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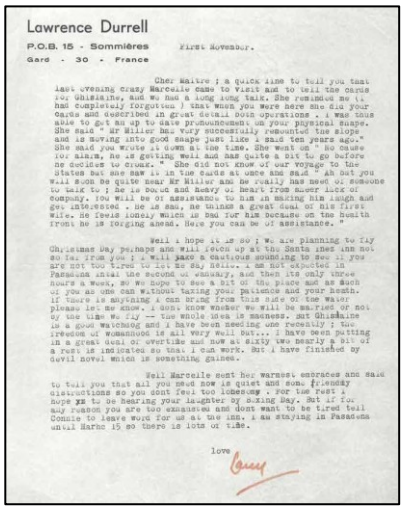
LAWRENCE DURRELL

Letters to Henry Miller: 1974-1979

"I WANT TO HUNT FOR THE LARVAL FORMS, THE GERMS FROM WHICH CREATIVE IDEAS START"

1. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. [N.p.: 1974]. Single sheet addressed by Lawrence Durell to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Henry you can imagine how thrilled I was by your reaction to MONSIEUR; it was good of you to tackle it. It's the first of five novels interlinked in a new way – not relativity this time. A telescope, say, with five sections. I want to hunt for the larval forms, the germs from which creative ideas start. You said once that you could write a whole book about one tiny phrase if need be, tracing it back to the source. In a way these books will do the same. There should be five – a quincunx, so to speak. But their relationship is a reincarnation-like thing and will be very stereoscopic-stereophonic in form. / I mean we all knew we had previous lives but mostly don't know what they were – but we feel the weight of the karma accumulated. Anyway, what the hell, if I can pull it off it will be more ambitious in scope than the quartet – Pray for me. But I am delighted and encouraged by your praise as always. / Love from Ghislaine; we have had some dour battles but I think sunlight is beginning to break through. If I live through it I'll write a play called THE TAMING OF THE SCREW. / All the best from us both – we are heading for London to watch the launching of MONSIEUR. / [signed] Larry." About 225 words. Folded for mailing and slightly creased, else near fine.

2. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: November 1, [1974]. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Cher Maitre; a quick line to tell you that last evening crazy Marcelle came to visit and to tell the cards for Ghislaine, and we had a long long talk. She reminded me (I had completely forgotten) that when you were here she did your cards and described in great detail both operations. I was thus able to get an up to date pronouncement on your physical shape. She said "Mr. Miller has very successfully remounted the slope and is moving into good shape just like I said ten years ago." She said you wrote it down at the time. She went on "No cause for alarm, he is getting well and has quite a bit to go before he decides to croak." She did not know of our voyage to the States but she saw it in the cards at once and said "Ah but you will soon be quite near Mr Miller and he really has need of someone to talk to; he is bored and heavy of heart from sheer lack of company. You will be of assistance to him in making him laugh and get interested. He is sad, he thinks a great deal of his first wife. He feels lonely which is bad for him because on the health front he is forging ahead. Here you can be of assistance." / Well I hope it is so; we are planning to fly Christmas Day perhaps and will fetch up at the Santa Inez Inn not so far from you; I will take a cautious sounding to see if you are not too tired to let me say hello. I am not expected in Pasadena until the second of January, and then it is only three hours a week, so we hope to see a bit


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France

First November.

Cher Maitre ; a quick line to tell you that last evening crazy Marcelle came to visit and to tell the cards for Ghislaine, and we had a long long talk. She reminded me (I had completely forgotten) that when you were here she did your cards and described in great detail both operations . I was thus able to get an up to date pronouncement on your physical shape. She said " Mr Miller has very successfully remounted the slope and is moving into good shape just like I said ten years ago." She said you wrote it down at the time. She went on " No cause for alarm, he is getting well and has quite a bit to go before he decides to croak. " She did not know of our voyage to the States but she saw it in the cards at once and said " Ah but you will soon be quite near Mr Miller and he really has need of someone to talk to ; he is bored and heavy of heart from sheer lack of company. You will be of assistance to him in making him laugh and get interested . He is sad, he thinks a great deal of his first wife. He feels lonely, which is bad for him because on the health front he is forging ahead. Here you can be of assistance."

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Well Marcelle sent her warmest embraces and said to tell you that all you need now is quiet and some friendly distractions so you dont feel too lonesome . For the rest I hope ya to be hearing your laughter by spring Day. But if for any reason you are too exhausted and dont want to be tired tell Connie to leave word for me at the inn. I am staying in Pasadena until March 15 so there is lots of time.

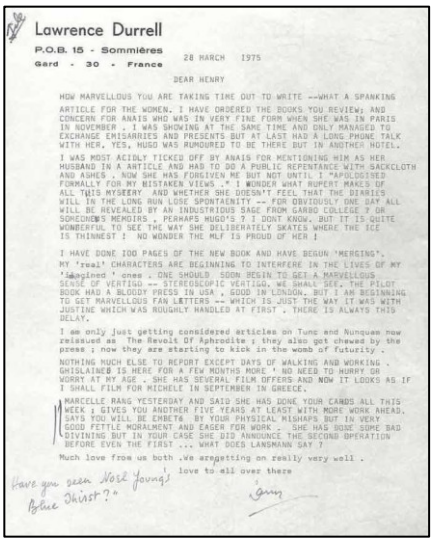
love

Larry

of the place and as much of you as one can without taxing your patience and your health. If there is anything I can bring from this side of the water please let me know. I don't know whether we will be married or not by the time we fly – the whole idea is madness. But Ghislaine is a good watchdog and I have been needing one recently; the freedom of womanhood is all very well but… I have been putting in a great deal of overtime and now at sixty two nearly a bit of a rest is indicated so that I can work. But I have finished my devil novel which is something gained. / Well Marcelle sent her warmest embraces and said to tell you that all you need now is quiet and some friendly distractions so you don't feel too lonesomy. For the rest I hope to be hearing your laughter by Boxing Day. But if for any reason you are too exhausted and don't want to be tired tell Connie to leave word for us at the inn. I am staying in Pasadena until March 15 so there is lots of time. / love / [signed] Larry." About 500 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.

"I WAS MOST ACIDLY TICKED OFF BY ANAIS [NIN] FOR MENTIONING [IAN HUGO] AS HER HUSBAND IN AN ARTICLE AND HAD TO DO A PUBLIC REPENTANCE WITH SACKCLOTH AND ASHES"

3. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: March 28, 1975. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "DEAR HENRY / HOW MARVELOUS YOU ARE TAKING TIME OUT TO WRITE – WHAT A SPANKING ARTICLE FOR THE WOMEN. I HAVE ORDERED THE BOOKS YOU REVIEW; AND CONCERN FOR ANAIS WHO WAS IN VERY FINE FORM WHEN SHE WAS IN PARIS IN NOVEMBER. I WAS SHOWING AT THE SAME TIME AND ONLY MANAGED TO EXCHANGE EMISSARIES AND PRESENTS BUT AT LAST HAD A LONG PHONE TALK WITH HER. YES, HUGO WAS RUMORED TO BE THERE BUT IN ANOTHER HOTEL. / I WAS MOST ACIDLY TICKED OFF BY ANAIS FOR MENTIONING HIM AS HER HUSBAND IN AN ARTICLE AND HAD TO DO A PUBLIC REPENTANCE WITH SACKCLOTH AND ASHES. NOW SHE HAS FORGIVEN ME BUT NOT UNTIL I "APOLOGISED FORMALLY FOR MY MISTAKEN VIEWS." I WONDER WHAT RUPERT MAKES OF ALL THIS MYSTERY AND WHETHER SHE DOESN'T FEEL THAT THE DIARIES WILL IN THE LONG RUN LOSE SPONTAENITY – FOR OBVIOUSLY ONE DAY ALL WILL BE REVEALED BY AN INDUSTRIOUS SAGE FROM GARBO COLLEGE? OR SOMEONE'S MEMOIRS, PERHAPS HUGO'S? I DON'T KNOW. BUT IT IS QUITE WONDERFUL TO SEE THE WAY SHE DELIBERATELY SKATES WHERE THE ICE IS THINNEST! NO WONDER THE MLF IS PROUD OF HER! / I HAVE DONE 100 PAGES OF THE NEW BOOK AND HAVE BEGUN 'MERGING'. MY 'real' CHARACTERS ARE BEGINNING TO INTERFERE IN THE LIVES OF MY 'imagined' ones. ONE SHOULD SOON BEGIN TO GET A MARVELOUS SENSE OF VERTIGO – STEREOSCOPIC VERTIGO. WE SHALL SEE. THE PILOT BOOK HAD A BLOODY PRESS IN USA, GOOD IN LONDON. BUT I AM BEGINNING TO GET MARVELLOUS FAN LETTERS – WHICH IS JUST THE WAY IT WAS WITH JUSTINE WHICH WAS ROUGHLY HANDLED AT FIRST. THERE IS ALWAYS THIS DELAY. / I am only just getting considered articles on Tunc and Nunquam now reissued as The Revolt Of Aphrodite; they also got chewed by the press; now they are starting to kick in the womb of futurity. / NOTHING MUCH ELSE TO REPORT EXCEPT DAYS OF WALKING AND WORKING. GHISLAINE IS HERE FOR A FEW MONTHS MORE. NO NEED TO HURRY OR WORRY AT MY AGE. SHE HAS SEVERAL FILM OFFERS AND NOW IT LOOKS AS IF I SHALL FILM FOR MICHELE IN SEPTEMBER IN GREECE. / MARCELLE RANG YESTERDAY AND SAID SHE HAS DONE YOUR CARDS ALL THIS WEEK; GIVES YOU ANOTHER FIVE YEARS AT LEAST WITH MORE WORK AHEAD. SAYS YOU WILL BE EMBETé BY YOUR PHYSICAL MISHAPS BUT IN VERY GOOD


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France

28 MARCH 1975

DEAR HENRY

HOW MARVELLOUS YOU ARE TAKING TIME OUT TO WRITE --WHAT A SPANKING ARTICLE FOR THE WOMEN. I HAVE ORDERED THE BOOKS YOU REVIEW; AND CONCERN FOR ANAIS WHO WAS IN VERY FINE FORM WHEN SHE WAS IN PARIS IN NOVEMBER . I WAS SHOWING AT THE SAME TIME AND ONLY MANAGED TO EXCHANGE EMISSARIES AND PRESENTS BUT AT LAST HAD A LONG PHONE TALK WITH HER. YES, HUGO WAS RUMOURED TO BE THERE BUT IN ANOTHER HOTEL.

I WAS MOST ACIDLY TICKED OFF BY ANAIS FOR MENTIONING HIM AS HER HUSBAND IN A ARTICLE AND HAD TO DO A PUBLIC REPENTANCE WITH SACKCLOTH AND ASHES . NOW SHE HAS FORGIVEN ME BUT NOT UNTIL I "APOLOGISED FORMALLY FOR MY MISTAKEN VIEWS ." I WONDER WHAT RUPERT MAKES OF ALL THIS MYSERY AND WHETHER SHE DOESN'T FEEL THAT THE DIARIES WILL IN THE LONG RUN LOSE SPONTANEITY -- FOR OBVIOUSLY ONE DAY ALL WILL BE REVEALED BY AN INDUSTRIOUS SAGE FROM GARBO COLLEGE ? OR SOMEONE'S MEMOIRS , PERHAPS HUGO'S ? I DONT KNOW. BUT IT IS QUITE WONDERFUL TO SEE THE WAY SHE DELIBERATELY SKATES WHERE THE ICE IS THINNEST ! NO WONDER THE MLF IS PROUD OF HER !

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I am only just getting considered articles on Tunc and Nunquam now reissued as The Revolt Of Aphrodite ; they also got chewed by the press ; now they are starting to kick in the womb of futurity .

NOTHING MUCH ELSE TO REPORT EXCEPT DAYS OF WALKING AND WORKING . GHISLAINE IS HERE FOR A FEW MONTHS MORE ' NO NEED TO HURRY OR WORRY AT MY AGE . SHE HAS SEVERAL FILM OFFERS AND NOW IT LOOKS AS IF I SHALL FILM FOR MICHELE IN SEPTEMBER IN GREECE.

MARCELLE RANG YESTERDAY AND SAID SHE HAS DONE YOUR CARDS ALL THIS WEEK ; GIVES YOU ANOTHER FIVE YEARS AT LEAST WITH MORE WORK AHEAD. SAYS YOU WILL BE EMBETé BY YOUR PHYSICAL MISHAPS BUT IN VERY GOOD FETTLE MORALMENT AND EAGER FOR WORK . SHE HAS DONE SOME BAD DIVINING BUT IN YOUR CASE SHE DID ANNOUNCE THE SECOND OPERATION BEFORE EVEN THE FIRST ... WHAT DOES LANSMANN SAY ?

Much love from us both .We aregetting on really very well .

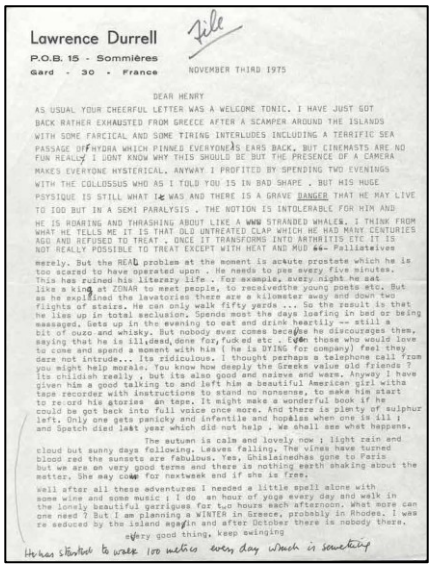
love to all over there

Have you seen Nord Journal Blue Thirst ?"

Larry

FETTLE MORALMENT AND EAGER FOR WORK. SHE HAS DONE SOME BAD DIVINING BUT IN YOUR CASE SHE DID ANNOUNCE THE SECOND OPERATION BEFORE EVEN THE FIRST … WHAT DOES LANSMANN SAY? / Much love from us both. We are getting on really very well. / love to all over there / [signed] Larry / [added as a holograph P.S.] Have you seen Noel Young's Blue Thirst?" With Miller's handwritten note "File" in the upper left margin. About 465 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.

4. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: November 3, 1975. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "DEAR HENRY / AS USUAL YOUR CHEERFUL LETTER WAS A WELCOME TONIC. I HAVE JUST GOT BACK RATHER EXHAUSTED FROM GREECE AFTER A SCAMPER AROUND THE ISLANDS WITH SOME FARCICAL AND SOME TIRING INTERLUDES INCLUDING A TERRIFIC SEA PASSAGE OFF HYDRA WHICH PINNED EVERYONE'S EARS BACK. BUT CINEMASTS ARE NO FUN REALLY. I DON'T KNOW WHY THIS SHOULD BE BUT THE PRESENCE OF A CAMERA MAKES EVERYONE HYSTERICAL. ANYWAY I PROFITED BY SPENDING TWO EVENINGS WITH THE COLLOSSUS WHO AS I TOLD YOU IS IN BAD SHAPE. BUT HIS HUGE PHYSIQUE IS STILL WHAT IT WAS AND THERE IS A GRAVE DANGER THAT HE MAY LIVE TO 100 BUT IN A SEMI PARALYSIS. THE NOTION IS INTOLERABLE FOR HIM AND HE IS ROARING AND THRASHING ABOUT LIKE A STRANDED WHALE. I THINK FROM WHAT HE TELLS ME IT IS THAT OLD UNTREATED CLAP WHICH HE HAD MANY CENTURIES AGO AND REFUSED TO TREAT. ONCE IT TRANSFORMS INTO ARTHRITIS ETC IT IS NOT REALLY POSSIBLE TO TREAT EXCEPT WITH HEAT AND MUD. Palliatives merely. But the REAL problem at the moment is acute prostate which he is too scared to have operated upon. He needs to pee every five minutes. This has ruined his literary life. For example, every night he sat like a king at ZONAR to meet people, to receive the young poets etc. But as he explained the lavatories there are a kilometer away and down two flights of stairs. He can only walk fifty yards … So the result is that he lies up in total seclusion. Spends most the days loafing in bed or being massaged. Gets up in the evening to eat and drink heartily – still a bit of ouzo and whiskey. But nobody ever comes because he discourages them, saying that he is ill, dead, done for, fucked etc. Even those who would love to come and spend a moment with him (he is DYING for company) feel they dare not intrude… It's ridiculous. I thought perhaps a telephone call from you might help morale. You know how deeply the Greeks value old friends? It's childish really, but it's also good and naive and warm. Anyway I have given him a good talking to and left him a beautiful American girl with a tape recorder with instructions to stand no nonsense, to make him start to record his stories on tape. It might make a wonderful book if he could be got back into full voice once more. And there is plenty of sulphur left. Only one gets panicky and infantile and hopeless when one is ill; and Spatch died last year which did not help. We shall see what happens. / The autumn is calm and lovely now; light rain and cloud but sunny days following. Leaves falling. The vines have turned blood red the sunsets are fabulous. Yes Ghislaine has gone to Paris but we are on very good terms and there is nothing earth shaking about the matter. She may come for next week end if she is free. / Well after all these adventures I needed a little spell alone with some wine and some music; I do an hour of yoga every day and walk in the lonely beautiful garrigues for two hours each afternoon. What more can one need? But I am planning a WINTER in Greece, probably in Rhodes. I was re-seduced by the island again and after October there is nobody there. / every good thing, keep swinging / [added in holograph at the foot of the page] He has started to walk 100 metres every day which is something." With Miller's handwritten note "File" at the top of the page. About 595 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France
File
NOVEMBER THIRD 1975

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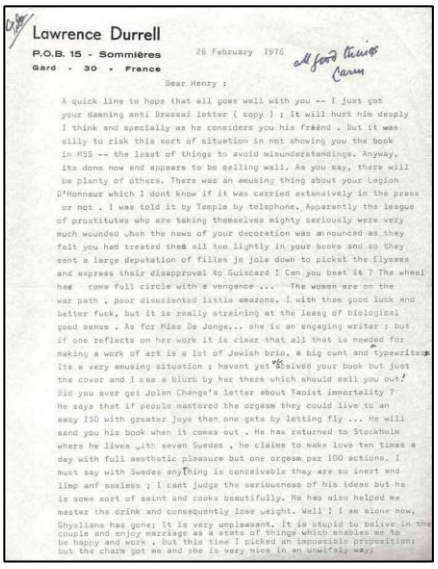
every good thing, keep swinging

He has started to walk 100 metres every day which is something

"[ERICA DE JONG] IS AN ENGAGING WRITER; BUT IF ONE REFLECTS ON HER WORK IT IS CLEAR THAT ALL THAT IS NEEDED FOR MAKING A WORK OF ART IS A LOT OF JEWISH BRIO, A BIG CUNT AND A TYPEWRITER"

5. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: February 28, 1976. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry; / A quick line to hope that all goes well with you – I just got your damning anti Brassai letter (copy); it will hurt him deeply I think and specially as he considers you his friend. But it was silly to risk this sort of situation in not showing you the book in MSS – the least of things to avoid misunderstandings. Anyway, it's done now and appears to be selling well. As you say, there will be plenty of others. There was an amusing thing about your Legion D'Honneur which I don't know if it was carried extensively in the press or not. I was told it by Temple by telephone. Apparently the league of prostitutes who are taking themselves mighty seriously were very much wounded when the news of your decoration was announced as they felt you had treated them all too lightly in your books and so they sent a large deputation of filles de joie down to picket the Elysees and express their disapproval to Guiscard! Can you beat it? The wheel has come full circle with a vengeance … The women are on the war path, poor disoriented little amazons. I wish them good luck and better fuck, but it is really straining at the lease of biological good sense. As for Miss De Jonge… she is an engaging writer; but if one reflects on her work it is clear that all that is needed for making a work of art is a lot of Jewish brio, a big cunt and a typewriter. It's a very amusing situation; haven't yet received your book but just the cover and I see a blurb by her there which should sell you out! Did you ever get Jolan Change's letter about Taoist immortality? He says that if people mastered the orgasm they could live to an easy 150 with greater joys than one gets by letting fly … He will send you his book when it comes out. He has returned to Stockholm where he lives with seven Swedes, he claims to make love ten times a day with full aesthetic pleasure but one orgasm per 100 actions. I must say with Swedes anything is conceivable they are so inert and limp and sexless; I can't judge the seriousness of his ideas but he is some sort of saint and cooks beautifully. He has also helped me master the drink and consequently lose weight. Well! I am alone now, Ghysliane has gone; It is very unpleasant. It is stupid to believe in the couple and enjoy marriage as a state of things which enables me to be happy and work. But this time I picked an impossible proposition; but the charm got me and she is very nice in an unwifely way; / [added in holograph at the top of the page] all good things / Larry." With Miller's handwritten note "File" in the upper left margin. About 470 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France
28 February 1976
All good things
Larry
Dear Henry;
A quick line to hope that all goes well with you -- I just got your damning anti Brassai letter (copy) ; It will hurt him deeply I think and specially as he considers you his friend . But it was silly to risk this sort of situation in not showing you the book in MSS -- the least of things to avoid misunderstandings. Anyway, its done now and appears to be selling well. As you say, there will be plenty of others. There was an amusing thing about your Legion D'Honneur which I dont know if it was carried extensively in the press or not . I was told it by Temple by telephone. Apparently the league of prostitutes who are taking themselves mighty seriously were very much wounded when the news of your decoration was announced as they felt you had treated them all too lightly in your books and so they sent a large deputation of filles je joie down to picket the Elysees and express their disapproval to Guiscard ! Can you beat it ? The wheel has come full circle with a vengeance ... The women are on the war path , poor disorientated little amazons. I wish them good luck and better fuck, but it is really straining at the leasy of biological good sense . As for Miss De Jonge... she is an engaging writer ; but if one reflects on her work it is clear that all that is needed for making a work of art is a lot of Jewish brio, a big cunt and typewriter. Its a very amusing situation ; havent yet received your book but just the cover and I see a blurb by her there which should sell you out! Did you ever get Jolan Change's letter about Taoist immortality ? He says that if people mastered the orgasm they could live to an easy 150 with greater joys than one gets by letting fly ... He will send you his book when it comes out . He has returned to Stockholm where he lives with seven Swedes , he claims to make love ten times a day with full aesthetic pleasure but one orgasm per 100 actions. I must say with Swedes anything is conceivable they are so inert and limp and sexless ; I cant judge the seriousness of his ideas but he is some sort of saint and cooks beautifully. He has also helped me master the drink and consequently lose weight. Well ! I am alone now, Ghysliane has gone; It is very unpleasant. It is stupid to belive in the couple and enjoy marriage as a state of things which enables me to be happy and work . But this time I picked an impossible proposition; but the charm got me and she is very nice in an unwifely ways

6. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: April 3, 1976. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry / After the success of my Greek film I am being asked if I will adapt a few things for French Television; among the notions I had was to ask you if you would grant me a six month option on your MISHIMA and THE SMILE AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER to see whether I could sell a short treatment to them. Naturally with such an 'option ami' if any other more lucrative offer comes up our arrangement automatically falls to the ground. But I need the option to get the thing officially listed by them. Send me a cable naming the titles; or if there is any black just say NO OPTIONS. / every good thing / am writing you soon / Larry / [added in holograph] p.s. they will pay well if it takes." With Miller's handwritten note "Show Tony!" in the upper left margin. About 135 words. Folded for mailing and creased, else very good.

7. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: May 1, 1976. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "[in holograph] Dear Henry / [typed] Just a quick line to give you a brief notion about what I had in mind when asking you for your option-amie. Recently Ghyslaine who has been itching to get back into the movie world where she spent some twenty five years, got a flat in Paris and started to reopen contacts for herself. She found a new situation developing in the TV world which looked more promising from a serious point of view than for some time past. The effect of inflation has been to cut big budget work and to drive many big film producers to turn their eyes to television while waiting for better and sillier times. This means smaller budgets with much more ingenuity, and a chance of making slightly more serious things. A change of perspective in fact. To back this I have for some time been receiving approaches from French TV to offer them, if not original work, at least some treatments of existing work which might make films. I at once thought of Mishima as a fine subject and also the newly reappeared House Of Incest which is having a success in Paris (apparently being pirated by a chanteur in a night club – Ghyslaine is trying to find out details.) Well G said she would like to try her hand at a little informal agency work, specially as she is going to Cannes next week with an American team where she will know absolutely everyone from Orson to Welles. So I gave her a couple of ordinary commercial scenarios and suggested that she might manage to place a treatment or two of work by you. Needless to say the minute she had struck, the ball is sent back to you to discuss price and terms and even director if you don't like the work of the one proposed. It is simply a try out. Paris seems desperate for new ideas and all three of us are very popular there whatever Brassai might think and the young are eager for our work. Consequently the chances of this ploy working are good; I am busy roughing out an Incest and taking some soundings for the existing Mishima material which they say is very rich. Next week is Cannes and we shall see what goes forward. / Much love to you both / LARRY / [added in holograph] Larry & Ghyslaine." About 390 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France
MAY ONE 1976
Dear Henry
Just a quick line to give you a brief notion about what I had in mind when asking you for your option-amie. Recently Ghyslaine who has been itching to get back into the movie world where she spent some twenty five years, got a flat in Paris and started to reopen contacts for herself. She found a new situation developing in the TV world which looked more promising from a serious point of view than for some time past. The effect of inflation has been to cut big budget work and to drive many big film producers to turn their eyes to television while waiting for better and sillier times . This means smaller budgets with much more ingenuity, and a chance of making slightly more serious things. A change of perspective in fact . To back this I have for some time been receiving approaches from French TV to offer them, if not original work, at least some treatments of existing work which might make films . I at once thought of Mishima as a fine subject and also the newly reappeared House Of Incest which is having a success in Paris (apparently being pirated by a chanteur in a night club -- Ghyslaine is trying to find out details.) Well G said she would like to try her hand at a little informal agency work, specially as she is going to Cannes next week with an American team where she will know absolutely everyone from Orson to Welles . So I gave her a couple of ordinary commercial scenarios and suggested that she might manage to place a treatment or two of work by you . Needless to say the minute she had struck, the ball is sent back to you to discuss price and terms and even director if you dont like the work of the one proposed . It is simply a try out. Paris seemes desperate for new ideas and all three of us are very popular there whatever Brassai might think and the young are eager for our work. Consequently the chances of this ply working are good ; I am busy roughing out an Incest and taking some soundings for the existing Mishima material which they say is very rich . Next week is Cannes and we shall see what goes forward.
Much love to you both
LARRY
Larry
Ghyslaine

8. TYPED NOTE SIGNED. [Sommières, France: September 27, 1977]. Two pages on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Marvelous description of your new question answer business; get it read to you. It's from MARY HENDER 11938 Sproul Street Norwalk Calif 90650. I will send her a book and a line of thanks. It's good news. More soon. A new project has come up for the BBC involving a trip up the Nile to top end, The High Dam. I leave for London Oct 7 then Egypt. I // should be back in London November 16 and so back here at latest twenty; meanwhile Ghys is staying and looking after the house. Both books are finished and I am set for a month or so off to cut wood etc. I shall head down for Greece about February I guess. / every good thing / Larry." About 125 words. Fine in the original mailing envelope, hand-addressed to Miller in Pacific Palisades, California, with Miller's hand-written note to his son Tony on the upper front corner: "Tony – / Read & file / Dad."

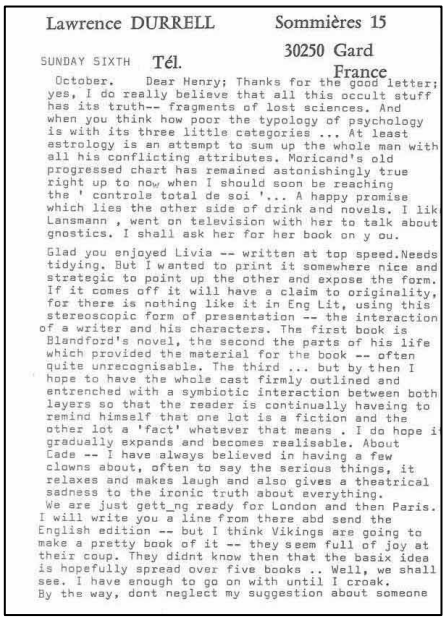
"J'AI VECU UN CAUCHEMAR ET J'AI PERDU UNE FORTUNE"

9. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: September 10, [1978]. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry: A time since I wrote – I was in a mad scramble to finish work in hand while at the same time preparing a trip to Egypt for the BBC, to make a documentary for a month and a half. I accordingly locked myself up and finished the big Rainbird book – coffee table – called Greek islands; and now today I have just sent off the last of Livia, the second of my Quinx series – the Q novels they will be called one day if they are finished… Duf! I leave here October 7 for London where I

stay a few days with old Alan Thomas and then emplane with the BBC unit. We are going right up to the High Dam and Kom Ombo etc. Positively my last Egypt trip. Meanwhile our great love affair has entered the Hold Up stage, as marriages do, and I am planning to stake the papers for divorce on the 22nd. Before leaving. I can't take it no more. J'ai vecu un cauchemar et j'ai perdu une fortune. It has been a monumental error of judgment and will cost me dear in alimony – it seems cruel to be foolish to this extent in my old age and without a pension! And of course now that money is the issue the Parisian "Garce" shows itself for what it is. I thought of some passages from insomnia about the black lustreless eye of Hoki, and the need for affection and protection and to be a bit dorlotter … Ha Ha. You should see this little homo's eye, when money is discussed; it becomes black and dry as the anus of Time's dog! Still come what may I must be free even if bankrupt. Voila the ground plan for this year. All I have earned is already earmarked for these worthy ends. I have already initialled the papers; now to sign. I must say tho I admire French literature it galls me to think that I shall work in my old age simply to subsidize the potations of fireflies like Blondin and other associated artists – for she's a couche partout as well and keeps a pretty cinematic court going in Paris in the VIIé … Well, I have really pulled the shit bucket over my own head this time and suppose that I formally deserve this set back. I am thinking seriously of spending a year in Greece, letting this big barrack of a place, and facing a Greek winter and spring – wonderful! But first I must deal with Egypt. I shall be back in London about November 15 then back here to tidy up my affairs. Then perhaps I shall take the Folkswagen and mosy down to Corfu. O dear, what a fool I have been. Now I must try and stabilise my finances with this huge millwheel tied around my neck – and I have neither the talent of Balzac nor the industry of Scott. I hope that things are well with you and that these letters don't make you swear because of eyestrain. / much love – Ghislain also sends, she is staying here until the papers are served and in order. amiablement quoi. / [in holograph] Larry." About 530 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.

"IF [*LIVIA*] COMES OFF IT WILL HAVE A CLAIM TO ORIGINALITY, FOR THERE IS NOTHING LIKE IT IN ENG[LISH] LIT[ERATURE]"

10. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. Sommières, France: October 6, [1978]. Two pages on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry; Thanks for the good letter; yes, I do really believe that all this occult stuff has its truth – fragments of lost sciences. And when you think how poor the typology of psychology is with its three little categories … At least astrology is an attempt to sum up the whole man with all his conflicting attributes. Moricand's old progressed chart has remained astonishingly true right up to now when I should soon be reaching the 'controle total de soi'… A happy promise which lies the other side of drink and novels. I like Lansmann, went on television with her to talk about gnostics. I shall ask her for her book on you. / Glad you enjoyed Livia – written at top speed. Needs tidying. But I wanted to print it somewhere nice and strategic to point up the other and expose the form. If it comes off it will have a claim to originality, for there is nothing like it in Eng Lit, using this stereoscopic form of presentation – the interaction of a writer and his characters. The first book is Blandford's novel, the second the parts of his life which provided material for the book – often quite unrecognisable. The third … but by then I hope to have the whole cast firmly outlined and entrenched with a symbiotic interaction between both layers so that the reader is continually having to remind himself that one lot is a fiction and the other lot a 'fact' whatever that means. I do hope it gradually expands and becomes realisable. About Cade – I have always believed in having a few clowns about, often to say the serious things, it relaxes and makes laugh and also gives a theatrical sadness to the ironic truth about everything. / We are just getting ready for London and then Paris. I will write you a line from there and send the English edition



Lawrence DURRELL Sommières 15
30250 Gard
France
Tél.

SUNDAY SIXTH October. Dear Henry; Thanks for the good letter; yes, I do really believe that all this occult stuff has its truth-- fragments of lost sciences. And when you think how poor the typology of psychology is with its three little categories ... At least astrology is an attempt to sum up the whole man with all his conflicting attributes. Moricand's old progressed chart has remained astonishingly true right up to now when I should soon be reaching the ' controle total de soi '... A happy promise which lies the other side of drink and novels. I lik Lansmann , went on television with her to talk about gnostics. I shall ask her for her book on y ou.

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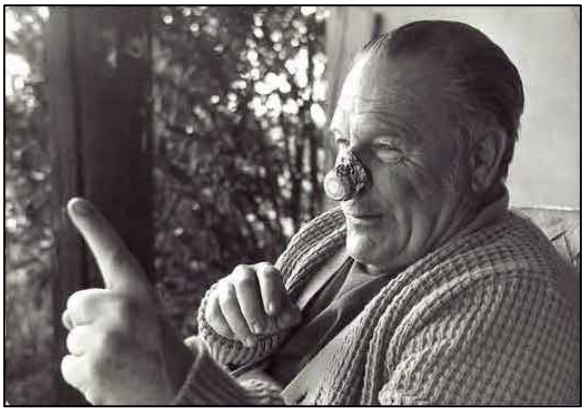
By the way, dont neglect my suggestion about someone

– but I think Vikings are going to make a pretty book of it – they seem full of joy at their coup. They didn't know then that the basic idea is hopefully spread over five books … Well, we shall see. I have enough to go on with until I croak. / By the way, don't neglect my suggestion about someone // to read aloud to you in the evenings. Its marvelously relaxing. / every good thing. Ghislaine sends love the little bastard. I am taking her to London for a Roman Triumph and to Paris. After that I cut her throat and elope with a pygmy. / love / Larry [signed] Larry." About 430 words. Folded for mailing and lightly creased, else near fine.

11. TWO AUTOGRAPH LETTERS SIGNED & AN ORIGINAL BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPH. Paris: September 4, 1979. Two pages addressed by Lawrence Durrell's ex-wife Ghislaine de Boysson to Henry Miller. She writes: "Cher Henry – / Mes amis Michéle et Philippe Gallard vous ont envoyé de New York une letter de ma part. Je les à rencontre la semaine dernier en Bretagne – / Si jamais vous ne recevrez pas mon message, voulez vous avoir la gentillesse de les accueiller un moment. / C'est leur premier voyage // aux Etats Unis… Larry ni avait telephoné. Si jamais vous ne recevriez pas mon message pour me dire qu'il voilait me voir – dommage. / Je travail pour une Tailleur de Piqûre, rue Nazarine… Très très souvent je pense à vous et je vous aime / Ghislaine de Boysson / ex Durrell." Lightly creased, else near fine. With the letter referred to above: ALS. Paris: September 4, 1979. Two pages addressed by Lawrence Durrell's ex-wife Ghislaine de Boysson to Henry Miller. She writes: "Dear Henry / – Excuse me for having taken the liberty to send you those two young people from France. / They called me yesterday and said they had not the opportunity to see you. They arrived late in the afternoon at your place. [Miller's son] Tony asked them to come again the morning after but they realized they had not the time to do so as long as they had to catch their plane for New York. / I met them in France in Brittany where I was for a weekend. They // are a very kind couple. He is a journalist and she is a teacher. I gave them that picture of Larry "champagnise" for you. Of course you will have prefer a bottle of Champagne and I would have been so happy to send you one but it was late and every shops closed. Next time – / Long time ago Larry wrote to me and tell that you were very well and in love. Bravo baisse toi cher Henry. / I planned for next year, Summer holiday, to rent a caravan with friends and camp all over California. You know how much I will be happy to see you. I will let you know before because I don't want to disturb you. / Je travail à Paris et enfin les temps efface les cicatrices. Je deviens une femme presque tranquille et joyeuse – Je vous embrasse / Ghislaine – / P.S. Will you excuse my terrible English written with the terrible accent français – " With: ORIGINAL BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPH. [N.p.: n.d.]. The 3" x 5" photograph shows Durrell seated wearing a cardigan with an outstretched finger and the cap of a champagne bottle on the tip of his nose. With a note on the verso by Durrell's fourth wife, Ghislaine de Boysson: "Larry ne boit plus – mais il a transformé son nez ce bouchon de Champagne –" Overall near fine, with the original mailing envelope.



"I FELT THAT IF SOMEBODY DIDN'T DO SOMETHING THE NOVEL WAS GOING TO BE ABOUT AS MODERN AS MORRIS-DANCING TO FLAGEOLET & DRUM"

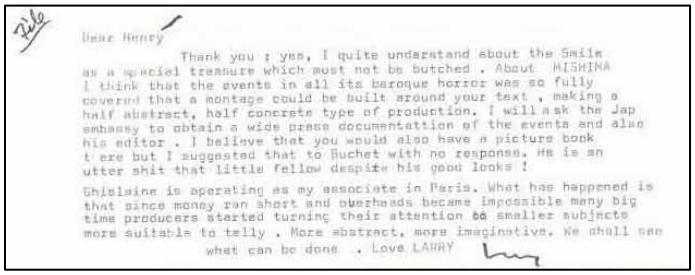
12. AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED. [N.p.]: December 14, 1979. Single sheet on Durrell's personal letterhead addressed to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry – A line to wish you all good things for your birthday at Noël. Not sure where I'll be but will send you a cable to 'marquer le coup.' From your side a prayer for the well being of my 'pivotal' novel 'Constance' would be in order. I am just starting the 'feedback,' i.e. feeding back the 'imaginary' characters into the furnace of the actuality, the action. It is rather an alchemical stunt and I feel like a physicist continuously playing with some atomic process. Up to now the feedback idea

has been purely temporal as a notion, but I am trying to feedback second-degree fictions into field inhabited by first-degree ones. Will the result be over-contradiction and chaos – ('reality over-determined'!)? or will they marry and settle down happily ever after like nouns and verbs in the same poem? I'm curious to see. I felt that if somebody didn't do something the novel was going to be about as modern as morris-dancing to flageolet & drum soon! If the bloody thing works however it will give a new flavor to fictional reality – with luck. / I'm waiting for my daughter – / love to you all / Larry." About 200 words. Folded for mailing, else near fine.

13. TYPED NOTE SIGNED. [N.p: n.d.]. Single sheet, addressed by Lawrence Durrell to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "A Postscript which will amuse you I think. This young lady, the vendangeuse I picked up on the road (who at the moment shows little interest in grapes and is thoroughly enjoying baths, hot water and plentiful sleep and food) is a great Miller fan, and nearly died of astonishment to wake up in bed beside one of Miller's 'characters'; she was under the impression that I was a creation or invention of yours in the Collossus which is her favourite Miller book. / I somehow think that she won't be doing much work in the fields, and I am going to keep her for a few days until I go to Geneva and back to Rheims. She is called Marie-Noelle, a nice name. / C'est ainsi que les jours coulent… / Larry." About 135 words. Near fine.

14. TYPED NOTE SIGNED. [N.p.: n.d.]. A typed note addressed by Lawrence Durrell to Henry Miller at head of the first page of an ALS written to Durrell by Simone Perrier. Durrell writes: "I gave Simone Perrier Brassai for Xmas since she is mad about you; see what she says. Writing you soon. Brassai's errors are correctible in a new edition I guess. He is rather crumpled by your not liking the book. I have said NOTHING. Love Larry." About 45 words. Lightly creased, else near fine.

15. TYPED LETTER SIGNED. [N.p.; n.d.]. Single sheet, addressed by Lawrence Durrell to Henry Miller. Durrell writes: "Dear Henry, / Thank you; yes, I quite understand about the Smile as a special treasure which must not be butched. About MISHIMA I think that the events in all its baroque horror was so fully covered that a montage could be built around your text, making a half abstract, half concrete type of production. I will ask the Jap embassy to obtain a wide press documentation of the events and also his editor. I believe that you would also have a picture book there but I suggested that to Buchet with no response. He is an utter shit that little fellow despite his good looks! / Ghislaine is operating as my associate in Paris. What has happened is that since money ran short and overheads became impossible many big time producers started turning their attention to smaller subjects more suitable to telly. More abstract, more imaginative. We shall see what can be done. Love LARRY. / [signed] Larry." About 160 words. Near fine.

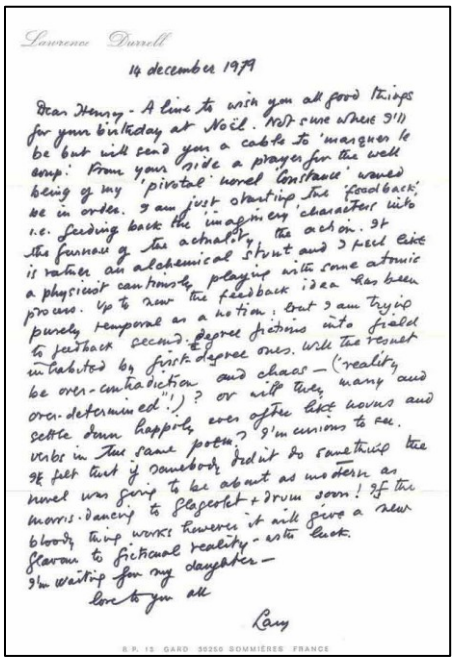

Dear Henry

Thank you ; yes, I quite understand about the Smile as a special treasure which must not be butched . About MISHIMA I think that the events in all its baroque horror was so fully covered that a montage could be built around your text , making a half abstract, half concrete type of production. I will ask the Jap embassy to obtain a wide press documentation of the events and also his editor . I believe that you would also have a picture book there but I suggested that to Buchet with no response. He is an utter shit that little fellow despite his good looks !

Ghislaine is operating as my associate in Paris. What has happened is that since money ran short and overheads became impossible many big time producers started turning their attention to smaller subjects more suitable to telly . More abstract, more imaginative. We shall see what can be done . Love LARRY

16. AUTOGRAPH MANUSCRIPT. [N.p.: n.d.]. Single sheet written in holograph ink by Henry Miller. He writes: "Chanson – Valse – Guinguette / C'était un jour d'amour / C'était notre plus bel jour / Quand le chagrin ne démange / Je souviendrai toujours / Jour si candide et si tender / Puis toutes mes fleurs sont à vendre. / (Solange – 1938) / Courtesy of Lawrence Durrell / (see Morand's "Six Day Race")." About 55 words. Near fine.

Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell began life a generation and a world apart. Born on 26 December 1891 to an impoverished German-descended tailor, Henry Valentine Miller grew up in Brooklyn ('Orpheus in Brooklyn', in Bertrand Mathieu's phrase) and worked in New York City at countless menial jobs until he fled America and his alimony payments during 1928 to live and write in Paris. Lawrence George Durrell was born in Jullundur, India, on 27 February 1912 into a family with colonial roots in the civil service. At eleven he was sent to England for further schooling, destined, so his engineer father hoped, for a solid career in the land of his birth. By the time he was eighteen Durrell had asserted his independence by steadfastly refusing to study subjects he disliked or to pass university entrance examinations: he wanted to become a writer. Early in 1935 he decoyed his widowed mother to Corfu and soon he initiated the correspondence with Miller in Paris. The early meetings between Miller and Durrell occurred from 1937 through 1939, when the Second World War drove Miller back to the USA and Durrell, a year and a half later, to Egypt. Thereafter, Durrell lived as close as he could manage to the Mediterranean – the one exception was the year he spent being miserable in Argentina – while Miller established himself in California, first at Big Sur, later in Pacific Palisades near Los Angeles. Reunions were infrequent but the friendship flourished by post. As Lawrence Durrell likes to tell it, he first came across *Tropic of Cancer* discarded, presumably by a disgusted or shocked American tourist, in a public toilet on Corfu. The account he gave Henry Miller is that a common friend, Barclay Hudson, had tossed *Tropic* in his direction during one of their literary discussions on the Greek island during mid-1935. Those enter Durrell's world soon the meaning of 'heraldic': the visible phenomena of the world are not stable, but take on mantic significance, coloured by contexts, emotions, language. The discovery of the first *Tropic* by Durrell was in fact a heraldic event: neither he nor Henry was ever to be the same therafter. Until 1935 neither Durrell nor Miller had achieved, at least in public, anything approaching heraldic stature. If they existed for anyone beyond their immediate families and circles of friends, it was as promissory notes or question marks on the pages of literary history. True, Miller had been spinning like a dervish for nearly forty-four years, collecting that vast catalogue of failures and emotional disasters which would eventually surface as his life's work, and had turned his studio at 18 Villa Seurat into a virtual sweatshop of literature. Durrell had only published a booklet of competent but derivative poems, *Quaint Fragment*, and *Bromo Bombastes*, a satire on the formidable G. B. Shaw, prudently signed with the pseudonym 'Gaffer Peeslake.' Durrell and Miller had both found role models – Durrell had discovered the Elizabethans and had met the London poet, bibliophile and bohemian John Gawsworth, while Miller had laid claim to an array of heroes from Knut Hamsun to Walt Whitman. And both could muster a crew of supporters. Durrell had the friendship of antiquarian bookseller Alan G. Thomas and actor Peter Bull, while Miller's cohorts included some impressive names – Herbert Read, Count Keyserling – and he had acquired in Anaïs Nin and Alfred Perlès literary allies who would be loyal to him throughout his life. But neither Durrell nor Miller had found exactly that colleague of complementary affinities who could be at once mirror and rebounding surface for his art. When Durrell wrote his first letter to Miller – '*Tropic* turns the corner into a new life which has regained its bowels' – the American realized he had hooked his ideal reader and replied, 'You're the first Britisher who's written me an intelligent letter about the book.'


Lawrence Durrell

14 december 1979

Dear Henry - A line to wish you all good things for your birthday at Noël. Not sure where I'll be but will send you a cable to 'marguerite' asap: From your side a prayer for the well being of my 'pivotal' moral 'contrainte' vowed we in order. I am just starting the 'good book' i.e. feeding back the 'imaginary' characters into the furnace of the actuality of the action. It is rather an alchemical thrust and I feel like a physicist cautiously playing with some atomic process. Up to now the feedback idea has been purely temporal as a notion: but I am trying to feedback second degree fictions into fields inhabited by first-degree ones. Will the result be over-contradiction and chaos – ('reality over-determined'!) ? or will they many and settle down happily ever after like lions and lambs in the same poem? I'm curious to see. It felt that if somebody did it do something like novel was going to be about as modern as morris-dancing to flageolet + drum soon! If the bloody thing works however it will give a new flavour to fictional reality - into Eliot.

I'm waiting for my daughter –

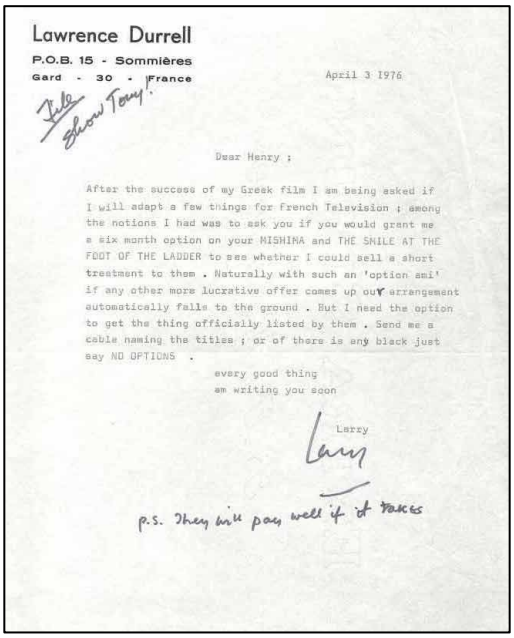
love to you all

Larry

R.P. 12 GARD 30250 SOMMIÈRES FRANCE

Among the refrains of the early correspondence are Miller's requests for work from Durrell, with Durrell parrying because he is embarrassed at the quality of his early writing and his alleged small current output. He is being unnecessarily modest: most twenty-four-year-olds with a novel published by Cassell and another accepted by Faber and Faber would not feel the need to protest so much. Durrell even omits mentioning to Miller the existence of his first novel *Pied Piper of Lovers* (1935). Then in November 1936 Durrell writes, in red ink on graph-lined oversized paper, a letter on Hamlet (the text immediately precedes this note), later published in expanded form in the *New English Weekly*. Durrell had already written about his theory of heraldry – akin to

Keats's concept of the power of the imagination – and about Hamlet, but this letter Miller excitedly calls a 'note for an essay.' Other work from Durrell soon follows: 'A Christmas Carol' (published as 'Asylum in the Snow' in *Seven*) and, with a reverberating impact, *The Black Book*: Durrell recklessly posts his unique typescript to Miller, telling him to 'pitch it into the Seine' if he does not approve. It is Miller's turn to salute Durrell, and the roles of helper and helped are henceforth to alternate throughout their friendship. The Hamlet letters have given Durrell the chance to cut in as a creative equal. Miller remains Durrell's mentor, however, and this section ends with ruthlessly honest letters on artistic integrity. Durrell had been working out schemes to promote Miller: now Miller is circulating the 'Hamlet' essay to publishers, foreshadowing the enormous task he and Anaïs Nin, primarily, will assume in typing out copies of *The Black Book* and negotiating its publication. In mid-August 1937, Lawrence Durrell appears in Paris, 'with the Ionian tan still on his face and hands', as Alfred Perlès described him. It is a Sunday, and Perlès returns to 18 Villa Seurat from his part-time job at the American Golf and Country Club to find a party in progress – Larry and Henry talking, Durrell's first wife Nancy Myers in the kitchenette grilling steaks. The party is to continue, with interruptions, until Miller parts from the Durrells at Tripolis in the Peloponnesus on 26 December 1939. Durrell radiates tireless energy, even when seated 'Confucius-fashion' and listening to Miller. A few days in Paris, and he dashes off with Nancy to London for meetings with Havelock Ellis, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas. Back in Paris, he rents a flat at 21 rue Gazan, near his friends, and the projects begin to sprout like dragons' teeth: with Miller and Perlès he takes over editorship of *The Booster*, the magazine of the American Golf and Country Club; Anaïs Nin had fallen in love with Larry as quickly as had Henry and Fred, and soon the Villa Seurat Series is launched (on Nancy's money) to publish *The Black Book*, Miller's *Max and the White Phagocytes* and Nin's *Winter of Artifice*. Miller's life in Paris, at the hub of what Larry termed his 'factory', could best be described as hectic before the summer of 1937; now, the activity increases. Then the Durrells dash back to Corfu. Though the time Larry and Henry spend together means they need not rely entirely on letters, the correspondence is more prolific this year than any other. With the Durrells back in Greece, Miller and Nin in Paris continue to labour on Larry's behalf, seeing *The Black Book* through the Obelisk Press. Next winter Larry races about Europe again: Paris, London, Stratford. But he finally manages to lure Henry to Greece, and on about 22 July he and Nancy drive up to the Corfu dock just as Henry's ship slides up to the pier. With the principals in almost daily contact, the correspondence lapses. For Miller the trip is a revelation: a confirmed city-dweller who once claimed that his soul thrived on garbage cans, he basks naked in the Greek sun and becomes a close friend of every native in sight. Later in Athens he is adopted by George Katsimbalis, Theodore Stephanides, and George Seferis – raconteur, doctor and biologist, and future Nobel laureate respectively – who were to appear in the writings of both Durrell and Miller. Miller tells the story of his trip in the book many consider his finest, *The Colossus of Maroussi*. When Miller parts from Larry and Nancy Durrell at Tripolis in the Peloponnesus on a miserably wet afternoon the day after Christmas 1939, the separation is to prove far longer and more momentous than either expected. But they might have known: for one thing, it was an axiom with Miller, born on 26 December, that nothing good ever happened to him during the Yule season. In *The Colossus of Maroussi* Miller wrote that they had sat in a cold and damp café, facing 'abominable' food, and added, 'To me at least it was really beginning to look like Christmas – that is to say, sour, moth-eaten, bilious, crapulous, worm-eaten, mildewed, imbecilic, pusillanimous and completely gaga.'


Lawrence Durrell
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France

April 3 1976

Dear Henry ;

After the success of my Greek film I am being asked if I will adapt a few things for french Television ; among the notions I had was to ask you if you would grant me a six month option on your MISHIMA and THE SMILE AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER to see whether I could sell a short treatment to them . Naturally with such an 'option ami' if any other more lucrative offer comes up our arrangement automatically falls to the ground . But I need the option to get the thing officially listed by them . Send me a cable naming the titles ; or of there is any black just say NO OPTIONS .

every good thing
am writing you soon

Larry

p.s. They will pay well if it takes

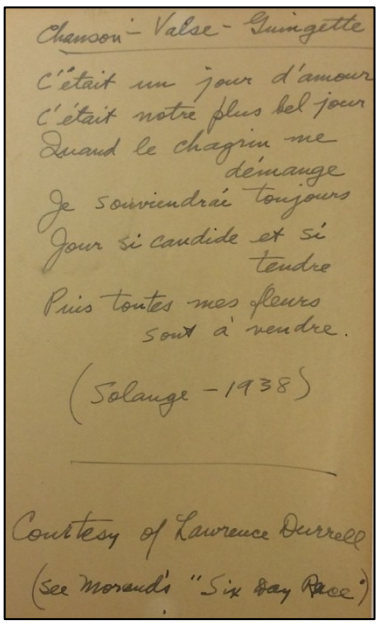
In 1940, at the British Legation in Athens, Durrell holds the first of his various jobs with the British Council, and later with the Foreign Office, from which he will not escape permanently until 1956. While this employment will provide him with the material for later books, he is not to be again exclusively a man of letters

until 1957. True, he keeps writing, but with his left hand, so to speak. Soon after his return to the USA, Miller launches himself on an eighteen-month tour of the country, which leads to his writing *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* and then to residence at Big Sur. Durrell's Greek friends, among them Katsimbalis, Seferis, and Stephanides, are all intensely involved with the war effort, first in the defeat of the Italians in the Albanian campaign, then in the desperate defence against the April 1941 German onslaught. Durrell is sent to Kalamata by the British Council to run a school. The correspondence suffers: as the conflict intensifies, letters become infrequent and the delivery time lengthens into, typically, five or six weeks. Miller, touring the USA in his 1932 Buick, may have missed or lost some of Durrell's letters. Durrell, leaving Greece just three days ahead of the German armoured divisions, abandons possessions in the scramble for a caïque in which to escape. Precipitate and undesired though the flight from Greece was, it landed Durrell in the world of *The Alexandria Quartet*. No letters of 1940 from Miller survive, but Durrell's from this period are so vivid, so exciting, that they flash like mirrors, reflecting the concerns of the one man while they signal the adventures of the other. Durrell leaves Greece on 25 April 1941 during the desperate evacuation ahead of the German advance. Larry, Nancy, and the year-old Penelope, aboard a caïque with a crowd of leaderless Greek soldiers, make a risky passage to Crete. They can travel only by night, when the small ship is supposedly harder for German Stuka pilots to spot, but the exhaust emits a comet's trail of fiery sparks. Finally they reach Cairo, where Durrell finds work as a press officer attached to the British Ministry of Information. Durrell's marriage does not survive – 'just the war I guess', he writes to Miller – but after this personal crisis he is transferred to Alexandria where he falls in love with the beautiful Eve 'Gipsy' Cohen. Meanwhile, Miller is midway in his tour of the 'American nightmare', rushing about the USA as though the nations were not preparing for the most destructive war the world has known. Hating warfare in general and this war in particular, Miller defends himself by carrying on with his life and writing as if the only annoyances are the travel restrictions which kept him from returning to Europe – that, and his frequent visits to the dentist. By 1945 Miller is firmly settled in Big Sur with his third young wife, Janina Lepska. This is to prove an enormously significant period for both men: Durrell finds the setting of his first major fiction in the overheated and fecund, sordid yet exotic ambience of wartime Egypt; Miller rediscovers that he is indelibly American, as American as the Walt Whitman he has always admired. With uncanny though perhaps unconscious foresight, Miller records the travel diary which is to form the basis for *The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* in a printer's dummy for *Leaves of Grass*. Egyptian themes and motifs – cabbalistic studies, Gnosticism, desert oases – are never to leave Durrell, and recur in his fiction starting with *The Alexandria Quartet*. Miller never again really sees himself as an *expatriate* artist, although he continues to look abroad for inspiration.

The autumn of 1945 promises marvelous rewards for Larry and Henry, the deserved harvests of many years of impatient labour. Although Durrell was to make generations of readers long for the exotic Alexandria of his *Quartet*, he himself is aching to get away, preferably to Greece. He secures the post of Public Information Officer on Rhodes, an assignment which comes with a staff, a printing plant, freedom to publish newspapers in as many languages as he can manage. Durrell is, as he claims, 'damn near' being the governor of the Dodecanese Islands. He is able to bring Eve Cohen along as secretary – even though it means the intercession of friends in the Embassy to outwit her disapproving father. It is as exciting as an abduction from a seraglio! Soon he and Eve are settled in the bougainvillea-surrounded Villa Cleobolus; he is in the Greek world again; his work is exciting, and Eve, 'with her seven languages', is an able assistant. He has 'The Book of the Dead', *The Alexandria Quartet* as an embryo, mapped out in his head and waiting to be born. Miller's prospects seem almost as good. Late in 1944 he had met two Polish sisters in New York, and on 18 December of that year he had married the younger of the two, Janina Lepska, twenty years old and a Bryn Mawr graduate. At nearly the same time that Durrell is beginning his idyllic life on Rhodes with Eve, Miller is awaiting the birth of the first child of this marriage. (His only previous child, Barbara, was born to Beatrice Wickens Miller twenty-five years earlier.) Miller is going through a tremendously productive period; everything he submits for publication is being accepted, back titles are being reprinted and his water-colours are selling. American soldiers in Paris buy so many of his books that he finds himself briefly a millionaire – in francs, which he cannot take out of France, while the US Government is denying visas for 'non-essential' travel, preventing him from spending his fortune.

Durrell had hoped that his appointment in Rhodes could be used as a springboard to Athens, where he had already resumed the personal and literary friendships he enjoyed before the war. But he turns out to have an enemy in British services in Athens and is denied the post. This leads to a sojourn in a cottage in Dorset, and then, like some Roman proconsul in disgrace – so he feels – he is exiled to Córdoba, Argentina, as a lecturer for the British Council. While he makes good and loyal friends in South America, he finds the country, the dry distances, even the 'huge steaks – like loaves' oppressive, and returns to England after a year. He hopes that the Council will send him to Greece or France, but his fate turns out to be exile again: as Embassy press officer in Belgrade, which he terms 'this centre of barbarism comparable only to the darkest of the dark ages'. Despite official recognition – he meets Marshal Tito and plays a prominent part during Sir Anthony Eden's visit – and such replenishing of his spirits as is afforded by a month in Ischia with his friend from Corfu days, Zarian, Durrell finds he can no more write in beautiful but fear-oppressed Yugoslavia than he could on the arid dry plains of Córdoba. Only some poems, *A Key to Modern Poetry* (based on his lectures in Argentina) and the drama *Sappho* emerge from this period. In 1951 his daughter Sappho is born in Oxford, and by 1952 he is planning a final escape from the Foreign Office. For Miller these are productive years. He revises *Sexus*, originally drafted in 1942 and destined to be the first part of *The Rosy Crucifixion*; then he writes *Plexus*, the second part. Following the suggestion of his friend Lawrence Clark Powell of the UCLA library, he pauses in the 'serious' creation of *The Rosy Crucifixion* to reminisce about his favourite reading, and *The Books in My Life* soon emerges. Although his chronic money difficulties continue, he buys land on Big Sur ridge and builds his first home. His only son Tony is born in 1948. There is much talk of meetings, but Durrell and Miller do not see one another; the major crisis of these years comes when Durrell is 'bitterly disappointed' with *Sexus* and tells Miller so. Durrell's candour and Miller's response illustrate the calibre of both men and the depth of their friendship.

Durrell plans carefully for 1953: it is to be his big year; he resigns from his highly paid position as press secretary in Belgrade, calculating that he has enough money saved to buy a small house on Cyprus and have a 'golden year' free to write his long-planned 'Book of the Dead'. Around Christmas 1952 he is scheduled to leave Yugoslavia, but Eve has a nervous breakdown and is flown back to England. Durrell and the baby, Sappho, go to Cyprus after the doctors assure him that his presence will not help Eve's condition. He buys his 'Turkish house' near Bellapaix Abbey, and the purchase and remodeling of his dwelling are to form one of the dramatic currents of *Bitter Lemons*. The expense of maintaining Eve in England, and an army of masons and plumbers locally, drains his finances, and soon Durrell is teaching a class of sixth-form girls in Nicosia. Durrell never shows anything but joy at Miller's good fortune during these years, yet Henry's triumphant progress across Europe with *his* Eve – Eve McClure, sister-in-law of his good friend the painter Bezalel Schatz – must have led to wry comparisons. For seven months Miller is courted by his French publishers and visited by his old friends: Georges Belmont, Brassaï, Hans Reichel. He tours Spain with the Delteils. Back in Big Sur he receives Katsimbalis and Van Wyck Brooks; Perlès appears to complete *My Friend Henry Miller* and to re-create their usual good times together. Barbara, his first daughter, whom he had come to consider lost to him, arrives and they got along famously. His joy during these years is darkened in the spring of 1956, when he returns to Brooklyn to sit at his dying mother's bedside for three months, but he also resumes writing this year, making some progress on *Nexus* and completing *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymous Bosch*. Durell's position in contrast is bad – he has an ill wife, an endangered marriage, a low-paid job, a child to look after – but he does, eventually, have an attractive house, made over to suit his need for space and an artistically satisfying environment. Then he makes a fatal mistake: he asks Alan Thomas to send out the books secured in the loft above the bookstore. By that act, as Thomas has noted, Durrell seals his fate: an international catastrophe is bound to ensue. When Thomas sent Durrell's library to him on Corfu, the Second World War



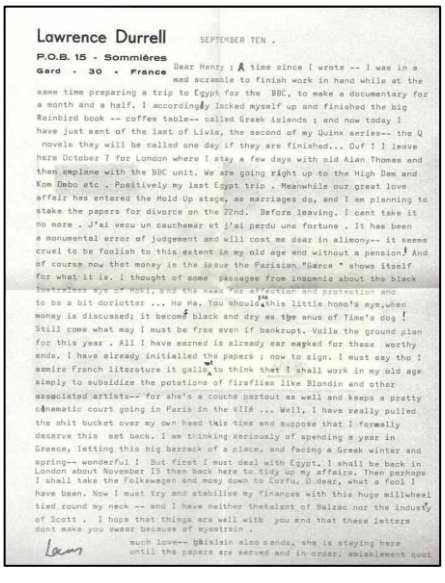
broke out. Within months of the shipment to Cyprus EOKA bombs begin going off as the Greek Cypriots agitate for ENOSIS, union with Greece. Durrell is invited to return to Foreign Office service, as press officer in Nicosia. He finds it necessary to abandon his Bellapaix home, both for personal safety (he is nearly shot one evening in a local tavern) and to shield his neighbours, who might be killed merely for associating with an Englishman. However, through his work during these chaotic times he meets Claude Vincendon, the woman most nearly able to sustain his demanding daemon; and during this time he completes *Justine*.

Durrell writes about places with a verve and brilliance which has led many to compare his 'foreign residence' books to D. H. Lawrence's on Mexico, Italy and Sardinia. But the truth is that he always hated travelling, and repeatedly tried to put down roots wherever he finds a place to his liking. He added a second storey to his landlord's house at Kalami in 1938, and would have stayed in Greece to write 'The Book of the Dead' had not the Second World War intervened. During the early 1950s he planned to live indefinitely at Bellapaix, Cyprus, in his Turkish house. His mood is desperate when he moves into the Villa Louis in February of 1957, just up the hill from the railway tracks on the edge of the small medieval town of Sommières. For twenty years he has carried inside himself and on the flyleaves of one or two notebooks the idea for an ambitious work which he hopes will be of the same class but greater in kind than *The Black Book*. By Durrell's standards of industry, he does not have much to show in print for the past twenty years of creative life: *The Black Book*, a novel unpublishable in England or America; another novel, *Cefalû* (*The Dark Labyrinth* in later editions), which he dismisses as a potboiler; four volumes of verse; and *Sappho*, an unperformed poetic drama. Then suddenly Miller's faith in Durrell, and Durrell's own promises, are fulfilled in a year of terrific accomplishment. He publishes books in four genres, all successful to a greater or lesser degree: *Justine*, *Bitter Lemons*, *Esprit de Corps*, and *White Eagles Over Serbia*, the last a thriller based on his Yugoslav experience aimed at teenage readers. Miller's praise is now chorused by the critics, and suddenly Durrell finds himself in the position Miller has long warned him against: he is a sought-after public figure, besieged by editors offering commissions, by interviewers and television crews, by curious tourists. Durrell continues to work at a feverish pace, writing reviews, articles for *Holiday* magazine, and two more volumes of *The Alexandria Quartet*. Durrell and Perlès initiate a correspondence about Miller intended to clarify his intentions and explain him to the public: Miller cannot bear to sit on the sidelines and soon derails the correspondence with an eight-page letter about himself. These exchanges, including Miller's epistolary *tour de force*, are eventually published in *Art and Outrage*. In the midst of being forced out of the Villa Louis by the owner, who needs the house for his family, Durrell undertakes the vast task of selecting a representative sample of his friend's oeuvre for *The Henry Miller Reader*, a labour of love and gratitude. Miller is delighted, and weighs in with a long list of titles and many paragraphs of advice. Although he is bedeviled by visitors, correspondence, and petty tasks, Miller publishes *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymous Bosch* and pushes *Nexus* along slowly.

Miller remained fixed, except for a few trips, at Big Sur from 1944 to 1962. During this period Durrell lived, except for short periods in England, in Alexandria, Rhodes, Córdoba, Belgrade, Bellapaix, Nicosia, Sommières and, finally, the Mazet Michel, a peasant farmhouse just outside Nîmes. Although Miller was to live for nearly seventeen years at his last home in Pacific Palisades, it was Big Sur along with 18 Villa Seurat that left their mark on his life and work. While Alexandria clearly had an enormous effect on Durrell's work, he was far happier at three other places, each associated with a different wife: Corfu with Nancy, Rhodes with Eve, and the Mazet Michel with Claude. The Mazet Michel sits on a gently sloping hillside amid frost-stunted olives, wild thyme and scrub timber. An ungraded road, unpaved when Durrell moved in, winds for a mile to the Engances thoroughfare, and Nîmes is only another mile distant. Durrell and Claude work and spend royalties to turn the 'mas' into 'an ideal hideout for a couple of boozy writers.' This is a good time for both men. Miller has in *his* Eve a woman who is a good household manager and a talented painter. He completes *Nexus*, which is published in French by Corrêa in 1960. Durrell's Claude seems to be his first wife to keep pace with his enormous energy: she cooks gourmet meals, controls the children during holidays, writes her own books. Together, they go to Hamburg for the triumphant première of *Sappho*, directed by Gustaf Gründgens and starring Elisabeth Flickenschildt, at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus. Durrell finishes *Clea*, completing *The Alexandria Quartet*.

And in the summer of 1959 comes the reunion Durrell and Miller have planned, looked forward to, and been repeatedly denied over the past twenty years. In 1960 Miller is coming to the end of yet another seven-year cycle – in wives: beginning with his marriage to June Mansfield, that was about the usual term. Seven years with Lepska, and now his marriage to Eve is coming apart. He accepts an invitation to be a judge at the Cannes Film Festival and on the way meets Renate Gerhardt, a beautiful widow and the English-language editor with his German publisher, Rowohlt. Soon they are talking about marriage and a European home for their respective children. Henry sets out to find the ideal place and, of course, fails. Christmas brings the obligatory depression; he has just turned sixty-nine and he feels used up. To raise his spirits he writes his first play, the hilarious *Just Wild About Harry*, in three days. Soon he is making arrangements to have it staged in Germany. Durrell in contrast had long been interested in drama, and had drafted a play entitled 'The Hangman' during his Elizabethan-struck period in the 1930s. *Sappho* was published in 1950, and in 1952 he had written a farcical anti-Communist 'pantomime', *Little Red Riding Hood*, to be performed by his colleagues at Her Majesty's Embassy in Belgrade. However, there had been no financial rewards, and novels seemed a surer way towards securing his independence. With the success of *The Alexandria Quartet*, he can return to the theatre: by the end of 1961 he sees *Acte* performed at Hamburg under the direction of Gustaf Gründgens, who had produced *Sappho* in 1959. Friendship grows between them, and in 1963 Durrell writes *An Irish Faustus* so that Gründgens, who affected a satanic mien, can play Mephisto. Gründgens dies before the production can take place. Durrell writes no further drama, but tries a second screenplay: *Judith*, a role he creates for Sophia Loren. (In 1960 and 1961 he had written several film scripts for Rouben Mamoulian's *Cleopatra*, but little if any of Durrell's material was used in the final version.) He spends weeks on location with Miss Loren in Israel, and is so impressed by her intelligence and sensitivity that he rewrites his entire scenario to suit her conception of the title character. Miller and Durrell meet a number of times during these years, but finally Henry buys an imposing house in staid Pacific Palisades, where he comes to be seen as a model neighbor. The likelihood that the old allies will again share Europe between them on a permanent basis fades.

After the tremendous success of the *Quartet* and the excitement of seeing his plays well performed by actresses of the calibre of Margaret Rawlings, Elisabeth Flickenschildt, and Maria Gorvin, Durrell seems content to bask in his popularity. With the help of artist Nadia Blokh and photographer Mary Mollo, an old friend from his time in Rhodes, on 6 March 1964 Durrell launches his gouache paintings with a one-man show at the Galerie Connaître in Paris. Roguishly, he hides his identity under the *nom de peinture* Oscar Epfs. He has been painting since the 1930s and, in dialogue with Marc Alyn, cheerfully acknowledges his mentor: 'Miller taught me how to paint masterpieces. His technique went like this: you paint a horse or a woman or any old crap; then you make for the bathroom and run it under the tap; and you've got a masterpiece!' He indulges himself in other ways as well: he buys a Volkswagen Microbus, a Zodiac inflatable, and a powerful outboard, and with these toys he crosses to Greece from Brindisi. He writes a number of travel pieces for *Holiday*, including 'Oil for the Saint; Return to Corfu'. He keeps writing seriously, however, and fills notebooks and a stock of typed sheets with material for a 'comic novel' to be called 'The Placebo'. In fact, he has been struggling with this project since 1961. It is not to be completed to his satisfaction and published, although some sections eventually emerge in *Tunc*. During the summer of 1966 he and Claude move from the beloved but rustic and somewhat cramped Mazet Michel into the largest house in Sommières, set amid tall chestnuts and palms, a rather sinister *fin de siècle* three-storey mansion with a mansard roof and the name 'Mme Tartes' over the door. Miller too is not very productive over this period. His hip, operated on for the first time in 1960, continues to give him problems, but he recovers well enough to resume playing table tennis, at which he usually wins, even against his son Tony. His major efforts seem to go into painting – he donates countless works to museums in an effort to reduce his taxes – and to the courting of film stars and nightclub singers.


Lawrence Durrell SEPTEMBER TEN .
P.O.B. 15 - Sommières
Gard - 30 - France
Dear Henry ; A time since I wrote -- I was in a mad scramble to finish work in hand while at the same time preparing a trip to Egypt for the BBC, to make a documentary for a month and a half. I accordingly locked myself up and finished the big Rainbird book -- coffee table-- called Greek Islands ; and now today I have just sent of the last of Livia, the second of my Quinx series-- the Q novels they will be called one day if they are finished... Ouf ! I leave here October 7 for London where I stay a few days with old Alan Thomas and then emplane with the BBC unit. We are going right up to the High Dam and Kom Ombo etc . Positively my last Egypt trip . Meanwhile our great love affair has entered the Hold Up stage, as marriages do, and I am planning to stake the papers for divorce on the 22nd. Before leaving. I cant take it no more . J'ai vecu un cauchemar et j'ai perdu une fortune . It has been a monumental error of judgement and will cost me dear in alimony-- it seems cruel to be foolish to this extent in my old age and without a pension! And of course now that money is the issue the Parisian "Darce " shows itself for what it is. I thought of some passages from insomnia about the black lustreless eye of Hell, and the need for affection and protection and to be a bit dorlotter ... Ha Ha. You should see this little homo's eye,when money is discussed; it becomes black and dry as the anus of Time's dog ! Still come what may I must be free even if bankrupt. Voila the ground plan for this year . All I have earned is already ear marked for these worthy ends. I have already initialled the papers ; now to sign. I must say tho I admire french literature it galls to think that I shall work in my old age simply to subsidize the potations of fireflies like Blondin and other associated artists-- for she's a couche partout as well and keeps a pretty cinematic court going in Paris in the Ville ... Well, I have really pulled the shit bucket over my own head this time and suppose that I formally deserve this set back. I am thinking seriously of spending a year in Greece, letting this big barrack of a place, and facing a Greek winter and spring-- wonderful ! But first I must deal with Egypt. I shall be back in London about November 15 then back here to tidy up my affairs. Then perhaps I shall take the Folkswagen and mosy down to Corfu. O dear, what a fool I have been. Now I must try and stabilise my finances with this huge millwheel tied round my neck -- and I have neither thetalent of Balzac nor the industry of Scott . I hope that things are well with you and that these letters dont make you sweat because of eyestrain .
much love-- Chislain also sends, she is staying here until the papers are served and in order. emblement quoi
Larry

The year 1967 finds Miller, aged seventy-five, in ardent pursuit of the Japanese film actress and nightclub singer Hiroko Tokuda, aged twenty-eight, whom he had met at a party in 1966. Though he sees himself as a septuagenarian Goethe in love with teenage Ulrike von Levetzow, his behavior is eternal youth: soulful gazing upon 'Hoki' at the piano, midnight telephone calls; he even writes a set of lyrics for her – only the third poem he has ever penned. An image that comes to mind is the Chaplinesque clown who always lands on his feet, no matter what the threatening situation. It is fitting that Miller and Chaplin become great friends and, with Georges Simenon, formed a trio in search of hilarity. Nineteen sixty-seven begins for Durrell with the death of Claude on New Year's Day in a Zurich hospital. He is stunned: until the last few days, the doctors had been talking optimistically about a curable bacterial infection. Claude's illness turns out to be cancer. As if to underscore the disruption in Durrell's life, the correspondence lapses, and Miller's reply, if any, to Durrell's terse note announcing Claude's death, has been lost. Like Miller, Durrell is very resilient – a less tough man could hardly have kept his emotional equilibrium, let alone continued to create, during the upheavals he has faced – war, professional setbacks, divorces, the mental breakdown of one wife, the sudden death of another, and so on – but in Durrell the disasters point to tragic conclusions and so inform his art. Miller's *Rosy Crucifixion* is, finally, Rabelaisian and comic, as befits his egocentric personality. The direction of Durrell's life and fiction, while presenting continuation rather than tragic finality, points to his ego-fleeing nature. He strives to overcome hurt and loss through defection rather than confession, disguise rather than self-portraiture; death, from wry Death Gregory in *The Black Book* to the gnostic death cult in *The Avignon Quintet*, is Durrell's great subject. With *The Alexandria Quartet*, and particularly in the works written after Claude's death, the shadow of mortality lends his work a serious tone which belies the laughter. Durrell comes to the USA for the first time in 1968, stays with Miller and his Oriental coterie in Pacific Palisades. Hoki and her cousin take Larry to Disneyland – which he loves. His Sommières home is expertly burgled: 'They took only my best Elizabethan books and the paintings given me by famous artists – but left all my own art,' he complains.

The next year, 1969, *The Alexandria Quartet* is filmed as *Justine*. Durrell studies the gnostics and writes the first volume of *The Avignon Quintet*. He begins a cycle of frequent visits to Geneva and Paris, and returns to America in 1970, 1972, 1973 and 1974, the last time to teach for three months at the California Institute of Technology. During 1972 Durrell and Perlès celebrate a reunion in Paris. Miller is enraged by the film *Bonnie and Clyde* and writes an article on it; he is deeply moved by the suicide of Yukio Mishima and composes a long essay. He falls in love with Lisa Lu, a celebrated Chinese actress, and concentrates his still-prodigious letter-writing powers on her. He makes a list of thirty of his oldest pals and begins writing his *Book of Friends*. Just before leaving for the Caltech teaching stint, Durrell marries for the fourth time. His choice is Ghislaine de Boysson, a lovely model born to an old French family. Ghislaine and Larry are given the use of a house on the beach at Malibu, within easy driving distance of both Henry and Anaïs: the trio of the Villa Seurat Series is together once more. In 1974 Durrell publishes *Vega*, a volume of poetry, which delights Miller; then out comes *Monsieur: or, The Prince of Darkness*, which puzzles Miller. Just as before, artistic disagreements and doubts in no way impair the friendship. For Miller, 1976 opens auspiciously with a telegram from France announcing that he has been named 'Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur'. During the year the first volume of his *Book of Friends* appears, to be followed soon by *My Bike & Other Friends* and *Joey*. Both men divorce their wives during 1977 and, while Durrell professes to enjoy living alone, Miller discovers the last of his great loves, the dancer and actress Brenda Venus, 'an Ariel to his Prospero', Durrell writes in his Preface to the book of Miller's letters to Brenda. Anaïs Nin dies the same year after a long and gallant battle against cancer, and so is severed one of the strongest ties to the Villa Seurat period. She is followed in 1978 by Katsimbalis, the figure who represented for Miller so much of the fascination of Greece. Durrell writes *Sicilian Carousel* and wins Miller's praise; then he completes *Livia*, 'sibling' to *Monsieur*, and struggles with *Constance*. He also writes the text for *The Greek Islands*, a lavishly illustrated celebration of Greece. In 1980 Henry, dying and almost blind, dictates a cheerful last letter to Larry. (Ian S. MacNiven, editor, *The Durrell-Miller Letters, 1935-80*, London: Faber & Faber, 1988).

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