

June 4, 1976

Dear Conyn:
It was good to have your letter and hear you end-of-terrist
even if still buried in work and projects.

The last 2 months for us have been more than
necessarily difficult because what I thought must be a
pulled muscle turned into a major trauma of discomrup
a deteriorating spine, flattened disks in both my upper and
lower back, and nothing to be done but cope with it.
Well, muscles can barely replace strength in my lower
back and I have these, being religious about exercises
since I did pull a muscle several years ago. But
a neck brace is the only help for my upper back, and
I can now in one a good part of each day. I can't work
more than an hour at my desk without lying down for
15 minutes, and I'm much restricted in lifting and
carrying anyway. I spent my 45th birthday contemplating
being 85, and I didn't go to Hawaii since that trip
for a week and is an necessity for the healthy. But
we couldn't put off the move. Fortunately we have lots
of beloved young who simply took over most of the job for
us. Our loads of records, boxes, china, paintings went
over and got settled before the official move took the
big stuff, and there wasn't a great deal of that since
we sold or gave away a lot of stuff: beds, dining room
furniture, couches. The only appliance to come over was
the deep freeze. There there was a three-day ferry
strike (postponed now for 30 days) and a doubling of the
rates which we avoided by 6 days, coming over the
night of the 25th. We are now remarkably settled and
very pleased with the result.
Our studies are the chief. There for malins. What was
our bedroom is now Helen's study with a skylight. We've
moved our bedroom to the small room downstairs, which is a

it like being away at camp, but we like that. My study is furnished with new desk and Credenza (I didn't know what one was until I bought it: a side board for papers!), the new couch/bed, useful for my stretches out periods, my favorite reading chair, a wall of books, my favorite paintings. I am far more efficiently and comfortably organized than ever before. Generally the house seems the same except some completely new. There are five azaleas at the deck.

Monica's was cleaning for the carport; so we'll be changed up outside for a while, but we are settled enough in town to contemplate ordinary days. I am trying to figure out a work schedule after all these interrupted months. Summer is no time to be ambitious, given the guest schedule, but I hope to deal with a few short stories.

Wesley found a young woman down the road who is willing to clean for us and can also do some typing for me - a new head since I don't want to waste precious time at my desk copying manuscripts. I'll be typing this now, but the power has gone off. I think maybe I need to invest in an electric typewriter for these occasions which are fairly frequent.

At that moment, as if to discourage me from unnecessarily extravagant thoughts, the power came back on. And I'd rather think like an islander.

One of my chores in the last couple of months has been to try to sort out our finances so that we are comfortable and without concern. In town I was brooding about some of the safer second mortgages available, but now that I'm here I think maybe I'll get involved in first mortgages on the island, easier to manage and more under my control. If I arrange things sensibly, neither of us should have to worry about earning any more money. Helen's pension is about \$200 a month after 40 years' teaching; so it's a good thing we've built up a fair capital over the years. As things look, we should be able to live very comfortably here and take a trip or so a year on what we have. Then whatever comes in from writing can be put into capital investment for insurance against inflation.

So if I could just get myself a new back, we'd be in excellent shape. Actually, now that the move is over and I can figure out a routine, it won't be too much of a nuisance, except in the inevitable extreme episodes.

The new novel, The Young In One Another's Arms, comes out in January. Lesbian Images will be out in July in paperback with a more civilized cover than the hardback, amazing luck. Canadian Fiction Magazine is devoting the November issue to my work, and Chatelaine has just bought one of my Harry and Anna stories (as in "House"). On what other people consider the

negative side, John Hofsess came out to do a profile for the Globe and Mail, having been turned down by Week-end, Chatelaine, The Canadian, and Saturday Night, and once he'd done the profile, the Globe and Mail also turned it down. It matters not a pin to me since publicity usually causes me nuisance rather than sales of books, but John Hofsess is enraged, convinced that there is a conspiracy against me to keep ~~my~~ from my audience. I haven't the heart to tell him that I'd just as soon be kept. Oh, I'm glad to books get into print (Theme is out again as of yesterday, another 4000 copies printed), but I mainly want time and peace to work.

I'm glad Marion Engel's The Bear is doing well. It's a fine book, as ~~xxx~~ is her collection of short stories. I was sorry not to get to Ottawa to see her again and other writing buddies, but maybe I'll manage it next spring, though crossing the country in neck brace is still a pretty daunting idea. I may try it in September to visit Marie-Claire and Mary in Montreal, but I'm not yet sure. I'll know better at the end of the summer.

Just heard from Peggy that she has a little girl. Since Don and Ann Bailey have just had a son, I feel rather more than usually tribal with my writing friends.

I've got to go into Vancouver on the 16th for a reception Doubleday is giving for its B.C. writers. I should fly since it's being held at the Bayshore, but we've decided to do something useful as well and pick up a hind quarter of beef for our freezer.

Have a good and peaceful summer, and I do hope your publisher comes through with the book.

Love to you and Kathy,

Jane