

October 14, 1970

Dear Kit,

I see, to my shame, that almost a month has passed since I received your letter. I've been working on a review of Cleridge and have evidently caught some of his procrastination, although not, alas his genius.

I have, as you can see, enclosed two poems: "Labyrinths" was written before Stanley died, and is still part of the European thing. "Deathwatch" is brand new. I have about six poems on the hook, but they aren't willing to be landed yet. Two of mine are appearing in next month's Poetry, I guess. I'm vaguer on publication policy but I just corrected proof last week, and they say that they send out galley's three weeks before publication. My former roommate-poet ^{EBB?} Margie Searles is up here in Madison in the psychiatric ward, but hoping to be sprung soon and come for a visit. Nothing very serious, but her father is a psychologist and head of the hospital in Portland, so he sent her here, and she likes Wisconsin.

All success to Thomas's political future. There seems to be the year for Republicans. Wisconsin is jumping at the moment, because the Navy is trying to install Project SANGUINE, a grim name for a grim idea - it involves lots of little electrical wires under the ground which cause the telephones to ring all the time (according to the people in Utah who have it already) upsets the balance of nature, and raises human blood pressure and body temperatures. The citizens are trying to block it, but I'm not optimistic that we'll

win. We are trying to do what we can for nature by gardening organically, which really turns out to be more efficient than the other methods. For one thing, we can use all the old leaves, vegetable peelings, ^{the} chicken's dirty straw, pine needles, etc. instead of burning them and polluting the atmosphere and buying a fire permit. Did I tell you that Stanley sent Nancy 35,000,000 (a some fantastic number) of Ladybugs for a present? They arrived after I got up here and were Biblical in their numbers. Now, with the cold weather, a certain number of them have moved inside, which is well and good because we have house plants, but if several thousand of them come in, it will be crowded. I've found that they come in considerably more sizes, shapes and colors than I had imagined. My friends in England tell me that since England stopped using DDT sprays, they are back, and when they migrate from one field to another (they seem to be particularly fond of the aphids that live on hops) sometimes the sky turns black. I wish that they would eat the locusts - we're getting tired of them, and the seventeenth year is next year for our areas of the country.

I'm pleased to hear about Ed. He recently sent me two fine pictures of Stanley that a student's father had taken at graduation. Ruth Ellen had written a few days previously, enquiring about the baby. It is due in about a month, and all seems to be well. In any case you will be hearing about it. Both hospital and doctor are excellent, so I'm not worried - except that it's twenty miles away, and if the lakes freeze, life will be a bit strenuous. We were worried about getting there; the doctor says that's no problem, but if the weather is bad, the baby and I simply won't be able to go home.

I saw some reviews of the Trust. I'd be very much interested to see yours. Do write when you've a chance.

All love to you and Thomas,
Phred [Pettingell] '68