, I came to the conclusion we are old/new motherfuckers + all this speculation is just the result of the excitement created here by your reading (great timing!) in combination with a new workshop group + Ed F’s Monday night series, which is really good.

I am getting very interested in completely changing, abdicating, my “style” – it’s got too good + all I am interested in is its transitions. This must have much to do with finishing memory. I wish you could be here to see the “poetry”? excitement around us this year but I know its no different, one place or another. But finally, something is going on + people are into real writing or song or something.

When you send me the cave work I’ll attempt to insert in my rewrite the ideas about transitions + I think it will make for an interesting space in there.

Also, we are putting out a “dummy” issue of UNNATURAL ACTS to get more grant money, an issue of the 1st series of writings + drawings + as we put it together tonight it seemed like something really interesting was going on there (aside from Michael’s stupid aphorisms). Will send you a copy.

When’s it gonna snow + UFO?

Love, Bernadette

²+ a movie + money + the rest.

wednesday 31 october [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

Explosion, eh? Thanx for the report. Glad some shaking up was accomplished by somebody intra NYC PS. Long past time for that. Keep it going!

Here, luckily, such “explosions” as a busted telephone (now fixed), will the roof leak again?, trick-or-treat kids coming on the wrong night, Celia starting to write her own letters, & me starting into another longwork which will doubtless take years this time(!) Usual things that keep the ego fixed in daily sanity...

But (but) I get some peeps thru letters into the shenanigans of responding minds. David Gitin writes me he got letters from Jackson MacLow on my “very good work” & wondering if I “used chance-operations or not---think so” (!) (ole one-track) & Fee Dawson writes me using words like “genius” etc. Hope I can keep 'em at bay!

So, dive back into the work. This new longy, now just plotted out, will include everything(!), & doubtless take at least two years in the working on. So I get my minimum daily requirements. Hopefully this one'll work in practically every bit of information I've ever read, heard, seen. etc. Am I nuts?!?!? Let's see... Maybe I too can hit the unpublishability limit hit by you in your recent thousand whatever page work! Writing daily keeping the process open, see where & what we get & not think it over too much in front...

Yes, we are “old/new motherfuckers”! The feeling I get too, timeless, every whichway, pouring in/pouring out. Ah, shit, how do ya “describe” this!? Birch trees in a slight wind...

I must confess I don't understand how my work can affect an audience that way (I was more amazed than anybody). Are they really getting with my moves or what? You must feel such a response but never seem to get any articulation of it (after). Glad in a way I'm a sorta communications pessimist...

Right, transitions!! That's the crux of it. I've sometimes tried to make my work all transition(s). Other vocab inputs helping there, getting mind to shift natively on call (takes long practice).

I'll want to set into this newwork for two or three weeks of nothing but up here, so best think in terms of my “lecture” (what should I do?) in December. Not to put off again, but I wanta get this thing going on its own.

Just heard those guys who got taken in “crabclaw” spaceship passed lie detector test. Hmmm. Finally finding out that aliens really are squat guys with crab claws & pointy ears would be a bit like discovering Jesus really looks like those sundayschool paintings! Spoor of the unconscious archetype in this somewhere?

Hope they finally quit on your street nights, so you can enjoy quiet & make your own noise. Here they're building a little “house” for the tractor(snowplow), daytime only luckily...

Using first-series UNNAT ACTS works as mag (in sequence) sounds like good idea, specially since

better not wait for “final” mixes (they’re taking so long & going to India), get something out soon to see.

WORKSHOP mag you gave me looks terrific (sharp) (amazing what you’ve got them into doing actually) from aimless readings I’ve done in it so far. Want to give it whole uninterrupted run-thru soon.

Send next stage Cave-work when you get it (I’m excited to see ideas on transitions you mention putting in). That work now seems close to the big work I’m in now, so shouldn’t take so long in the waiting&writing from now on.

Great seeing you & Ed as ever. When we talk I always get big feeling of sanity (unusual in “writing scene”?) & promise to go on.

More soon.

All love to you and Ed,
Clark

P.S.-- Susan just read-thru Lance Rentzel’s woes in a flash.

Oh, & could you send me George Quasha’s address? I wanta get copy of his tape/my reading if possible. Probly better sound (Uher) & Church-tape cut off in middle due to my duh forgetting turn over cassette(!)

tuesday 4 december [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

This is an interim missile to apologize for the long silence. November has been a truly miserable month for us here. Our car's been in "the shop" for three weeks so far & still not ready, thus trapping us (except for occasional borrows of neighbors' cars--in itself a drag) on hill (I've hardly been out of the house for three weeks). Plus a season of colds & various germs--the worst chest-cold of all time for me, which always cuts me off from working &/or feeling good about much of anything. Plus bad roof leaks, & basement-room flooded last week due to faulty concrete foundation osmosis. Plus, as if all that wasn't enough, to top it all off today Susan got hit by a car in Pittsfield--we thought her leg was broken but it turned out to be "just" a bone-bruise, big swelling, leg elevated, ice pack, etc.

Jesus. Time for a change of luck (& mood)!

So, I find myself just getting to see some light, getting out from under xxxxxx (various matters of depress & furour(sp?). Pile of letters to answer, etc. Will get to the rewrite scene soon as I can. Got your letter (with Cocteau stuff, which I'll add, great!), much thanks. Lots of ideas re "the work", & re your group rewrite problems too. Will write all this to you soon. Really!

Pisses me
off to have to enumerate complaints to you thus! Such is life as it goes (on & off)...

Really
digging your Hunger piece in CHICAGO! Best work in that mag in many moons!

So, soon.
Wanted you to know I'm still "on the beam", tho delayed.

Much love to you & Ed,
Clark

wednesday 12 december [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

Here's one for you:

"In all those diseases where absolute silence, and the total exclusion of light are indicated, the Cave, above all other places, possesses pre-eminent advantages; for nowhere else have we these conditions combined. The only condition in which risk is incurred is during the menstrual period. Serious, and even fatal results have been the consequence of inattention to this fact."

First time I ever ran across such a notion in the cave literature! It's from A GUIDE MANUAL TO THE MAMMOTH CAVE OF KENTUCKY, by Charles W. Wright, M.D. published in 1860.

Hmmmmmmmm...

So what else is new?

LOVE,
Clark

[handwritten across top:] Thursday ——— [November or early December

1973]

Dear Clark,

Kinda hard to write this letter cause there's too much to write about which means, to put it simple, that I'm not living with Ed for a while which I somehow think, absurdly, is going to panic you so dont panic – it's the old xxxxxx behaviorist theory – you arent panicking, what am I doing? Anyway, I'm the culprit of the scene in case you hear, inevitabl, all this as gossip. Things got impossible for Ed so I left & he was really happy about it for a while, he's been wanting to try out living alone & been really worried about his work (turned 29 Dec. 7th, &tc.), & now we're both really depressed about it & it's hard, withdrawal, your house your possessions your dividing up of the friends. Fuck this shit. But we got no ideas about what'll happen. Except that Ed thinks it's going to take alot less long a time for things to straighten out than I do & then, so, maybe I'm wrong. Enough of that. Ed is living with Tom at the xxx loft.

& even more absurdly I am now starting a new paragraph. I guess the idea of absurdity keeps coming up about telling you this because of all the talk about crazy new york & crazy scenes & xxxxx neurotic new york & crazy pressures & how you're so much somehow out of that & I always felt I was too, in my own way, & now all this is happening. But it's good (stupid good) for us to be apart for a while & maybe necessary after living together for ten years in crazy new york surrounded by crazy scenes & all the pressures & needless to say our pretty neuroses, all in a row. I just sorry I started it all with & I really think I can blame it on, my fucking work, my "late" work. & I'm almost sure that if I had never started that kind of writing & done the volume of it, not the volume at all but the intensity of it & where it is was always leading, I would never have found out what was going on between me & Ed that was all wrong & I would never have had the nerve to leave either, whether that's xxxxx good or bad (??) – bad(?) & I'm sure it's no accident that I left xxxxx the day I got a letter from something else begging me to sign a contract for no money & I read it aloud to ed, or he read it to me, & he got out of the car & I thought I was never going to see him again. & now all of a sudden it's raining like a motherfucker here. Dont worry if this makes no sense at all, I didnt intend to write you this much about it, just a sentence I was hoping I could get away with, but then I couldnt stop doing that monster work either. Edgar Poe?

Anyway something else really wants the book but they say they have no money right now, what is that scene? I wrote them a hard-nosed (?) letter & demanded something. Also their design ideas are pretty hokey. Who is george mattingly? He always ends his letters "happy trails"! I dont know how to go on with all this "business" but it keeps me sane, I guess, if there is one.

So,

Peter Stamos from the workshop is editing the city college literary magazine & with a budget (for one issue!) of \$700, he wants to make it really good. There's no idea of publishing city college people & he is collecting really fat contributions from everybody to make a fat magazine & asked me to ask you if you would be willing to publish part of the cave work in it, maybe your first reworking of both our work. Let me know. I'll get on to my turn at the cave soon as I get settled into more work & less mood. It's no wonder I've been obsessed with transitions.

Also, anytime in January you could come down to do a "lecture" would be great. The church is hedging about the lectures as a series, the money part, but any tuesday or friday would be fine. I'm not paying attention to them. We've already had one by a philosopher-physicist on "2,000 years in the history of inertia from aristotle to relativity theory" & scheduled alan sondheim, who's moving into tom's apartment, & an astronomer to talk about the comet, plus maybe hans richter (?) & some other murderers, including linguists & steve reich. My ideas about your lecture are it could be a reading with the workshop of the Maintains which always works, or maybe we could get together or practice there some sort of that Hawthorne-Melville dialogue, or I'm really tempted to ask you to do something about caving without relating it at all to any literary. Most of the lectures are science anyway & we're working in the workshop alot off of Einstein's writing. So let me know what you think. Also we'd all appreciate a reading of Polaroid, in toto.

Quasha was really snotty about the tape of your reading which caused me to have a fight with him, which I will do at the first word he says, allways, no matter what we're talking about. His address is 159 Christopher Street, (that's from memory but I'm pretty sure) – why not write him a really sweet letter he cant refuse – he's a jerk & an entrepreneur, if there ever was one. Fuckin dope dealer who wants to save the poor helpless poets by doling out money to them week by week cause if he just gave them the money outright, all at once, they'd spend it foolishly. So you can see. Very tight-assed. We talked about the "preservation" technique & "valuable" tapes of poetry readings alot & then I kicked him. He was worried about the cost of the tape.

So I'm at 17 St. Marks Place, NYC (#20, c/o Piombino) & Anne just got back from India & she says "great! We can hang out together" Everything boggles my mind but the sanity aint gone, sometimes I wish it would be.

So write, & more soon, love to Susan & Celia

Jacques gave Ed & me his 1964 Cadillac just before all this shit so maybe there's a chance of coming up, it has snow tires, when things get more (what do they get?

but we'll bring our own
valiums [handwritten line from end of "valiums" to the righthand margin]

[handwritten] Read in Chicago where Ted taught – read two hours + really got into performing but for a typical college audience. Desperate people, including Tom Raworth who's taken Ted's place.

[long line connecting blank space above to the following, handwritten at the end of the page:]

Love,
Bernadette

tuesday 18 december [1973]

Dear Bernadette,

No panic here, don't worry. We're with you, both of you! Naturally concern about good friends having troubles, but we're betting on you to work it all out for best no matter the what. And, natch, as you figured, Larry dropped his two-cent "Bernadette & Ed Split. Surprised? No." in his letter the other day--that pissed us off, his usualcasual presumption, he has to be "on top" of the scene, whatever etc. As if he "predicted" it all along & now gets to love saying I told you so, etc. Phew! But that's rumor, & rumor's a "story", & all the unnaturality of that mode, so we can't take that seriously. Good to hear from you, so forget the rest of them various mongers...

The SomethingElse scene seems all fucked up in possible soon backruptcy maybe. Just got a bugged letter [**spelling corrected by hand**] from Jan Herman, saying he was sitting on top of a pile of unpaid tabs, everything insecure, didn't know what would happen finally. Then I read via Project Newsletter that Dick has left, whatever that means (he hasn't seemed too "with it" anyway lately?). Jan still "promises" to try & get The Maintains out on sched, but I have the usual dire doubts on that score. All too familiar (I went thru a similar scene with Paul Carroll & Follett a few years ago), but somehow I don't feel too concerned or upset about it now. I would have a few years ago, but now the writing seems more important to go on with as act than any sort of possible publishing stringout. Figure that whole scene is going to start getting cut back anyhow soon, what with paper & everything shortages etc. Be interesting to see just how many of our poet friends keep it on with increased lack of publishing outlets, eh? I don't know Mattingly (sounds like a real hokey with his "happy trails!", wow). But Herman, being more the writer on his own than publisher, should know better than to try offer you a no-bucks contract! Jesus, what's the matter with such people! I always figure that publishers telling writers no money is bullshit, since publishers always have more dough invested etc. than they ever let on to us. So, I dunno. I spose I'd wait & definitely not sign a no-dough contract, see what develops if anything. I'm gonna wait & see, feeling little or no anxiety (which surprises me a bit, but good). Maybe the best thing for The Maintains anyway is to take it around & do readings of it live, rather than cemented in book forever(?)

I'd be glad to let Peter Stamos have my Karstarts thing, but... Since I read it when in SF & Barry Watten heard it there he asked for it for THIS way back then & so I sent xerox of it to him a few weeks ago. Shit, I guess it's "spoken for". But I could send him something else for the magazine? Maybe the later part of the cave-thing? Or maybe you & I could print two sequential parts of that back-to-back? Tell me what you think.

I want very much to do the lecture, January or whenever it becomes possible. Looks like I'll be reading the whole Polaroid in April at Paula Cooper, if Larry gets that set up (you're reading on that series too?), so maybe leave that for then. It'd be fun to do The Maintains again with new people. Actually, I'm getting most interested in doing the cave lecture, mainly because I've never done that kind of thing, also that it's far from the literary (right).

I'm writing to the National Speleological Society Library for info on sets of slides they rent out-- if I can get some good slides it might be great to use 'em. & that Hawthorne/Melville dialogue

we just gotta do someday! We'll have to talk & figure more on that, I'm not sure how we'd set that up, maybe end up just getting up & doing it?!!?? I'm sure we'd love it, anyway...

About Quasha, er... I don't wanta get all involved with what sounds like a compleat jerk, just trying get a copy of the tape of my own reading(!) Maybe I should write him anyway & offer to pay for the copying of the tape? Or does he consider it somehow "his possession" now? Christ, I've been getting bugged enough (too much) lately with "critical" idiots (like one Barry Alpert, for one), who want you to "explain" everything, but then don't at all want to listen to you if you do try. It's really clear how that "critical" thing is so removed & different a language from the one we're working in. They all insist on "communication" but simultaneously make it all the more impossible. I've been having severer (sp? = more severe) doubts on the whole mumbo of "democraticization of art" anyway...

I'm feeling odder & peculiarer about appearing in dribs & drabs in all these magazines with all the poets & tomfools. Something out of synch. We've talked alot about all this I know, but now that I'm about 50pp into this new (projected 1000pp-plus) work, & it's really going & going well beyond what I thought, the whole dolling out scene seems more the incongruent. No "answer" to that one, so I go on writing...

& speaking of "preservation" of "vaulable" [spelling corrected by hand] poetryreadingtapes, I had a thought the otherday that what's really needed is some kind of clearing house for all reading tapes, where they could allbe collected in one place & available to anyone (not just schools, groups, as has usually happened) for nominal fee of copying the tape. But who to take on such a task?

Beautiful blue clear day today after big snowday yesterday (our first). We got about 6 inches of "strange" snow: xxxx tiny spheres of frozen water (like first stage of glacial ice) rather than the usual hexagonal crystals. Really fluid & slippery. Got super new (expensive!) Michelin radial snow tires for the bus tho, & zipped right up the hill. Near busted my back shoveling our "driveway" yesterdayaft, ugh! & think I finally got the cold that's been lurking in my tubes for months now. Keep going, Clark...

Found this in A GUIDE MANUAL TO THE MAMMOTH CAVE by Charles W. Wright, M.D., 1860:

"In all those diseases where absolute silence, and the total exclusion of light are indicated, the Cave, above all other places, possesses pre-eminent advantages; for nowhere else have we these conditions combined. The only condition in which risk is incurred is during the menstrual period. Serious, and even fatal results have been the consequence of inattention to this fact."

Pretty weird, eh? I never ran across such before in entire cave literature. Just goes to show synchronicity of data working everywhere if you push far enough?

Really hoping you can Cadillac it up here soon! Once Xmas week is through (family scenes et al) we'll have plenty room, come stay as long as you like. I hereby bar blizzards from interrupting anything!

Be sure & write more as soon as you can. We love you both, we hear you, we're with you!

all love,
Clark

[Typed along lefthand margin of second page]

P.S.--What was the money like on that Chicago deal? I always meant to go do that, but they never could promise enough \$\$ to make it possible at all.

[Handwritten at top:] Monday [late 1973 to early 1974]

Dear Clark,

Guess you know by now, know you know by now about the great s.else fuck up. So, what? It will be interesting to find another publisher I think. I dont know if I'm kidding xx or not but I'd rather have I know your attitude of your last letter than mine which is that this form of MEMORY should be xxx xxxx I cant seem to write the word cemented in a book. Anyway, nothing much to say about that except George Mattingly is quite crazy but I think he means really well except he's nuts & the snow dont fall here, it rains. Dick has evidently lost his mind. Michael Anania who I met last week told me that Dick never even defended, in fact he hated the UNNATURAL ACTS idea when it came up at that cclm meeting & that he, Michael & john ashbery were the ones who got us some money. but anyway all I was hoping was that larry wasnt the one to tell you about all that because I told him & then he said he was on his way up but I guess you had heard by letter by then. Just to top it all off, G. Mattingly invites me to share his 'roomette' on his train-way to some place he calls S.F. ?? I ordered alot of books, some books, I wanted from the "press" cause I think you can get whatever you want, they feel guilty & evidently dick is so crazy he's just abandoning the whole thing. ? Dont get it but never did. I think I really will look for another publisher for memory thought. **[handwritten circle around the second 't']** Might be even funnier than this time around. Seems like every time somebody comes close to doing a book of mine they fold. Maybe I could get Praeger to fold, or even Whore House! The two of us together could get any house to fold. Enough.

I never started a new paragraph before. The paula cooper scene that we'll be reading in was set off (put off?) to an astounding start by a group reading of "new" works by Anne, Larry, Dick (no show), Ron & lewis. xxx It was a very queer beginning for a series of "long" works by us & who else. not many new x works at all, strained seriousness – where does that phrase come from? no density & alot of "this next poem is called & I wrote it when" I'm getting to be an old purist. I drank my way thru the reading & then we all went to a party at Randall de Leeuw's house with alot of queers & then anne invited me over to "see" her new couch. So why dont you come to New York. Seriously come to do a lecture. Either the cave lecture or the Maintains. Actually any of the ideas but those two seem most appropriate to the workshop now. Any Tuesday or Friday in February, or, if it has to be, March, is fine (xxxx March 15 is taken by D.Antin). Let me know fairly soon cause I'm scheduling a whole month of lectures & besides it'd be good to see you cause I'm not sure about cadillacking it up there, it's too complicated now & I dont feel like driving up alone. Also write back soon about Larry Alpert cause he's on the verge of 'interviewing' me for the world – what have I gotten myself into? did he try to do it to you? Anne told me I could trust him or something but I think I'm going to make up both the questions & the answers &/or else ask him all the questions. I hate interviews & dont know how I said yes to this at all. He did say I could rewrite it after & that would be the final version but I dont want to have to articulate alot of shit I dont mean, maybe I'll just quote myself & Hawthorne & alittle bit of you & make an anthology, since they're printing it. Dont know. ...Promethean wants to print back to back the last two segments of the cave work so I said O.K. but they're gonna be a while, more money hassles & if you want to go out to Chicago to read & make anything on it at all you have to convince them you just wont do it for expenses & they'll get you more, I wound up making about \$150 plus air fare which isnt bad, they've got a fairly serious audience, really hungry for real stuff (some of them) but you have to give two readings & Tom Raworth, who's out there now, seemed a little spaced & drinks alot & threw up in the

bathroom right in the middle of my reading (the first time ever) of STORY to his poetry class. The other queer thing is if you read out there make sure you get to read alone cause both my readings were preceded by short but bullshit readings by "chicago" poets which kind of put me off. That's all business or something.

Anyway Vito's back in town & we're friends again & he's full of alot of great energy which I guess he got from being a little famous, he likes it, so it's good to talk with him freely again & his work is getting really interesting in the same old perverse way. He's made a 1½ hour super-8 film "with a plot" that I'll get to see this week & here's the punch line he's really interested in poetry again! So mellow.....food food fame & fame fame food, that's what freud said to einstein when they were collaborating on peace. Unnatural Acts is waiting for its grant, I'm collaborating on peace & I'm glad I didnt go into the cave

**[page break. Final page handwritten, on stationery labeled
"UNNATURAL ACTS PRESS / 49 CROSBY ST. NYC."]**

Love

to all,

Bernadette

thursday 24 january [1974]

Dear Bernadette,

Just got your letter this afternoon, good you wrote. (Howsabout that sentence?!) Larry left yetred... (Jesus!) yesterday, taking with him the phone number you gave him to give me to call you, I didn't think of it till after he left. I almost called him today to get your number when your letter came. (Amazing how complicated "simple" things seem in words, cf. above) Anyway...

Jan Herman called me last week & told the whole sad tale. Mattingly got on the phone too and mostly laughed alot (where's he at?). Sounds like Dick nudded off again, but with a certain amount of calculation(?) I feared some such eventuality well before signing the contract, sigh. Jan said Dick had "lent" [**spelling corrected by hand**] (taxwrite-off purposes) the press three hundred thousand clams since its inception, none of it ever paid back. Plus the last 3 or 4 books they put out haven't been paid for. It seems incredible to me that they couldn't have made more a go of it than that; other presses with titles of absolutely no popularity have somehow continued to exist. Jan said he spoke to a publishing lawyer, showed him the S.E. list of titles & the guy said "So, what's the problem?!" Then Jan told him about the 300,000 etc. This must figure as one of the world's biggest "business" fuckups! Takes a genius (Dick) to pull such off...

Anyway. Again. (Seems like when you talk of publishing every other word sounds like a sigh) Yeah, whatta we do now??? Jan said you had some possibility of getting Praeger to do MEMORY, yes? Hope so, I mean I'd do it too. But I can't avoid thinking how ridiculous it is that our works be dealt with at all by "big" publishing. They just don't inhabit the same world. And I absolutely refuse to take mss around to those houses anymore, I've had it with that. Then there's that new press Ron & those people are supposedly starting... umm... When I hear things like "Well, first we'll do a book by Allen Ginsberg and then we'll get around to some things that won't sell so good..." I start to feel itchy. Anyway they haven't asked me.

Christ, after all that work you put in on retyping/reworking MEMORY, to have it come to this! I can see how you feel: the book in present form really should be done by somebody! This whole "deal" reminds me of the last book I had "contracted" (AMOUNT) that then promptly turned around & went down with PaulCarroll/Follett a few years ago. The Press Sinkers, that's us...

What elseto do but keep writing? My only "reasonable" hope toward any kind of "publication" thesedays is to get used of a cheap (or free) Xerox machine, so I can make copies of these big works to send around to a few people who I know will dig 'em. Natch, I'd want you to have 'em, I'd like a copy of MEMORY, etcetcetc...

This new work I'm doing (to be my thousandpager, at least) is goin great guns, so distracts me mostly from any dire emotion of non-publication or whatever entropic. I've got about 75pp now & that's only the tiniest begining of what I want to do. Fuck 'em all!!

Larry

brought up & played us the tape of the Parlor Coup-er reading you went to, ho hum.

I wonder: is starting "our" series off with such as Anne Ron et al (the "stars"?) the same kind of scam as starting a press off with an Allen Ginsberg item? I sometimes think Larry worries too much about our "drawing power"...

Commented [CW1]: Page break

Bob Grenier called me up the otherday out of the blue New Hampshire to ask (he'd heard about the S.E. demise) xx if I would be interested in him & Barry Watten (they're thinking of stopping THIS & doing books) printing THE MAINTAINS. I said Why not? Have you got any money? No...

A month or so ago I got one of the stupidest letters I've ever received from a human being from one Barry Alpert. I wrote & told him so. Then immediately received another even stupider. Didn't bother to answer that one. Really, my early warning system lit up like Xmas in the total negative. The guy is obviously a young hustler-critic manipulator & should be avoided if at all possible. I meant that's my feeling & I mean to stick to it until such time as the guy proves himself somehow positive. I've been thinking a lot lately about the whole secondary critical level of this "business" & coming up blander than ever. Or at least more negative. I think that sort of "critical" mind poisons anybody's work. Art is direct, present, conscious. Criticism is secondary, removed, full of reservation. Critical language puts a distancing barrier between anybody & the work. And simply breeds more of itself. I know I can't stop anybody from writing thus about my work but I'm damned if I'll collaborate with 'em on such shit. No interviews either. I'm at least toying with never giving another. I realized that all through the Watten thing I was trying to avoid talking about my work (trying to get onto other subjects; there was lots more of that in the xxxxxxxx original but Barry edited it out), plus admitting my own ignorance (which I consider a positive element in interviews with artists). Also it pissed me off that I've had far more feedback from the interview than I've ever had from any of my works appearing. For instance, Barry Alpert read the interview, decided I was "intelligent", & promptly wrote me a string of inanities, requests, etc. Who needs that?

Wish I didn't start feeling like some old knotty bastard when I start talking/thinking like the above. The hard process of learning to say No(?) Anyway I thought I'd try my mind out on you on the subject & see how it strikes you. Tell me I'm full of shit if you feel like it...

Sondheim called me a couple times lately, wanting to come up. His life a mess as ever, but sounds like he's working hard at whatever he's doing anyway. (He rented an office in an ad agency to go & type in?!?!?) The first time he called he spoke of possibly coming up here with you, then all that was forgotten by the second call. Plan now is for him (& "somebody", Beth?) to come up on the 1st for a few days. Wish he could stop thinking of me as "successful"....

Am figuring out how to do a cave lecture for you. I've sent to the National Speleological guys for their list of slide sets they rent out, take a look at those & put together something with screen & pointer (huh?!?!?!?). As soon as they send & I get it together I'll let you know, soon as possible. Maybe we could do THE MAINTAINS again too in the workshop? Whatever you'd like.

Write or call again soon & I'll (what was **[underlined by hand]** that number Larry was going to give me??) do the same. Great if we could get together soon.

all love,
Clark

[handwritten at top:] Sunday [May or

early June 1974]

Dear Clark,

Cant tell you how great your visit was, even though, maybe because, it came in the middle of all the furor uproar, where am I? I am staying with Frances, yes, and it's very strange. But certainly I've been in stranger ones, and strangely enough, it's very comfortable and good to be away, almost, from all the crazy pressures that I seem to induce(?) -- (You see here I lost track because Holland Taylor who is the actress who lives upstairs came down & we got involved in a conversation about the people we know in the theater. She plays the music to "The Sting" all the time which drives me nuts & then one day she puts on Joe Cocker and I thought things are lookin up but then, what, she starts singing along, voice lessons & all, so).

Anyway, she speaks well. Anyway, there's a feast going on outside the window, Italian feast, ferris wheel, noise, & the sounds of almost murdered children who, I guess, cant stand the crowds, projected a million people in one weekend -- Godard? where? So I'm hiding out here & it's o.k. Ed's repainting the loft & we'll see what happens. Got a call from Michael Cooper up at Something Else & that scene sounds so fucked up, never had any more hope for it but, so fucked up, that I forget it. Altogether & as we say, just keep writing more. Dont know what at all to do for my paula cooper scene, any suggestions? Can I read your work? Speaking of which, Peter Seaton asked me to give him xxxx the part of the cave work that comes before the part you sent him, which I understand, but I dont feel like giving it to him but I guess I will since you did (?) Does that make sense? I'm just mad at Peter & all little magazines, but swallow that? Opal L. Nations just took some of my writing which somebody else had & printed it, so who cares but the magazines was so awful & I'm sick of poets & poetry (exempt self here, yours) -- I would now like to become Edgar Allan Poe himself. Or drift out onto the sea in a raft or the antarctic would do & do a little exploring. you know what I mean?

Every day here is cloudy, warm-cold during the day, hot at night & then it rains. One day the sky turned green & something on Houston street was hit by lightning. Fire engines came. That was the end of that. Hiding out, but, Nick is threatening suicide, should I say that, write it down. I dont believe it. Ed is fine. So here's my schedule & my addresses! : at Frances' (Waldman), 47 Macdougall St. NYC, till about mid-June, or write to me at the Church (capital C), then Anne's 33 st. marks, etc. till end July, then if plans still hold, your place in August [**spelling corrected by hand**]. I think Hannah may come up with me, but that may change, at any rate, I'm coming up with someone so that care can be taken of me & the house(?). I wish it was August, need a vacation. And before that, I'd like to visit, not sure when. By the way, Larry threatened to come up for part of August & I said I didnt mind, do you? Let me know.

In the meantime I've read in Philadelphia for two hundred dollar bills in tact, and, after a workshop & a reading, they've asked me to teach there next year, & say to me, we'll make it

worth your while (wile?). Evidently they've gotten used to being totally deranged & insulted by such as Diane Wakoski & Nathaniel Tarn & thought my 'experiment' approach was so fine they needed more. Also, put in alot of plugs for you to get there since they pay so much, sort of, but no expenses. So I'll put in a few more & maybe next year you could get there from New York, only 12 dollars from here, both ways. Not bad poets, but a real back-biting scene.

I owe you a cave-work but havent been able to concentrate on anything, even letters till tonight, but my normal? journal writing, lots of that. Decided maybe it's getting too easy but it's a way in, to something, dont know what yet. I'm really down on it, strangely or perversely, cause it's becoming too popular, I mean in Philadelphia they really were, first time it ever happened to me, asking for xx **["more" typed above]** more, so I read two hours & then sing a song. Can you believe it. My stance as a woman. For two hundred dollars I'll sing a song, "My Hear Belongs to Daddy" – my best. Wonder what'll happen when I grow up, as usual. Living with Frances (& John) strange at best, first of all I have to hide xxx the beer I love to drink & finally, almost no visitors allowed. Emily Dickinson & there is a garden. Meanwhile, been reading presidential tapes & thinking of getting some people to perform them, reading Diderot's nun, much better than the movie & seen twice "going places", great amoral anarchist movie about small-time criminals with happy ending. Also watching strange doings on macedougal st., heart of west little italy out the window interspersed with dinner with frances where she tells me all the gossip, amazing chronologies you'd never remember about all the poets, and talks alot about death & every poet in the world dead & living. She knows everything! The first night I was here the only way I could get John into the conversation was to tell him stories about your caving, your house & finally sports. Somebody said to me, after you live there for a while you'll have amazing insight into Anne. I said, no way, its too much for me. For instance, Frances said to me tonight, listening to Philip Glass for 6 hours is like listening to Clark Coolidge for 2. Now what do you say to that? I told her **[spelling corrected by hand]** we had given up on publishing & she said we were idealists. And that? Realists, more like it.

Was walking down houston street the other night & ran into bob dylan – tried to pick me up! didnt even know it was him till 30 yards, so that's fame. maybe if i had known I would've taken him up on it & gotten invited to Sly's wedding at madison square garden with stevie wonder as usher -- told you, strange doings. Picasso's son used to live across the street & the Italian-American Civil xxxxx liberties people have a place on the corner called the Cracow A.C. Hare Krishna people rented a storefront a block away. It's a very safe place. Frances hates John Giorno because he's a 'trouble-maker' so I stole some bread & milk from the local grocery deliveries at 6 a.m. & gave em to her as a present. She said, what'lll I do when the police come? I said, then you can throw me out, & gave her xx five dollars for the phone bill. NYC. You get the picture. Anyway, am trying to arrange a trip up soon or in July & am hanging in here (someone said) **[handwritten]** Love Bernadette

thursday 6 june [1974]

Dear Bernadette,

Wanta get this off to you before you leave Frances's place for elsewhere, or get throwed out or something adventurous. We just got back from Providence, seeing my father get honorary degree from Brown, that scene. Got introduced to Gwendolyn Brooks (who also got degree, along with Sirica there) & whole table full of poets by one Edwin Honig (who teaches there), real boring group with nobody having anything to say, looking around, but with overall feeling that we're sposed to feel like comrades just 'cause we're all poets or something (just what I hate about poets anyway), like we're members of a secret society. I enjoyed talking to my cousin (who was there too) about biology better. & watched Sam Dash (his daughter was graduating) put away great mounds of food at the next table at president's luncheon with roses frozen in the ice punch bowls, that scene. And Celia was only little kid there, wasn't "really" sposed to be there but was anyway & enjoyed bashing around the alky oldgrads. Strange & boring sametime, & familiar to me as college-brat, but I really felt like getting bombed but there wasn't any bar set up, just weak wine punch...

How did I get off on that? Must be 'cause you related recent adventures so I figure I will too. Mostly sat around down there whole weekend & watched my folks' color TV. Had sensation sitting by myself there one night that I'm really glad to have feeling of being just some guy sitting in room, not "famous", & not all embroiled in ArtScene as "poet" or whatever & never will be (hopefully!). Comparing that feeling with after-reading glide at Paula Cooper's: like I'm somebody who's identity somehow got defined to meself by audience, lingering tug of fame inertia out of the body into the pantheon. & bet too much of that would ruin me & I'd write what they wanted (just like all those guys like Philip Roth get criticised for in TIME), & all that crap. Like talking to people like my cousin, who's biologist & real pragmatic & stalwart in life directions with a real curiosity for changes, etc. by choice, but because that's how I sense my self & work from that sense: as guy who writes & does other things too (lots) & talks to people & sits alone in a room sometimes & feels no pressure of world poking in at me, so I get to do what I want, change as I will. I don't think I ever really had big sense of myself "as Writer", who relates only to that/those people, etc. Madness of such as A. Saroyan awaits too much tugging in that direction I figure. I don't wanta travel out of my body (!!!) Sneaking suspicion the body is what they mean by the soul?

Reread that and.. sounds like I got it all figgered out, which ain't true at all. But, the guy in the room is right somehow. Not take directions from "artists" (only, anyway) is true enough. Going from that, "long poem" is wrong term (as in "I can't write one..."), it's just the continuing writing a person does in midst of whatever directed life.

And, yeah!, count me in on any explroing(exploring, can't type tonight) trips you think up. Sure. That's what I mean!

Funny about that Peter Seaton deal. I gave 'im the cave piece partly 'cause I figured you might have asked 'im to ask me, like you might've wanted me to or something (huh?!?). So, anyway don't give 'im your piece if you don't wanta, I mean just 'cause **[spelling corrected by hand]** I

did or anything. Wires crossed there somewhere? I haven't been answering those kind of letters lately, mostly (somebody asked me to contribute 200plus pages to mag with Andrews, DiPalma, all those creeps in it other day & I just can't face that matrix anymore). Also I dint want give Seaton excerpt from longwork...

What the fuck! This is scattered, isn't it? Don't rush to do cave-piece if you can't at mmoent(moment), sounds like you'll be moving around alot in coming weeks, just wait till you get peaceful space (maybe when up here?). Real warm here last two days, maybe thunders tonight. Sounds like you're livng in Olde Bohemian Village, what with Frances' stories et al. Did she mean I was just asboring (or more boring than) as Glass or what? Can't figgure it. And I don't feel like an "idealist", do you? Shit. No program. And what would Caresse Crosby say? If it gets easy, keep writing till it gets hard again (ther's a great stupid maxim for ya!). No way, cept to see what happens. We seem to disappoint people who seem to think writer's should have certain thoughts. I get thoughts like: Celia just went to bed saying "I'll never get toothx decay & gum disease!" and "Where's my other teddybear?"

Dunno what to say you should read at Paul Le Coup, save mebbe for 8 hours or something(!) But, be it said as of now you have total rights to read any of my works you want. You don'tveven have to say they're not your works. Just get up there & immerse 'em! Read Hawthorne! Sometime we gotta read alternating chapters of Hawthorne/Melville (what work was Hawthorne doing at same time M's MobyDick--around 1851?). Sometimes I think people are now so fucked around as to what they think they're supposed to be hearing at a reading you could read 'em ANYTHING(?)

I won't ever forget the ORCHIDIA now. & our great ramblings into the night over beers & spaghettis at 10. Oh, Susan & I went to the Brasserie (Bennigton) last friday & it was great! Many thanks (specially from Susan, right) for steering us up there. Hermitage is terrific! They didn't have Pike Dumplings (what are they?) that night, but I had Orange Duck & Susan had some form of KaBob, topped all off with Chocolate Mousse & great cafe. Hardly anybody in the place. We're gonna go again for sure (come on up & we all go together). Then we went & blew it by going see Gatsby in Pittzfield (wanted to follow dinner with "a movie")...

Hope you come up visit soon. Anytime, cept for sometime in late June we'll prbly go up to visit with The Corbetts in Vermont for a few days. Give us a call. I don't mind if Larry comes up while we're gone if it doesn't bother you, you decide, don't feel like you gotta let 'im or anything, it's your house while you're here.

And thanks for the \$30--I'll go out tomorrow & spend it (on what??), a great windfall.

love,
Clark

[Typed in lefthand margin of page 1: I read somewhere that the French title of that "Going Places" movie means "balls". It'll never get to Pittsfeidl...]

[Typed in lefthand margin of page 2: Hope you had chance to tell Dylan what you thought of his music! Famous people in typical places. Freud's graddaughter posing nude in OUI. Picasso's daughter once asked me for work for her magazine. Henry Miller writes letter to TIME: "I don't want any visitors, especialy writers!" Famous people are trouble makers! And I just condensed the last issue of TIME mag into 5 pages...]

[handwritten at top:] Sunday [July 1974]

Dear Clark! Am presently trying to 'outwrite' a dream which means write so much about it that it runs out. I'm on page 5. Anyway, was thinking about coming up to see you, probably with Peter if that's o.k., this weekend or next week for a couple of days after tuesday (have to be here for my Dream Workshop), xxx whenever you're free if free. I was up in Cummingoon around July 4 but you not home. Got a bad sunburn then and am peeling. Where do you go swimming around Hancock? Anyway looks like I'll be coming up with Peter for part of the month & maybe Hannah will come up for the rest. She's pretty unpredictable & her mother's sick so she's out in, up in?, providence & I'm just writing her to get the dope.'

I'm installed in Anne's now, from mother to daughter. It's hot. Since I cant x remember what I've told you about my recent life I'll stick to the present. It's very hot. It was very hot in Massachusetts too. Hotter than I've ever seen it there up on the mountain, Windsor Mountain. We forded, forged?, a raging river, 30 yards across to get to some esoteric swimming hole, which was worth it, but fording river, I fell in, holding on to a rope that one brace (brave) explorer had taken across & tied to the xx other shore. Waist high water going about 100 miles an hour in the Westfield River. We swam in the Swift.

Dream Workshop's pretty disappointing (after two sessions, three to go) – Ullman's (did I tell you he's the head of Maimonides dream lab) being intellectually stingy with us. He's got his own way of doing things, is using us for his research & not really giving out. I'm thinking of calling him & telling him so right this minute but I dont know how to put it. Maybe I approach him tuesday in person, gently, in a low cut shirt. Larry very happy with his CCLM money (over 3 thou!) which I didnt even have to speak up to get for him, Joel Oppenheimer did most of the talking he & I being the only sane members of the committee. I envy your isolation^{1/2}(?) from scenes like those for sure. Coordinating Council, after meeting, takes some little government funds & buys us dinner (at 2 pm!) in fancy northern Italina restaurant, hotshit. We have just given away 20,000 dollars (American). Joel & I then go out & he buys me thousands of beers (he cant drink anymore) he's drinking club sodas & I listen, at the 'Lion's Head' – famous sports or village ovoice bar – to incredible stories about baseball, bets laid on batting averages & every once in a while a young girl wanders in, comes over to Joel & says she just wrote her first poem. I get very drunk & Joel enjoys watching me, we talk about the crazies we just spent the day with, make horrible insults, everybody in the bar thinks I'm his latest girlfriend & he tells me all his problems with his wife, who, with kids, he's leaving with to have their xxx portrait painted by Alfred Leslie in Maine. Unbelievable, old Greenwich Village scene.

So pretty much everybody's out of town. John G. played xxx our latest record at the Cosmep(?) book fair & left for Colorado. Anne goes to Colorado next week, this is all for spiritual poetics. Michael goes to Cornell to give hotshit reading. Larry missing. Ed is working & acting kind of crazy. Ed F. gone to California. Lewis' workshop is reading on Wednesday. My workshop is all depressed at being weaned again, also, cause I'm not teaching next year. I guess I'm flattered, but I'm also tired. Felt like I didnt really get in on with them this year at all, probably due to "Personal Problems". Meanwhile, I'm drinking enormous amounts of beer, eating enormous amounts of food & getting fatter. Looking forward to August quiet. Peter & I have planned to try to write a collaborative detective novel up there. Actually we've already begun but it's

impossible working here cause he lives across the river. It may not turn out to have much of a plot but should be pretty interesting. I just wanna write my ass off & not see a soul. Practically. Peggy, old high school friend who's staying with me, & I were trying to make a list of sane people last night, we only got to four. Peggy reads Charmed Circle & Darwin's Autobiography & tells me the good stories. I read x xxx Structural Studies in Psychoanalysis which deletes me from the list of the sane, Alive (read Alive), Ullman's book Dream Telepathy, & Raymond Chandler Speaking – great book, English though, you cant get it here I dont think. Also reading the last Melville I havent read, Redburn, & some non-Maigret Simenon. So we read alot, we do alot of reading & then we read somemore. In the middle of Crime & Punishment. How could it all be? Tried a Lovecraft, did I mention it, The Case of Charles Dexter Ward. I wasnt scared, no Poe. What's the best ones to read?

Still debriefing myself after reading at Parlor Coop (?), it seems, and I'll get you a copy of the work soon, got some made & gave them all away already, it seems that the murder I commit in the work – am I giving away the plot – was psychologically unsound in one sense. I find this all very interesting in relation to plots & thinking about real plot in Peter & my book writing attempt. (We want to make a killing). It was psychologically unsound because I left out something I wanted to put in, which would be, since it was an erotic murder, to die myself at the end of the writing. I thought of doing this, I mean writing it of course, but I couldnt figure out how to handle the first person narrative that way so I decided that I had to stick it out, that is, survive. I know this sounds a little crazy, but it's taken me weeks to figure it out, certain reactions I've had to the work & the reading & writing of it, & from the reactions I can tell that the kind of 'exorcism' I was trying to do with the writing failed only in that sense, just like a novel-idea might fail, 'fail', on account of structure. So I've been thinking alot about this. And when I started to try to outwrite this dream I had had, I realized that it too had a certain xxxxxx structure & if I could get my hands on it in a way, or keep in touch with its form in that sense, this is all very vague but I seem to know what I mean, if I could keep it, one whole picture of it in my mind constantly in the writing, then I would wind up never being able to finish & the work would become not only my total autobiography but probably that of everyone else as well. The dream itself only brings out about three real-life characters, people I know or knew, but even in five pages of this kind of writing, at least twenty more characters have emerged & this is just in sticking to "reason" in a way. I dont know if any of that's clear x in re-reading it I see it's not but I'll know more later.

Anyway, you can write me c/o Waldman again but this time at 33 St. Marks, etc. & we'll be in touch about coming up which I'd like to do before you leave for California city. My last session or Ullman's in tuesday july 30th, so my plan would be to come right up after that, soon as I'm packed (these days it takes about 15 minutes), probably by bus or something, anyway we'll see or will see you, let me know. Who is Caresse Crosby!?

[handwritten:] Love
Bernadette

wednesday 17 july noon [1974]

Dear Bernadette,

Just got your letter, been wishing you'd call or something. We got back from The Vineyard saturday. Wasn't sure where you presently were (!?), Anne's or what/where. Figured I better write this to you quick, as we have to drive up to Bennington in an hour to pick up Larry who's bussing down from The Corbett's Vermont, he somehow can't get a bus from Bennington to Pittsfield (true enough I guess, Vermont bus schedules are rediculously rediculous). Anyway, The Larry. And I dunno how long he's figuring on staying, probly through the weekend enyway. So, what to say about you coming for a weekend before you come up here for the month? Usual lack of clear plan space, & figure these few weeks before California are gonnawhizz by. Maybe think of weekend of the 27th?

Uh, why don't you call one of these nights & we'll talk it all over. Probly best. I can't think ahead straight at moment as usual thinking visiting hours. Too complicated in letter-prose, better talk it.

We're booked on a flight for tuesday August 6th. Probly come back on the 29th, tho might stay out there just a few days longer. At any rate Celia's school starts up again on Sept. 4, so have to be back before then.

Your letter full of great stuff to talk about, but I'll wait to pick up in person.

Watched Universal shooting "Jaws" on island while we were there. Crazy business-like young crews changing all the town signs & dragging compressed-air shark fins through the water. Kept thinking of suddenly seeing Ed pop up in midsts of all that! Then began thinking how I'd like to be writing the script! Director was some company man name of Steve Spielberg, looked younger than me. Crazy scene having all that Hollywood fantastics overlayed on places I've been going to since I was little kid. Tell you all more about it when I see you...

So, give a phone soon, OK? Really looking forward to seeing you!

Love,
Clark

**[Postcard of “Niagara Falls”
postmarked August 28 (?) 1974
handwritten]**

The sky [**“stars” written above**] is moving clouds in clumps, the sun shoots horizontally
[**“sunset” in between lines**] the madness at us. Marilyn Chambers shoots the moon, teaches
orgasm with a dummy, John goes to visit his friend speakeasy speakers, wont be back till five,
we have three rooms but we forget to use one We have 3 versions of a torture or a trick
performed Love Bernadette

[postcard of “Snow Leopard – Bronx Zoo,” postmarked 1974 (the rest cut off), handwritten]

Dear Clark, the roof is leakin + the rain’s fallin on my head. It’s 80° in NYC + I had a big fight with Aram – he started it. Bill Knott defended you + me! (I think). Then A. said “I guess you’re right.” Who is it cares? knows etc. I sometimes do. A. is really very nuts. Pulling the old “people are writing too much” line on me. + he can’t listen. I’m going to read in Chicago + maybe Milwaukee, mid-Nov. Will send beer Write soon. Love, B.

**[postcard of “Raffaela’s”
postmarked 28 Oct 1974
handwritten]**

[Written above postcard details] Just read from IN VIRGINA – Great hole names How about Mass.?!

Dear Clark –

It’s 7:30 am so it reminds me of you, I cant sleep but cant write a real letter so my address is c/o Greenberg, 65 2nd Ave., #56, NYC 10003. Tel. no. OR48136. How’s things? Anne met Cecil Taylor who thought Allen Ginsberg was simple-minded. Aram’s bk a disaster. Write.
Love Bernadette

sunday 3 november [1974]

Dear Bernadette,

7:30 P.M., Celia watching Apple's Way, Susan sticking cloves in an orange in the livingroom the cat asleep in her lap. How's that for a domestic scene? Clear skies & cold. The hammers have almost stopped over our heads: carpenters working for over a week now almost have our new roof up (on? done?). Looking good, now here's hoping it solves our leaks come winter for real & its slush pack. Found that, strangely?, sounds of pounding made both of us feel super industrious, so lots got done this past week (sewing cooking & writing). Erratic mail of late, so specially glad of your card. Bill B sent cassette of Cecil Taylor's latest gig at SF Keystone Corner, & after perusing AG's Allen Verbatim I'm inclined to agree with CT (he is "simpleminded"). Then arrives a three-hour tape of Paul Metcalf's complete Apallache (Appalache?) read by himself & in stereo yet(!) Needless to say I haven't been able to listen through all these tapes yet (feelings of not enough time for everything lately). Piss-off Item of the week: a \$55 check (royalty check) from Arno Press for 6months sales ending June 1974 on their JOGLARS reprint at 10%, piss-off because they owe me \$100 on publication & I didn't even know the thing had been published! Ain't seed book or nothing & the thing's evidently been available since January. Fuck the book business.

No word in a moth(month) re The Maintains, tho B. Watten's evidently doing it somehow someway someday. This is no time to wait for anything(?) Fuck the book business.

Speaking of books, I'm sending you extra copy (thanx to Herr Silverstein)(who's abroad forever) of McPhee's ORANGES. Read it in coldless pleasure. Somebody (nice guy actually) named Jim Rosenberg was just here for overnite, said he has been staying(&arguing with, over math) A. Sondheim in NYC, reports Alan has \$4000 advance from Dutton for book on Conceptualism (a position & task I wouldn't take for 4 million dollars). Bless him & America for putting up with 'im. Said America is cracking: I opened up a copy of Compleat Bartok Quartets to find one record of Cesar Franck's D-Minor Symphony. Hail Columbia! Some letter...

Longwork thriving still OK. About to start on Geology section soon. Looking up derivations of mineral terms in O.E.D. Looks like legwork . Or cowork. Wonder what "profession" I could pretend to quit the writinggame for, so I could continue my writing in secret & peaceful(?) Or, as Lily Tomlin said, "Nobody has any answers to anything." Ed never called about going to the cave, so I guess that'll wait till next appropriate season. PallMalls just went up to \$5 the carton in New Lebanon. And the cat ran away for a week once the roofers started hammering. The Fire Engine That Disappeared & Roseanna still missing from both local libraries. If you ever see a loose paperback...

Unbelievably, given "Pittsfield", Altman's California Split has arrived at the Inn Cinerma, so we'll get to see that anyway. Alternate choices: Gone With The Wind, 2001 (small milimeter, bad print). Your rave on the Rivette makes me wish I lived in Paris Cinemas for at least a year. Susan's bro Bob sez if too many housing plots encroach on prune ranch he's gonna move to Paris & spend rest of his life in his movies like "Gringo I Spit On Your Grave!" Watched

Leone's For A Few Dollars More last nite on tube & dug his corny deep-focus static frames (with Spanish cigar xxxxxxxxx protruding from lower left). You take what you can get in the hills...

Somehow(?) (a word which devulges all my writing secrets forever) took off & wrote leetle 30pp "book" take on Smithson otherweek, SMITHSONIANDEPOSITIONS. Inspired by discovery that both RS & I painted dinosaur back-of-room murals in grammarschool. Of such is art made, & the murals were probly better than our combined greatest works. Anyway I hope so.

Preceeding two sentences nodoubt produce of present funny state of piss-off with whole artz scene. I don't live there. And does anybody. Read James Mellow's book on Gertrude Stein (CHARMED CIRCLE) & got further pissed. OK for chrono of herlife(actually leading or leaving me with list of further biogs to be sought at Lenox shelves, such as Mabel Dodge Luhan's 4-vol INTIMATE MEMORIES, Fernande Olivier PICASSO & HIS FRIENDS, Janet [spelling corrected by hand] Scudder's MODELING MY LIFE), buth (yeah, BUTH!) he (Mellow) totally hates S's writing (so why did he bother? he's an art critic.), leaving D.Sutherland with honor of still writing only decent book re Stein over 20 years ago. At moment S's writing seems so simple & obvious (well, maybe not simple, but obvious enough that she even told everybody, in LECTURES, what she did & was doing), I don't understand why everybody....

ah well, fuckit. Wanta go to Paris? Just to the movies of course, no other reasonable stimulus there. (or here?) This letter is a wreck. But you takes that chance if you ask me thesedays. Actually life is looking great around here. Halloween came & went (& got spelled wrong?). A warm moon in mists. Radio editorial from Berkshire Women's Coalition warns not to let you let your daughter dress up as witch ("they were healers"). No problem, Celia chose to go as Alice In Wonderland. Meanwhile she's way ahead of the school reading & already bored. When will the first school hit the moon...

Read Ballard's CRASH, but wouldn't advise trying such on your sexlife 'less you're expecting a short term. Clarence E. Mulford's HOPALONG CASSIDY (1910) starts off with this sentence: "The raw and mighty West, the greatest stage in all the history of the world for so many deeds of daring which verged on the insane, was seared and cross-barred with grave-lined trails and dotted with presumptuous, mushroom towns of brief stay, whose inhabitants flung their primal passions in the face of humanity and laughed in condescending contempt at what humanity had to say about it." And now nobody wants to read long anymore...

Well, I tried. Write, or call, or come over soon, or something dedicated to all our healths.

love,
Clark

[stamp:] **BERNADETTE MAYER**

no om was in transit [date handwritten:] Nov. 25 [1974]

Dear Clark,

I really owe you this one. I've been in transit. Since your last letter I've been carrying around your last letter in my pocket so, whenever I felt low, I'd take it out & read it, occasionally, in faav (in what?), in fact, I've had to read sentences of it to other people in order to cheer them also,

also, I've been to Chicago, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, South Bend, Gary, Indiana, am I writing another MOVING, but now I'm back home with many thoughts. Perhaps now you are thinking, first, why am I writing to you in red, second, why was she in all these places, much less almost at once, and third, why didnt she send me a postcard? I refuse to answer those questions. I've been hired by the CIA to undermine all experimental prose & promote poetry. Actually, I was just elected (?) to the board of directors of CCLM, what is that? Now I will tell you the whole story but first I must thank you for Oranges. Thank you for Oranges, it was here today when I got back & looked good. So, I went to Chicago to give reading readings many, northwestern, northeastern, body politic, anne at notre dome (they do have a dome [line to note handwritten in rightand margin: Chicago Art Museum – giant Warhol “Chairman Mao” (little high-school girls looking)] & it's a gold dome & the guy who drove us there saw a real priest standing in front of a urinal but not pissing – is that what they do?). Anne also at U. of Chicago, both of us at U. of Wisconsin, are you jealous yet?, finally anne at cclm-sponsored read-out. Now, how can I explain all of this to you much less give you all the gossip & my thoughts, if ever there were ones. Anne took (?) me on a reading tour. Jesus Christ. & then to cclm where I get fallen in love with by, are you ready, Richard Grossinger, Raymond Federman, Lorenzo Thomas, Ishmael Reed, & Mark Mirsky; also a little come-on from William Phillips & alot of theatrical encouragement from Michael Anania. Now this is why I put such a long piece of paper in the typewriter. I am stymied. Which stories would you like to hear? Jerry Rothenberg saved my life, asked me to do a dream workshop-experiment article for alcheringa, suggested he get me a publisher for a whole anthology, Amer. a Prophecy-style about dream-work, Ted punched me in

the breast while we were having a fight with him, me & Anne about playing the dialapoem record for his students – he was pissed, historically for not being on it – a playful fight’where, nevertheless, I received a stunning blow leaving a sunny purple blow on my left breast, the kind of object that has been receiving so much attention in the news. I didnot show this stunning bruise to Ted because he (A & I were staying with him & Alive? Alice & 2 babies for one (year) week in Big Chicago), he was totally absolved in formulating the theory that since he was turning, in our presence, 40 (years old, he’s about two), he must be as morose a center of attention as possible, and managed to arrange, on his total birth-day, to have no one in the house but us girls: now, first he tormented alice but she’s too smart & went to bed, then he yelled at anne for a while about the record and, catch this, how could she ever break up with lewis. Anne has the good sense to leave silently the room; now I am sitting there thinking I will be talking, normally, to Ted. Well, I was. He says I’m the only ‘girl’ alice ever considered a ‘threat’; he says he loves me still & if only, etc. He says a few other things about ancient history, I begin to weep, Ted says, I’m glad you’re weeping because that really woke me up, now I’m going out for a walk cause it’s my birthday & Frank (remember Frank?) only lived three weeks after his fortieth & I’m so sad. The truth is he’s underfed or ill-fed, but, then, that is a whole other matter. Am I writing you trash? In Chicago, Annne & I who were giving a reading or

[handwritten]

Miss. Bernadette Mayer
74 Grand Street
New York, New York **[typed:]** --this is not yet a change of address
10013

class a night would go out to a place called xxxx Treasure Island, a giant grocery-super=ex-market full of imported delicacies, buy 35 dollars worth, have em delivered & cook something edible. Otherwise the fare was Chinese (local) take-out which made me throw up the first night or Macdonalds as you know my feelings about those. & lots of root beer. (?) What is going on. I was going crazy, but we had our own room. Ted seems to think that we all have to have this sense of history about our selves, I dont mind about work so much, consistently he is putting history in order, in his mind. It was driving me crazy. The readings were great & everyone was stunned, some or most of the time. I can see now that

[after this point, all typing in the letter is uniformly set to the lefthand margin, presumably to save space.]

this paper is not even going to be long enough to tell you the rest of this whole story so I must switch

to singles spaces. I dont even know if you wanna hear all this, But I'll go on, so we shot alot of pool, I outdid a few of the guys & they were shocked, same old stories, & then, I think moved on to Milkwaukee, as I like to call it, the beers, most in bottles. Milkwaukee is a nice town. Here Jerry is calm, everyone is a bit calmer, everyone is with the "university". How calm. Calm university. Posh university. Is this what I'm supposed to be doing? Please let me know. We teach jerry's class (ethno, etc.) & jerry finally gives in & says, you are really so ethnopoetic, mostly about dream works & experiments. Now herecomes the good part: before we leave for Milk, we find out that a posh party will be given for us after our reading & xxxx Oscar Robertson will be there, yes, the Big O. So, we are having "lunch" at the Drake Hotel with our poet "connection" at OUI, yes, magazine & trying to come up with an idea for a little article that could make us a little thousand dollars. We think about the Big O & realize instantly that with my knowledge of basketball & Anne's moue, we can make it on a dime, a women's article on basketball. First of course we propose that we pose, but they say, not in so many words, we're too old! We aint forty. So they dig the article & commission us. Oscar is out of town & doesnt show up for the party but our "Oscar connection" who's like (duo) a younger a little bit more sophisticated version of the Hornicks (?) gets us his unlisted no. We call. Big O says sure I've got lotsz of time, be happy to talk to you, meet you in the bar of the Plankinton House. We meet Oscar in the lobby, tame(?) take him up to our suite, (the Paradiso just fell off my desk) suite provided by the cclm meeting which has by now begun, and for which I am staying to make up the costs for my fare home, innocently, and interview Big O for 3½ hours, him ready for more, but we have to go out & do another reading. Just to mix things up, imagine, and this happened, Anne reading, it happened twice, Anne reading "Fast Speaking Woman" with me & jerry playing the Indian rattles as a back-up, me in a bright red dress bough on Wisconsin Street the day before & floor-length, is this the bernadette you know & respect? Dear Clark, I find my soul is

difficult so I will double space again. Big O drank two tequila sunrises & talked incessantly, I ask him about his dreams, first he says he has none, then he admits to recurrent dreams, first of wild animals (bucks, bulls?) chasing him, then, of being buried in a crypt or cave! Whaddayou think, O? I don know. xxx I don know about that stuff, all I know is people dont dream that much. People dream every night, I say. He dont believe me. I explain the whole thing. Really? says O. Wow. Meanwhile introducing O to Ishmael Reed & Lorenzo Thomas & Jerry & David Meltzer. We didnt have a camera. Jerry looked about two feet tall. Ishmael was upstaged. Does any of this make sense. Anne asks the O does he oil his body. X Not with Mazola, says O. I ask direct b-ball questions. Finally O says, do you play? Amazement, yes. Wow. A solid family man

whose only hang-up, he says, is I cant stand it when someone puts a nick or a dent in my fuckin
x car, then I go nuts. Been stopped on the street so many times as a possible bank-robber, all
niggers look alike, he's become xx a radical but reads Ayn Rand. How culd all this be? So you
can see how I couldnt send a postcard. Meanwhile we go out dancing with the black members of
the 'board' and try to avoid any 'scenes'. Does a proposition like this require so many quote
marks? Why or what would G. Stein think? Bar xx next door to the hotel called the Big Stein.
And it was a big stein, hot potato [salad & all. So now I'm safe home, except I've been elected to
the 'board'. I can say no. What to do? Big Stein. Big O. Meanwhile Michael gets reviewed
(Country Cousins) in the Sunday Times Book Review.] **[bracketed section is single-spaced]**
(Do you want a copy to read?) Good review, in a way, maybe you seen it, I'm all wiped out.
Michael's all freaked out about me traveling with Anne. Also, I come home nearly broke. Other
news items of the week (ten years): I'm supposed to be in that book of Alan's & he's doing it
with Rosemary, didnt I tell you this before? & we've been having incredible hasslxes over
money cause I made a vow (chastity, so), never be in anthology again without fair pay, & then,
next thing that comes up is one edited by by I cant say it the own sister (plus Alan, incestuous
brother). By the way just to complete the gossip tone, Ed Bowes been going around in shades
saying he's too xxxx beautiful to bee x seen & at least in shades they don't 'touch' him – least
he's still got his sense of humor. Also, info, no Sjowall-Wahloo books around except what you
got but still/will lookin, eyes wide open, & that's, finally, why they wanted me on the cclm
committe, cause of all the thirty-odd poet?) writers, etc. there, nobody got eyes wide open much,
eyes sensible enough to say one direct sentence, even me they want with all my smokin & loving
beer drinking. What's the story? Tell me? I nn(two n's)need to know. Fuckit is right. Except I
had a good time reading. I still like to read my works. Somehow, this letter should be entitled the

double dream of spring. Somehow, I would like to know if I really want to do what I am doing. Am dying to see your smithson work & thinking about it often, in some strange way, and have new work of my own, influenced by good old dante, which is a sort of notebook, two weeks worth, which wound **[spelling corrected by hand]** up an attempt to write a love poem, failed, and replacing that with a made-up dream, cause somehow, (that word), in the attempt to write the love poem or love writing, it made me stop remembering my dreams, if you get my meaning. Work is numbered in 40 sections, little cantos, but it's not a long long one. So where do we go from here--into agriculture, into space, I have a new red dress that someone said If i wore it to the moon it would disintegrate on **[spelling corrected by hand]** me. I sleep in it, walk around in it, & hopefully stay inside, like I advised Anton Webern, as much as possible. Which [reminds me that I want to come up for a visit, with Peggy. What's the thanks(?)giving scene? I mean the weekend, or Friday, right after, or maybe the following weekend, or week, like maybe around the 4th of Dec.?] **[bracketed section is single-spaced]** Are you free? Typewriter freaking out on this long page -- longhand:

[handwritten] Also typewriter getting very hot, bad electric connections here like bad roof, is it really new.

Now here is the serious story, longhand provokes it – I dont love nobody, cept inaccessible Anne + Ed of course + his name could be Ed-Of-Course but we cant live together (yet?) + somebody(s) tell(s) me you cant have a “childhood sweetheart” without having to have a “second marriage.” I just wanna write my ass off with some kind of security + love. I'm not asking you any questions, I'm just writing you a long letter. (And I've only been home a day.) So what else to say – this is the first “month” of my life, since 1969, living alone in Great Barrington, that I havent had to worry if I'm pregnant. Strange to say but I feel I'm so changed, so the tone of the letters must reflect.

LOVE to all, Bernadette

wednesday 4 december [1974]

Dear Bernadette,

Wow, great letter! And you just back from journey exhausted & write, so I'll try the same (just back from Thanksgiving Providence folks-scene & will see if I can type worth shit this morning). Drove down there for the real as-of-old family turkey footballgame homescene, & Celia came down with the chickenpox, & then we got stuck there for a couple extra days due to northeast storm waving over seawalls, a bit too long, but now home & the usual lots of mail to answer, & I know I gotta get through it before I can get back to my writing (puritan ethic?). Anyway, love your all-news & scat bulletin, dunno how you did it you should be restin' up(?)

Ted sounds playing the forty-pound iddy, you better watch your breasts at all times! Or wear breast-plates (around Ted anyway) as in Wagner. Breasts in the news, & a best friend of my mother's just had one removed, she's a singer (classical) & worried it'd affect her vocals (doubt it, but traumatic enough). Her husband is conductor of Brown U Orchestra, they're rehearsing Ives' Three Places in New England with my father on violin, which makes me wish I could whang a drum or two on that too (as of old, Classical sideman crazy greatness), my father's still pretty young.

Glad I don't have hangup of Ted-style historical life adjustments & worryings. I really couldn't care (like, I'd be glad to trade my place on Giorno's LP xxx with Ted, I'm sure it means much more to him sounds like, & John used a piece of a piece I don't much like anyway-- never did get "payment" from JG by the way, hohum...). Pretty sure I'll be glad to be forty, thinking of all I'll have written thought dreamed by then. Can't really see this eternalyouth thing. Seems I always felt I was "too young" for everything, rather than the other way around. Can't see worrying about world historical poetry movements or anything either: this NY School Thing, like Larry writing me I should write VillageVoice (Goldstein) against that NYSchool piece they printed. He's worried about it, but I really don't feel it has anything to do with me, or anything important, just the expected P.R. & then a copy of Margins comes in mail with Barry Alpert piece in reviewing World Essay issue: seems guys like him are only people I know really insisting there x be a NYSchool, that we should solidify & defend "our" position or something, nuts! They don't know the half of it...

Can't get really jealous about your/Anne's reading tour, I get exhausted just reading of it. Though sometimes wish I had more chance to read places. But too many at once would nodoubt wipe me out. Had many thoughts following reading (did I tell you?) at UConn in Oct, Polaroid compleat in rarebookroom, mainly for M. Koehler's tape but 5 or 6 people (Butterick, Chuck Stein) there too. What with having to stop every 22½minutes for tapereel-change, plus deadair audience (respectfully silent but no energy coming back at me), I felt jesus what enourmous amount of will it takes to get the words up & living in space! Up-to-me-and-nobodyelse feeling like gangbusters! Took alot out of me, felt depressed (thoughtful) afterward & promptly came down with first reallybad cold I've had in years.

Also, I dunno how you "handle" all them guys falling in love with you! Suchlike'd make me retreat to a shack I'd

build on the backside of this mountain here. Vulnerable position. Guess it'd make me start drinking a lot and gain weight & worry about "my history"(!?) Talk about will...

Oh, I had great strange dream last week. First time I recall dreaming I met myself in dreamlife (you ever?) (I've been asking people but nobody admits to such anyway). First part of dream I was climbing up cliff somehow in some backyard Providence in past, near top went inside house rooms built inside rock. Second part of dream I'm leaning on backyard fence & watching myself climb up cliff & realize if I go up there I'll have chance to meet myself at last (!) So I do it. Go inside rooms & see the me coming toward me from doorway, face-on confrontation but recall no eye contact. Something happened then that I can't recapture but seems very important. All I can recall is slice-like disturbance of space-continuum, the me's features are strangely askew (slightly, like asymmetrical?) leading to much thought later as to whether the me was in mirror-image or photo-image (reversed or what, which would be stranger? we're more used to seeing our face in mirror anyway?). Anyway no doubt it was me, but no clue to what the me was thinking/doing, the absolute other though obviously me, thus the strangeness. Then the me, who seems preoccupied with his daily doings, goes back out through doorway he came in, I last see him in 3/4 profile disappearing around doorframe, he looks younger like me in highschool shorthair but still with glasses, & I recall thinking "What a jerk!" Only "reason" I can come up with for dream is all the thinking I've been doing (specially after UConn reading) about the other-identity (identities?) we/I have as writer/s, when others read us/see us/think about us. Probly same scene everybody has, cept writers have added separation of the writing going out there beyond our control, etc. What you think?

Dunno what say about CCLM deal. What you have to do for it? How much they pay? I don't understand that scene. If it gives you chance to do anything you think worth it without taking too much of your time energy uselessly (plus pays sufficient), maybe you should? On the other hand it might be mostly time-wasting fuffing around uselessly? I can somehow see you getting mostly wiped out on the kind of scene-energy Anne seems to ride on so well(?) Actually, my big impulse thesedays is to stay home/write avoid distractions, find myself (mySelf!) not understanding any outside world scenes very well anyway, & not really caring. Writing's isolation with yourself, true enough, & if you can find sametime somebody you really want to be with, you're lucky. Beyond that...

Found copy of Michael's novel in Brown bookstore, about halfway now I'm loving it, really seeing M's language moves (even better somehow than in poems), interesting balance of imaginative/information-input, technical syntaxes/allaround nuttiness. I'll write him soon's I'm done. Thanks for further Swedes search. I found Murder at the Savoy in paperback (which lists a title, The Thirty-First Floor, I never heard of, you?). Alan Sondheim called (just after I read your letter) & asked me be in that Dutton anthology, I told 'im I didn't wanta: money too cheesey plus I hate anthologies. He said OK. I told him to watch his ass. Second cup of coffee. Umm. Read Goldman's Lenny Bruce: kicky fastread but depressing finally, but put me in mind of oldfriend bassplayer Buell Neidlinger who used to hang with Lenny and copied his outrageousness in many ways (cept he called it: "breaking 'em off at the toenails"), also reminded me of strange unknown westcoats junkie musicians I used to listen to (like Joe Maini), & made me want listen to Lenny's CarnegieHall 3-LPs (to pick up on his language flow--other records I've heard are heavily edited, pushing bits together so you lose the flow he got). Odd to be thinking about Lenny Bruce again after 10 years not. Used to know a

bunch of guys who could “do” all his routines word-for-word & ended up boring everybody silly finally doing tat (that).

Just reread Wells’ War Of the Worlds, a great original turnon memorybook of mine, seems even better now (& I still wish they’d made the movie in England). Those landscapes... it’s a landscape book I guess. The Martians in their cranky tripod machines, written in 1898...

Finally located (for a minute!) the only McPhee I haven’t read so far: the Bill Bradley profile, in Brown U library but couldn’t take it out since I don’t go there any more. Looked great, some of it written from Bradley’s point of view. Lots of photos in back. Somereason bookstores I’ve tried can’t seem order that book, tho it’s still in Books In Print...

Still looking through & pruning a bit the Smithson work. I guess I can stand it! It uses lots of otherpeople’s writings (including beginning of Memory!), plus some earlyearly writing of mine I used to be too embarrassed to show (or even look at myself). Seemed possible catch it all in, around Smithson pole. Comes in at about 30 pages. I’ll get it xeroxed (how, up here??) eventually (I know how that sounds!) & send you one. Wish I had read more of your/Peter’s detective novel when you were here. What I did read was great. But I always have trouble reading when anybody around, & they just hand you a mss, you know? I’d always rather talk (some writer!). You done more on it?

Just got a long fan letter from somebody named Craig Watson, Collinsville Conn. Always makes me sad & tired in front. I mean the guys sounds nice, loves my work etc., goes on & on, gets boring, but sincere, etc. What to do? Did anybody ever solve this problem???? Natch, I feel gratified. But how “help” (he’s really saying “HELP!”) anybody like that without getting all tired out in somebodyelse’s writing/life problems? Anyway, whenever anybody asks me my “writing ideas” I always truly feel I don’t have any. The thought to tell ’em go read Melville or Hawthorne is coming to seem less & less perverse...

Well, the new roof is working perfect (knock on roof) so far. One job well done anyway. Didn’t get our cellar fixed (guys couldn’t get a backhoe in time) before the snows, so some flooding as ever downthere. Guess we go thru another winter wi th that . We go away for a week & the cat disappears again (his “routine”, so no worry). Celia’s chickenpox seems a mild case, no fever since just before she came down with it, so all it means is she can’t go to school for two weeks, but is out now playing at house of neighbor’s kids who’ve already had the pox. Luckily S & I had ’em. Have you had ’em?

Would love see you! Only thing is realizing(realizing) only three weeks till Xmas family gang here for week. Plus Larry’s been on the books to come up soon for months now (gotta call him). I was sposed go down there but don’t feel I can now, too rushed, wanta get a certain bridge-work section of longwork done by Xmas (sometimes giving myself dealines thesedays!), plus gotta go over see Guston soon. Plus I don’t have the money (despite general rumours) to blow on NYC visit, gotta buy Xmas gifts etc. But there must be a way, a time, somewhere in here/there, for you (& Peggy, if she wants) come up here. Why don’t you give me a call soon & we talk it all over? Lots to say. I get to this point in a letter I realize it’s hopeless to think of all I started out wanting to include here. So.

Take it easy (get another beer?).

LOVE,
Clark

[Handwritten and crossed out in lefthand margin of page 1: PETER]

[Handwritten, in different pen and likely by Mayer, in lefthand margin on page 2: "Love poems, dream"]

2/12 [1975]

[handwritten]

Dear Clark –

Once again (?) I wanted to get to you before Larry did, but didnt as usual so I guess you have a fucked-up version of the whole story – why wouldnt you come out of the bathtub?! Also the great phone fuck-up – I was at Poetry office (?) + went down to answer the door, when I got back, dial-tone. It was Ed so I wanted to talk privately + couldnt call back.

Anyway anyway who cares. Lewis + I are, as I'm sure you know, living together + how this, forgive me, love, happened I wont ever know except it was sudden + sure. We are planning to have a child. He may be working next year in San Diego + I'll go.

The bullshit poetry scene including Larry is taking all this with a lot of jealousy + "threat" – also disbelief – "Lewis + I are unstable, promiscuous, etc." In every way, I never felt better in my life. Except for Ed + Anne's difficulty with accepting this, + its seriousness which they are probably the only ones to understand.

It's a long story as usual + a strange one to write tonight – we have been constantly together for a month + living together, for a while almost in secret, for 2 weeks. Tonight Mushka is threatening suicide + as far as I know Ed has gone, in the middle of the 1st big NY snowstorm, up to Massachusetts. This has been no secret to him since the very beginning but he's finally feeling it. Even though a month ago, he wouldnt or couldnt live with me again, his words. It's the baby thing that scares him + I'm serious.

Just to get light-hearted (?) I have been writing poems. Poems.

I know you're going away, so, as soon as things get settled, here + there, we'd like to visit. All I can say more is that assuming no violence (sorry) of any kind happens, I am very happy + will be more. Hope this letter reaches you before you leave

+

Love

write!

Bernadette

monday 24 feb [1975]

Dear Bernadette,

Just back from The Road a couple hours ago, ginat)giant) stack of mail awaits. Want answer you right away, though can't imagine typing long letter tonight--we'll talk when you get here.

Very sorry about the phone snafu, a momentary oddment. I was in tub just washed hair figured it would take too long to get dry & to phone, you could call back anyway. Then 2nd call I rushed out of tub as fast as I could, found dial-tone awaiting me on the end. Wha happen??

No matter. I had had two long phonecalls (Larry/Anne) the day before you called, just about had it with versions of your doings by others. Everybody seems worried concerned etc.--I figure such a happening has got to be simpler than all that! Everybody (there) is such gossips!

In past ten days I have (a) been bestman in a wedding (friend in Providence)(b) almost met John McPhee in Princeton (have his address anyway & will write him when I figure out just what to say as opening) (see his great new piece on Canoes in this week's NewYorker), (c) walked feet almost flat seeing National Gallery Hirschorn (a mess) Smithsonian place where Gort landed in D.C. Got incredibly lost trying find southern entrance to Taconic Parkway this afternoon coming back up here. Now wind is blowing almost dangerously on the hill, couple inches of water in garage but I'll sleep on it...

You say Ed is up here somewhere? Wondering if he tried to come over or get in touch while we were away? No strange caligrams on door or anything...

Larry is slated to come up here sometime soon, dunno exactly when (I'll try call him tonight & straighten that out anyway). Otherwise we'll be here clear & free anytime from now on (except for saturday March ist we'll be spending the day over at The Metcalfs). Probly best you call soon (I promise to answer promptly!!) & we set a time.

We're looking forward to seeing you both.

Take it easy, be happy, & don't worry about all that talk pro or con. What do they know.

THE MAINTAINS is out. I have copies & will save to give you when you come. Barry Watten wrote today he'd sent one to Lewis anyway, so you may have seen it already. I think it looks great. Tho, two years in "this business" is a long time!

This is the worst typing job I've ever been responsible for. But wanted you to hear right off. Call. Come soon. Bring poems!

All Love,
Clark

[date handwritten] March 5 [1975]

Dear Clark,

Trying to call you but it aint easy, as with the phones out, downtown, as you might know, fire in the phone bldg. on 13th & 2nd, all phones below 23rd st. out, and as that, I'm only uptown, not to induce guilt or anything, during your bath-hour, which is my psychiatrist hour, uptown where calls can be made & even if I made one, I'd be freezing or lost in some bar in German-town, feeling watched by the bund-types in trench-coats that still hang around. I actually did go into one of those bars to call you yesterday but couldnt take it, I even had even ordered a DARK GERMAN beer, which I didnt drink, I fled. You cant make local calls (the church phones are out! no work to do) but you can make local scenes, as Anne & Ed have. I wont bore you. Got letters today (local letters are in) from both of them and (and) R.Grossinger. The mailbox was sweating.

Anyway glad to have got your letter, its sense might sink ships in Manhattan, & cant wait to see MAINTAINS! Finally! How does it seem? We had long talk about you in what seems to have become my workshop last night & some of the crazies were saying David Melnick(!)'s work(?) is like? your early? work. This guy Charles kept calling your early book Spaces. I said, "Clark uses words". "Coolidge", they say, "has effected blah blah concretism blah blah", I continue to correct them until I feel like I'm talking too much. Supposedly, I wasnt even "teaching" this particular workshop. Anyway I'm looking forward to getting or forcing enough copies of the Maintains to do a private, unless you're up to coming down, reading in the workshop, which I've decided to take over as a "teacher" since the rotating thing is definitely not working out. Peter & Anne have both opted out, too busy, etc. & nobody ever comes regularly except me so I'm gonna straighten them out. Ed F. can teach once in a while, that's all. Me becoming a fascist?

The plans are Lewis & I plan to come up Friday March 14, if that's ok. If I dont hear from you, I'll try to call from uptown (these phones the phone lines are completely burned out & wont be working for at least another two weeks, they say, which means a month or two), & if I call you from uptown it'll be around 3 or 4:40, I meant 4:30 but I'm not used to having to write down times in letters to you or anybody. It's just a warning, you can leave a message with Susan if she's there then whether time(no) it's ok & we'll stay till that Sunday, at which time we might, if we can, go to Ted Wilentz's birthday party(?) Is that a weird idea?

Hope you like the something new for the cave, I cant believe the last piece, yours, was written in '73, though late that year, it's over a year, a longer year than most for me I guess, so I decided to introduce something new, so something new for the cave turns out to be something new for the canoe which you cant miss obviously. The articles are great especially the way McPhee uses "I".

I have to go watch the second half of a Nets game, so, hear from you, see you,

[handwritten]

Love

Bernadette

[handwritten]

Dear Clark,

4/17/75

I'm ready. You can send me the work. Have written the basketball article, rested, cleaned my desk + this is my day off (?). How's things. Have you found us a house! It's finally spring here. Which seems to bring thousands of poetry readings, nothing to speak of but Charles Resnikoff at the Museum – pretty good, pretty old + my "introduction" to the most boring reading of the "Grossingers" – Lindy saying awful things about being (?) a woman, both reading too many short things in a sort of drone, nobody there. L saying there's no joy in her poems (or in her "life of isolation") like the "joyous" N.Y. poets. We sit + cry. But Richard seems intent on publishing MEMORY which I'm proofreading, horrible chore, realizing not only is it totally dense, unreadable? but also a kind of farewell song to Ed. So this makes it hard to read. I've never read it before. Spending the spring avoiding seeing alot of people. Lewis works his ass off to get "school" done, no jobs. + he's writing his book, now Peggy is writing a book, working, conscientiously, about 6 of us who were in high school together, based on an accumulation of letters over the last 10 years. A household like Fahrenheit 451. The Fiction Collective writes me a letter saying they'll publish a/my [**"a" written above "my"**] if I put up \$3,000! Now wouldnt it be better to live in the country for a while. I'm only going to start writing when I'm 35. Going to the movies now to see California Split + some dirty movie.

*

[Written in different pen] Just happened to to just locate a copy of this six. Dynamite work, amazing. Is it part of the new work. If so I like it much better on paper to read over than listening. I dont know why that's true of this so far (just read it) Except for something about the "color" of the sentences – something to see. Who or what is Derleth? I know he didnt invent the bra. Also, your work is getting dirty. Great for me to happen on that tonight cause it gives me energy to finish reading MEMORY whose (dont laugh) "syntax" I was worrying about. How come your work constructed itself in mostly short sentences. Have more thoughts about how the proper names work in there (like solid rock?) but cant formulate them. You're sort of casting a spell. Publish more quick. Am eating it up. Will steal from it. Love the "I" use in there. What else? California Split great movie. Emanuelle cant be sat thru. Walking around the city tonight with no coats on. A strange megalomania overtaking me, maybe spring or just for the moment not working/writing. Interesting state. Some poems. What'd you think of the poems? Strange running-on forever + cerebral poems. I'm caught with real sentences. As if it were some kind of industry which I guess it is. Am sort of anticipating a period of aimless kind of work, no focus at all, which I usually enjoy, but I'm always wrong about these predictions anyway. Have cut thru all my busy work at the church, I just dont do it. My focus is very personal but I dont wanna write prose about myself. Make any sense? Cant write no more journals. Finally. A weird sort of passive relief like somebody did this to me. Something's formulating in my mind to write more in a forward direction, in at least my mind's space, without its past, a great wish. I dont know what I mean at all. I'm not reading either. (yr piece was the 1st "whole" thing I've read in months) in preparation for some separation from my own "habits" of language. Still I feel very emotional about this, also wish I were out of NY to think more clearly. Here it just takes more time. Strangely enough I know what I'm planning will have something to do with anatomy + am looking for the right source books. Not just neurology as I originally thought. Anyway send me everything + thanks for your this work which I'll send you more thoughts on

Almost forgot: in 1850-1 Hawthorne was writing House of 7 Gables, Wonder Book + Tanglewood Tales. In '53 he went to England on a nepotism trip thru Franklin Pierce whose campaign biography he also wrote somewhere in the interim. On re-scanning James' biography of H, one of the strangest things is his description of H's death which is totally at odds with Melville's (cant remember where I read it). Having a slight deja vu while writing this which is probably because I think this is one of your note-pads, Herman.

So love from Lewis + to you + Celia + Susan. Lewis thought you were on the phone a moment ago + wanted to talk to you.

Send cave work,

I work

Love
Bernadette

friday 18 april [1975]

Dear Lewis & Bernadette,

Sitting up here em-brassed in an old Stan Kenton record, absorbing some weird kind of Vermont-Blend coffee. Nothing much happening except for Spring finally arrived (we think!), leastways a few Robins around trying to fly out from under cars.

Okay, you asked [**spelling corrected by hand**] for it, here's latest on the Cave Thing. Do with what you will & at your own chosen speed. Cigarette. Lee Konitz. Condensare. How you like the cast of characters? (Wittgenstein was seeming a bit lonely with only Julie Harris for playmate...)

Also enclosing copy of my Smithson work I promised you. Kindly ripped off the Emerson Coll Xerox machine by Bill The Corbett. Said work doesn't seem right for BC's fold-out dipsydoodle (FIRE EXIT) format, so dunno who'll publish it. For The Shelf? Anyway, fun to do it.

Liked your poems(!) lots, Bernadette. Yeah. Great what happens when a formal mind don't stop to think of the forms. That means we can do whatever we want? Right. Rustle of limits falling away...

Got a great postcard from Phil Whalen otherday, telling me how much he liked my Kerouac piece (in FIRE EXIT). That makes two! But quality, right? And he sounds chipper as ever.

Manythanx for BINDER, Lewis! Finally, MEMORY has a readable home. Now I can take it to the bathtub for long pleasurable afternoon of. First legal-size binder I've ever seen...

Read great baseball book otherday, THE SUMMER GAME by Roger Angell (another New Yorker staff guy). Makes me want get out to Fenway ("Boston's little green ballyard"--R.A.), & will in a couple weeks if all goes as planned, accompanied by Bill C & Michael P.

Holding breath for abig Visitation Scene soon. Meltzers, Palmer, Berksons all in wings. My folks this weekend. Then Celia's (7th) birthday next saturday (with big kiddy party here). May 15 I go try POLAROID on the Franconia crowd of 6. Looks like busy times...

Second Berkshire

Anthology appeared (I'm sure you've been breathless), forget it! The Crackpots managed (how? how??) to print two last paragraphs of one piece of mine in middle of the piece. Will I ever learn? (no...)

This Verm coffee/ain't [**slash added by hand**] strong enough (for one thing). But Kenton sure is loud enough. Rain tomorrow...

Write whatever news soon.

All Love,
Clark

sunday 31 may [handwritten: 1975]

Dear Lewis & Bernadette,

(have to get used to writing to you-both at the same time!)

Your letter (Lewis) just in reminds me (again) I've been meaning (proper use of that word at last!) to answer your letter (Bernadette) for a month at least, such a/great full letter has had me going on thinking on works all amid last motn(month) of visitations & me running around a bit more than I usually (to Boston/Corbetts & Michael reading, to Franconia for me to read, to Woodstock Gustons). Mess overlaps of time/space...

So got out of letter-stride but not forgetting you a bit! Your (B's) take on my work in THIS/6 really gives me alift (only real reaction to I've had) (so much for a "community of letters")(or, as J. Williams said, the real "center" of poetry is the U.S.Mails). Absolutely right on your sense that this work works best on the page! I had same realization awhile ago. Jesus, how have I come to write something I can't read aloud?! when I liked so much getting up & blowing (Polaroid for ex.). Anyway, it happened, & moving further. Short sentences (hadn't realized they were only short in this section--there are some really long involved ones somewhere in that work), I spose because I was focusing on sentence as unit (rather than phrase, word, whatever). Transitions tween too (lapses?!). Yeah, dirty, thanx to Julie Harris' breasts. Getting to a structure where I can include more of everything. Positive up feeling. Derleth (died a few years back), Poet Laureate of Wisconsin (self-styled), publisher of Arkham House original publishers of H.P.Lovecraft (most known for), protege (sp?) of H.P.L., & wrote millions of lousy imitation horror stories. Horror. Sexless puritanical writer, thus "inventor of bra".

Whole gang of little Celia-friends just poured in yelling, so don't know how much sense I make hereon. Raining & real DARK today (3P.M.)...

Reading your poems a lot. Love = simplicity of syntax (over complex of feelings)? "Simple Complications (might be overall title). "the single sentence of the body of lovers". "and now it's changed to economy of words". Etc. Shakespearean. Sonnet as prime love-address form? Tending to blank verse. (some notes I've had scratched on a slip for a month) Maybe after years of doing you can forget about complications of syntax & focus on Whatever, the interesting shapes come in anyway regardless. I'm riding a feeling that somehow all that structure stuff ain't that important anyway. At least in a pre-thought manner? We finally can't AVOID our structures. I'm getting really bugged with writings I see thesedays that are supposedly "after CC", like huge Silliman prose mss he sent (KETJAK) (part of itxin THIS/6), where what's "interesting" is sposed to be kinda mathematical expansion of paragraph lengths. Bullshit. More to the point: writing, sentence-to-sentence. Little patience left with preconception. More interested in, say, how Julie Harris' breasts look on the page. What Wittgenstein does to them. & are they in what corner of the room. What angle of the sentence.

Kids screaming over busted record-xxxxxxplayer. Wait'll you find what a baby does to your writing(!) & the rain on the roof. & I hope we don't get another (getting wilder) electrical storm & all the lights & water go off...

Don't worry! MEMORY is totally READABLE! No doubts, it now has its own life & should go on out to it (published). For sure. I now read it easily in great legal-binder thanx to Lewis. The whole a parenthesis lock on earlier phase of your living. & Aproposx your realization of it as "song to Ed": reading Polaroid at Franconia realized that in a big sense it's a kind of love poem (!), all that I/you & then it even gets to sections of "I long for you" etc. Came to me while reading & almost hung me up in the middle! What a jerk! What do we know about our own writing?? 'Course it's also a love poem to "it" as well as "you". Which takes it into stranger corners. & I said: Jesus, what lengths we now have to go to write a love poem! Well, Either/Or, I/Thou: it's ancient (as Mingus said of Cocktails for Two too!).

Yes, answering you in patches, THIS/6 work is from the long prose work. Published (perversely) (after not wanting publish more of it for awhile) another/shorter section in an Australian mag that asked me out of the blue (mag called THE EAR IN A WHEATFIELD, of all things, & available from Jack Shoemaker only I think, only sent me one copy). Wrote 150pp of that. & now work on what may be a novel (or story anyway), which may or may not be the next section of the long work. Dunno yet. Seem to be working in several directions at once. Come to think of it, when was I not? & how did you like the Smithon(smithson) piece?

Wrote another cave work (similar to Eldon's first-take prose), since xx oldfriend Ray was up & we went to Knox Cave over in NY, cave we hadn't been to in about 20 years, speaking of MEMORY(!) it's a real memory nexus (trees thick as your arm growing up through cellar-hole of Roller Rink used to be next the cave sink). Proceeding to fill that out further so it'll probably arrive at something transformed. Called THE CAVE REMAIN. Met a young cop over there (confronted while covered with cave mud) who didn't know about any of the stuff we remembered, too young! First time I've had experience with cop where I/totally knew I was OLDER than the cop. Also, spookily, it turned out a kid had been killed at same cave couple days before we were there. And then I heard (from English teacher SUNY Albany) a friend of the killed-guy already wrote a poem re his friend's death. Writing seems unavoidable...

I wish you were out of the City too! Sad to hear (Lewis' letter) you'll not be able to quit city for another year. Maybe something'll come up in intermin(im) & what's this about Bernadette "Fired" from Church?? Out of touch with Larry/Anne [~~crossout~~, with "Larry" **added by hand**] axis (thankfully apropos gossip levels) for month or so. What happened? Which is no doubt a long hard tale(?) Saw Anne's CityLites book at Philip's, nutz-cover but works look solid (can anybody send me a copy? no bookstores here ordering anymore C.L. books since Ferlinghetti now demands/no orders less than dozen copies or some such ridiculous shit).

Susan

just brought bowl of popcorn in, keys all greasy from fingers-to-mouth. Lemonade in the rain. Letter from Corbett: he had one of his "attacks" over at Gustons, saved by valium. Time to take it easy. But looks like their Vermont schedule a bit screwed by school/teaching summerplans: Bill up there first half of summer, Bev second half. We'll be here mostly. Cepting Martha's Vineyard for ten days starting June 30. My cousin here week of June 9th. Larry off & on "threatening" as usual. Come when you can get free. Time (long past time!) to get together again talk it all over...

What's with this new Sjowall/Wahloo, COP KILLER?? Izzat the newest (after LOCKED ROOM)? I hadn't heard of. Can you find me a copy down there? I got MAN ON BALCONY from Pittsfield Library; ROSEANNA from friend in D.C. (orig. paperback).

Doubt if I answered everything, but tried. Sorry about the gap. See you soon! I want rain to stop
& sun come out!!

all love,

Clark

**[in the above letter, most slashes are handwritten, likely a proofreading correction by
Coolidge meant to indicate there should be spaces between these words.]**

June 2 [1975]

[handwritten:] Monday

Dear Clark,

Time to leave the city.

I'm tempted to think that's all I have to say. Just waiting to see when I was going to get pregnant, now I'll have the baby in December I think, and we'll be out of here by May, end of. Sounds good to me, especially after the last few weeks which you may have heard something about. As I feel now [spelling corrected by hand], I don't see any reason to ever live in NY again. I hope. Strangest of all I've ben 'fired' from the P.Project in what seems to involve some astounding machinations of Larrys & annes wayward [spelling corrected by hand] emotions. So I have nothing to do but be pregnant & xxx write for six months. Just as an addendum to a study of our radical xxxxxx friends (I havent been typing at all lately), I was told I was being fired because I was pregnant & "Lewis will take care of you" (Anne)??? Needless to say, I'm relieved in a way. Many ways. So Lewis & I will become the Arlene Zekowski & Stanley Berne of, I hope, Massachusetts. If you or Susan get any ideas about where to live or prices, let me know, we'll be looking for somewhere starting next summer for all year round, of course.

Grossingers really doing Memory, soon. & the basketball article was rejected cause they "didn't know what was going on in it" & Ms. Hornick is doing a book in the spring. I dreamt I saw you lying on a bed in a dormitory owned by Holly Solomon last night. You were reading a book but your eyes were too close to it. I was supposed to answer the phone there but I was locked out & stung by an insect that turned out to be a red pea pod. A neighbor told me to examine it to be sure it wasn't a wasp, which reminded me, have you read COP KILLER yet by the Swedes, supposed to be their second last!

Also indulging in Freud's biography, 3 vols., mixed with Simenon, Graham Greene & Dostoyevsky. It's too hot to think here. We're going up to Vermont sometime in June, late June, & maybe we'll stop & visit you on one of the ways, espceially if we can get a car. Alan Davies was here today & said there were some sort of Massachusetts arts council grants, 3 thousand dollars, maybe you should apply.

How'll I earn my xxx xxx living in the future, Clark? Write xx soon.

[handwritten:] Love
Bernadette

[handwritten]

July 4 [1975]

Dear Clark, Here's the news –

A reversal of the reversal + we're moving to the country anyway. Can't wait. Lewis' job indefinite so we decided not to sit out another NYC year. Have baby in field? We can move, we wanna move by Sept. so start keeping eyes open. We just got back from the Vermont Corbetts + drove down thru Berkshires etc., picked up alot of local papers + even looked at a house – it was about 2 miles from you, in Canaan but it looked like a transplanted apartment building with 4 families (?) living in it fronted by a giant American flag! Anyway, firecrackers going off here + a bee in the kitchen, NYC? Anyway would appreciate it if you started looking in the Eagle for us + if anything comes up we'll drop everything + be right there. Also planning to come up soon – couple weeks? – + do some intensive looking. From the papers we saw it seems a little early (?) What we want is a house we can have for at least a full year [(Sept. 1 or sooner) **added in right margin**], about \$250 or so, something we wont get snowed in in cause in December we have to go have a baby. We'd even consider an apartment in Lenox. Bill C. suggested you ask Paul Metcalf if he knows of anything in his neighborhood since he's been there a long time. I'm gonna write to Tanglewood again + hopelessly ask if I can have Hawthorne's house ! I'll write a "proposal." All my energy now seems to be focused on being pregnant – I even look pregnant now – + moving + reading the novels of Simenon. Nobody's in the city except Simon Schuchat + Steve Hamilton just moved here from Chicago, both turning 21 + ambitious – they thought I could introduce them to Taylor Mead? + talk endlessly like + about Ted. Michael Lally's also moved here, writing book reviews for the Washington Post. We were told that "everybody" (cept us) was in Boulder. The mind travels elsewhere. And what about Wahloo's death ?! Like a member of the family + then pissed off there wont be more books, – we're speculating on one more. The Time said "after a long illness" – also that they wrote alternating chapters "simultaneously"!

Write soon + all if anything turns up, see you soon

Love Bernadette

[Written horizontally in the lefthand margin]: Could you look up an address for Mary Pelkey in the Berkshire phone book – dont know the town. Thanks.

[handwritten]

July 6 [1976]

Dear Clark + Susan—

We were here till Tuesday morning. We had a very quiet relaxing weekend. Larry called to say he forgot to call before (?) + was going to Boulder; Philip Guston called on Sunday + said to tell you. Also, the (Kay) Betlocks (sp?) arrived, he looking harried, to visit you. Cat is well though bluejays eat her food. We used a can of cheddar cheese soup + a tangerine juice. I think we stole someone's Eagles. There was a major storm, truly amazing, the house like an ark. You can read about it in the clipping (by the phone). We still lacked power in our house for the weekend + a living room ceiling. We are just moving blindly in today, Tuesday, + that's it. Our phone is 6373009. I'm leaving the plants till the next time we visit. I also left the (a) hammock in the garage. Use it if you want. Our house looks great, we have no carpets yet. Lewis is reading the complete works of J. G. Ballard. Marie's been babbling, she says "ba-ba-ba-aa-arroom brawl." Hope you had a good vacating. Give us a call

Love Bernadette

P.S. I've borrowed "The Wind from Nowhere" (Ballard)

Lewis

x — Marie

[handwritten]

8/12 [1977?]

Dear Clark + Susan –

Trees fell down on the Richmond Road, Marie + Cinder have a love-hate relationship, the car starts, you have beautiful bee-balms in the front yard, we had a heat wave, the Son of Sam used to live on Lewis's block, don't ever eat at the Log Cabin, the blackberries are ready for you, that's the big news

Happy Birthday Susan!

Love,
Bernadette + Lewis

P.S. Marie can say DANDELION.

PSS Books borrowed: Williams Interviews + YA-YA (Woolf)

**[Postcard: “A panorama view of Folsom Field on the beautiful campus of the University of Colorado at Boulder”
postmarked 16 June 1978?
handwritten]**

Dear Clark + Susan –

We got here, an ordeal, tantrums on airplane, then altitude illness for me + heat wave, 95° at 10 a.m. Then we recovered, Marie took to Moses + we knocked em dead at the reading (me last), Bill + Lynn volatile neighbors, Sophia said “baby” today, 1st word, Marie ecstatic at all the nooks here, John’s become everyone’s babysitter, Kate Millet’s a mugshot, the Buddhists wear suits, students need to be nudged alot, Boulder requires drinking, all Buddhists smoke, Allen asked us to be caretakers on his farm, Larry’s Larry, Susan’s got altitude fever, Dick + Michael nice (bores), Simone inspiring, maybe we’ll see Pretty Baby **[up righthand side of card: “Asked to stay extra week – maybe?”]** Love, Bernadette + Lewis **[written in lower lefthand corner: “Did you drive to the great divide” [?]]**