

364 72 Street  
Brooklyn, NY  
Nov. 26, 1952

Dear Frank:

I shall tell you something about what has happened to me internally in the interval since we last met. You will recall the time before last, in the winter, when we agreed that each would strive to acquire some new trait, and that by summertime it would have grown to such degree as to be noticeable, without deliberate clues, to the other. I will tell you now that the quality I aimed at is one I sought even in high-school days, yet never achieved, and I have not achieved it this year - serenity. I this year sought serenity, and I have lost even peace of mind. "Serenity" I call peace of mind with the superaddition of a kind of obvious majesty. But this year, when I was giving up my Macmillan job, and looking for another, and during my impermanent tenure of this current job with Welfare, I one by one lost most of the assurances which formerly had stood by me, faith in my mental stability, faith in my talent and destiny, faith in my value as a man. I seem of late never, as I once did, to reign over my passions and to exert choice. Of late, I seem rather like littoral sand that only is said to contain tumultuous seas, but actually which owns no form but what their tempests leave as a residue. I am angry much of the time. The look of peace that I once sensed as seated upon my face has given way to furrow in brow and a sullenness I can't seem to lift from about the corners of my mouth. I now suspect, as I look and observe similar trouble in others, how rare was that pleasure, once common in me, of walking abroad in nature and finding myself transported, suffused with the sense of unity with All, of immense funds of power and potency of infinite advance, which is the characteristic gift of mysticism. It is almost a year since I have felt moved to tears, except by my own suffering, felt hallowed in pines, exalted in church, or powerful in men. It is almost a year since I have enjoyed a truly original thought. I sense too keenly the poverty - no, more exact, the penury of ideas that compose and rule an individual. I have also been pained somewhat by my nerves. Always neuresthenic, I have of late approached neuroticism. Ground has been lost.

On the other hand, I have an intuition that I have learned very much, both about myself, and about life, this past year. It is knowledge not yet digested. As after a death, I cannot yet articulate these new truths. I hope they are not truths, like those madness knows, whose acquisition is so terrible that it destroys perception, analysis, and even memory in their possessor. So much for change. When do I see you again?

Very truly yours,

John

J. Collon  
364-72 1/2.  
Bklyn. N. Y.



Mr. Frank Shields  
Cp. Benson  
19 Clovelly St.  
Lynn, Mass.