

December 12, 1966

Dear Roger:

The trouble is that you must type at an incredible rate. I see the paper come smoking out of your machine. It depresses the hell out of me. The trouble is that I have something at stake in the production of words on paper. In a pub I can sit back and enjoy your virtuoso performance, but when I sit down to read a letter of yours I begin to cry sooner or later no matter how funny it is. Well, the trouble is that that's not true either.

Things were pretty grim when last I wrote you. Since then I have done a certain amount of writing. I finished a story I had started in London and got hung up on. Then came a little play. It is really quite a funny little play. I hope that some day I will get good and drunk and go and ask the Roundhouse people if they would consider doing it for me. But failing that I don't know what will ever become of it. Then another story. Now another little play. The plays tend to be much more wild than the stories. The first of these involved a man who had had a heart attack in the park and was found clutching his medicine bottle of nitroglycerin. He is suspected of being an anarchist and a cop loses his head and clubs him. Pow. Up goes the park. Very tiresome if you think of POLITICAL ALLEGORY. But I myself find it very funny otherwise. The second play is just getting under way (based on an idea of Henri Michaux) and at this moment I have three clean cut young chaps trying to hold in natural positions five men they have just shot in a compartment on a train. As far as I know this one has no overtones.

There are no publications. Oh, wait, U S CATHOLIC did something along about September or October. Did you see their January issue? That story was better. If ever you run into Robert Burns of U S C, I authorize you to buy him a drink and send the bill to me. A chap did write saying that he liked a

poem and could I do something about lines 18&19 and the last half of 17. I did but he has never replied. EPOCH is publishing or has published an anthology which reprints "The Manhunt" as the very first story, and I find myself elevated from the category of "and others" to that of "including." This is doubtless significant. I got a copy of the book some time back but no one seems to have heard of it. Neither has Stanley Edgar Hyman's book including the famous NEW LEADER piece ever come to my attention. I did get an invitation to go to Kalamazoo and play the visiting writer sometime after the first of the year. Stan Elkin, no less, is to be one of the featured speakers for the Festival in the spring.

Do you ever get to Urbana? I never get to Chicago under ordinary circumstances but I will probably be passing through to and from New York at Christmas and to and from Kalamazoo sometime after the first of the year. Let us highly resolve to have something together at some point.