

5/19/88

Dear Alyn,

Yes, I know I've been negligent in my letterwriting. My only excuse is my limited energy - after a half day's activities, I'm conked out. You know how it is. But when I got your letter today that you're in the hospital, well, I'm not doing THAT bad.

Throughout this whole time you've been ARC diagnosed, Alyn, it seems you've been much sicker than I've been. That really baffles me. You write that you're getting intravenous pentamidine - is there anyplace in Milw you can get aerosol inhaled pentamidine? I've been taking aero. pent. treatments every month now for a year and truly believe it's keeping the pneumocystis away; plus, because it's only inhaled, it goes directly to the lungs and treats the pneumo. but doesn't get into the bloodstream like intravenous or cause any side effects. Ask about it. It's VERY popular here. I'm still doing OK on the AZT, too, after being on it full dose for 14 mos. The bronchoscopy is how they diagnosed my pneumocystis Dec. '86. I hope you don't have TB. I don't know WHAT they do for that.

I haven't had any real bad problems since my 5-day hiccuping incident over the Christmas holidays. Lately though I've been having some very swollen lymph nodes - one behind my ear, and just recently the one under my left arm. But after being very swollen and sore for about a week, both of them just went away. Am having candida in my mouth again, but the mycelex troches keep that under control.

I see I haven't even written you about my BEST news: On St. Patrick's Day I signed a book contract with Alyson Publications in Boston for my biography of Jack Garland! They've already sent me part of the advance \$\$\$. Since I've found out I'm sick, I've been envisioning laying on my deathbed and having my 4 yrs. worth of work on this book being tossed in the dumpster after I kick off. Now I can envision it in the library instead. I am so so happy & proud. I have til Sept. 1st to get them the completed manuscript and am working feverishly. My whole perspective has changed now, knowing that it's NOT "just a hobby" and it WILL be published.

The story about how I got Alyson is amusing. They'd sent me a form letter last summer, rejecting me, saying they were all "booked up" until 1989. So I tried Naiad Press, the women's publishers in Florida. Barbara Grier, Naiad's president, phoned me on a Saturday to say she was SO excited about the Garland story and it MUST be published, but Naiad couldn't publish it because, even though my story is about a woman, I'M A MAN and they're a women's press! Oh, the ironies of life! So, hoping it would change her mind, I told her I haven't always been.... Then she didn't know WHAT to do! Said she'd have to consult others, etc., but even then, they still decided they couldn't publish me. But Grier said she knows EVERYONE and would find someone who would

publish it. Suddenly Sasha Alyson was VERY interested and accepted the book immediately.

The first week in April I went to Honolulu to get information on Garland from the Hawaii State Library. What a gorgeous place! Didn't have THAT much fun, because my mother went along with me, but I did ditch her a few times to check out the g. bars. But you didn't even have to go to the bars around there - there was so many hot bods and cruisy dolls just on the sidewalks and beaches. I've always wondered if they airbrushed those postcards, etc. showing how beautiful Hawaii is, but, no... it really does look like that. The thing that impressed me the most was how FRAGRANT the air was. Even in downtown city center, it smelled like you were in a florist's. We even went to the Don Ho Show - what a riot!

My other objective - to help the female-to-male community as much as I can while I still can - is also going well. I organized our 5th get-together in March and 18 F-M's attended with 8 guests. Am now planning another for June.

Dig the enclosed article. My additional attempt at education/liberation for others. Remember me in that tux at the ball?
HA HA

Thanks for mentioning some old friends - Donna Utke, Louie Stimac. I always thought Donna was so cool. Nice to know she's still around and a good friend. Tell her I say "hi" next time you see her, ok?

Hope you can do something about donating your house for a gay cause. I'm working with the gay lawyers group here (they will do a free will and power of attorney for PWA's) and am giving most of my assets (\$\$, computer, typesetter) to the S.F. Gay Historical Society. I hope you've arranged for any historically significant items you're keeping to go to a group for preservation - maybe there's a gay historical society in Chicago? I've tried several times to get Eldon to send issues of GPU NEWS which our Historical Society is missing, but he never writes me and, when he does, he never mentions my request.

I did finally get a copy of the Wisconsin Light from Howard.

Alyn, I'm sure I needn't lecture you about "keeping the spirit." That's one thing you're famous for, in my eyes. I strongly recommend doing all kinds of nice things for yourself, like buying that new mattress, and hope you're doing other things to pamper yourself, extravagant or not. I also recently bought myself an expensive new mattress, after sleeping on one over 6 years which was already used when I bought it!

All my best vibes and good energies to you, Alyn. Let me know, even if just a postcard, what's happening.

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