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4504 West Second Avenue Vancouver 8 British Columbia

August 31, 1970

Dear Carolyn:

I've been sent extra copies of the most recent LADDER because I've a small story in it, a passifier for the ladies since the reviewer of my novel was frightened that I was getting 'hostile' to the 'cause'. Since you've never seen one, it might be entertaining for you. It's very much women's liberation now, a good direction to go in, I think.

Yes, THIS IS NOT FOR YOU is in book stores. I've seen only the Globe review, very hostile, to do with the 'error' in judgement of a 'talented' writer to choose twice to write about lesbians. There's been not a word in either local paper here, which privately ~~xxx~~ doesn't trouble me since it postpones the ~~x~~ inevitable crank calls, but it can't be good for sales. Good reviews in Boston, L.A., Washington D.C. and other big centers. A couple of corking bad ones, too much silence. I try not to be too distracted.

What is wildly pleasing me you'll mostly have missed, out in those beautiful woods: the great attention being paid to a book called SEXUAL POLITICS, written by Kate Millett. She's an old friend of mine. The book is her PhD thesis, and it's turning into a best seller. Though academics are very uptight about her frank use of strong argument, it's a brilliant piece of work and obviously about to be the bible for Women's Lib. Kate's a gloriously crazy character, sculptor as well as scholar, married to a Japanese artist, and they live in a loft on the Bowery in New York. Get it and read it and share it with Catharine. Even if she's not a reader, she should like this.

What with running a hotel and my parents' business all summer, I haven't had much time to myself. When I do, I divide iris. Only about three more weeks, and I'll be free. Last of guests will have moved out by the end of the week. Then Helen gets tangled in registration. Since she's got charge of 40 teachers and 1000 students, it's a bit nightmarish. I've told her I'll man her office for the first week of lectures so that she can concentrate on teaching while I sort out the inevitable scheduling problems and threatened nervous systems. When that's done, I retire to making sentences and raking leaves and cooking meals for two--- I wonder if I'll remember how. We've rarely had fewer than six people in the house, often more. I do like that sort of thing, but I've had enough for a while. I haven't touched the press for weeks, and I haven't done all the gardening I want to. Never mind about climbing walls because I've had no space to work. I suppose I'll hate the space once it's begun.. for a while anyway.

Had dinner last night at a house where it's ritually that we are occasionally invited for 'kids' night because we are very fond of all three children in the family. Peter, the youngest, around seven, said to me, "Do you know why I like you? Because you're childish and a Tom-man." I've rarely had a better compliment.

I'd just been teaching him how to talk like Donald Duck. Then Mia had to read me her new poems. She's the middle one, around nine, and very gifted. Jessie, eleven and reluctantly turning into a girl, said, "Mia's the odd one in our family." "Why odd?" I ask. "Oh well, every family has an odd one.. like every family pretty well has a dog, you know." They are marvelous kids. Occasionally we have them all over for supper with their best ~~am~~ buddies, two children of other friends of ours, run a grown up dinner in the dining room and a kid dinner out in the backyard with my study as the playroom. The cupboard in the study is full of ~~xxxxxxx~~ toys, which the kids are convinced Helen and I really play with when we're by ourselves, and the two desks are stocked with pencils and paper and other gadgetry good for making posters and poems. Too many kids in the world we know are without extended families, and we ~~pa~~ play some kind of cross between ~~xxx~~ aunts and grandparents for quite a number, getting conned into dreary trips to the zoo (I can't stand the zoo, but Helen really quite likes it) or happy trips to the beach. Mia and Jessie and Peter have their own name for me, 'our private giant'. That partly makes up for no grandparents, and it keeps me from missing my own nieces and nephew ~~x~~ too much.

My sister's talking about coming up for a few days in the fall, bringing only the oldest of her children. I hope we can arrange it because it would be good for her to have a break. Living in that bloody L.A. climate with kids who tend to allergies ~~x~~ means that she's struggling with sick kids most of the time. Her husband is trying to get a job outside that area, and I hope he manages.

I had a frantic and funny time trying to rescue my seventeen year old nephew from the Idaho wilds in early August so that I could send him off to England to have two weeks with my parents. Finally he managed to get there. Since Mother and Dad were staying in the house we had last summer and seeing mostly my friends, I had a dozen reports about Rick from various and impressed people. He has a blond beard and a mane of golden hair and wore a black gambler's hat. I think he had to put up with more cultural sightseeing than interested him, but he had a good time. I'd had my London agent get theatre tickets for them all and steered Rick to some of the places he'd really enjoy. ~~xxx~~ I've always doted on him, but he's now just at the ~~xxxxxxx~~ age I know best. Sometimes he talks of coming to UBC and majoring in English, but I think football will be more of a temptation, and he'll stay in the States.

Welcome home. I hope civilization isn't too much of a shock. Whatever is Catherine going to do with two bathrooms? I think it sounds like an indecent motel. Not that I have any objections to indecent motels. But she sounds to me too busy a woman to run one.

Affectionately,

