

Dear Betty and Andy.

I don't know whether or not you have heard the news, since we have mutual friends, but last August 31st my twin brother Stuart died suddenly of a massive heart attack. I was there with him and it was as bad, worse, in fact, than I hope you can imagine and has been difficult since, though I have found resources within myself somehow to go on.

The letter written to you about a trade of my portrait of you for one of your watercolors, though signed by me, was actually written by him as was the episode of meeting you both that July 4, 2004 on the island.

He told me wonderful stories ~~of you both~~ and through his narrative to me there were a pervasive feelings of his love and respect for you. We often had our differences and one of them was his long narrative and letter to you. I wanted things to be less complicated, so simple, in fact, that I actually had in mind all during the four months I worked on it, the idea of surprising you with it as another gift "out of the blue." Simple economics intervened, of course, and practicalities always seem to impose their own kind of tyranny.

What I wanted you to know was that my extraordinary opportunity to actually paint a portrait of Andy and to try for some of that inner, personal, magic, focus and even a bit of the "method" actor combined with the flating mortal nature of all sight and feeling, was the answer to a wish, whose seeming impossibility I scarcely entertained.

I worked from a rather inadequate photograph and what remains still a mystery ^{to me} is that my portrait scarcely resembles its source, and is my idea of Andy. In fact, I caught exactly what I was after and how I did it is still another mystery. The whole work is an abstract construct (abstract in the way I think you mean, Andy) It is almost non compositional yet that is there too. I rather liked the symmetry as a backdrop for a person who has one entirely his own, an emotional

Symmetry that transcends the other and about which few people ever since the "old school" have ever given the time to explore. But! there are some. I see that I ramble, a weakness of mine. What I wanted also to tell you, other than the ~~tragedy~~ tragedy in my life is that my explorations of you, Andy, did not end with my painted portrait. For years now I've been doing a series of 18th Century costumes, the purpose of which has been the possibility of a "pipe dream" book that would include a series of portraits of my favorite Composers done in miniature and in the costumes from our collection. It is hard to find people who can fit into them, but the ones I have chosen have been almost coincidentally associated with the Art. First I did Michael Finlley, a well known art dealer, but when he was in his early twenty first year and slender enough to fit the 1790's coat he wore. Another is of C. D. Ruscha, now quite famous, and still a good friend. These are all done in pencil a medium I love deeply but do too little of. And, they are done from life.

You are now part of the collection. And perhaps it is the most dramatic one of all. I have a beautiful dark blue velvet gentlemen's coat from (I think) the 1720's. Every time I look at it I think of Sir Henry Morgan, pirate.

The other photograph that Stu took of you, was you in almost side profile. You are in that coat with the big cuffs and lots of gold braid. You are also wearing a gold cloth, heavy waistcoat from the same era — and you look great! I put you on a beach with toned down landscape background, looking out to sea. It is the ~~ten~~ largest drawing in the collection and there is something special about it. Pardon me, for tooting my own horn, but this thing is really good. In a way it completes the painted portrait, lots of imitating and deep respect, and above all a sense of wonder, unseen magic and a sense of the "other" no one else can ever know, but yet is there.

You know so little about me. I was a student of John McCoy's at the Academy. It was a happy experience.

of extraordinary luck that I ~~the~~ should have known such a man. His humility and deep respect of the quiet poetry of art was a lesson in itself. We talked principles, not technique, and that's where I really learned. I stood next to him once when he had a conversation with you, a heavy snow storm outside in the small diner where if memory still serves had the best large hot dogs I ever tasted. You talked and you left speeding out of the side parking lot on your black Lincoln like lightning. It was for me a wonderful moment the whole drama of the thing. Very special. It was shortly afterwards that I asked him if he could arrange a meeting between us. He did. I wrote to you and you answered and we set a time. I was 22 at the time. Jamie carried my portfolio into your school house studio. You weren't there.

It was the most perfect ~~the~~ sunshine day after some lead weather and I certainly understood your wanting to take advantage of it. I had done the same, painting too a water color of an old sled in a blue tunnel doorway at Lemoine (Sp?) Pa. You liked it as I remember. There were people in your studio with whom I talked while waiting.

John had dropped me off - totally alone and said I'd come back later to pick me up. I'm shyly native, but your son Jamie put ~~me~~ me completely at ease. I think he was only 18 at the time, extraordinarily handsome and a real gentleman, courteous and all the rest. I talked most that day with Willard in the kitchen where the sofa was. I was a tee totaller (Sp?) but he poured me cheap wine in I think was a jelly glass ^{and} time after time. I hate to confess it but the "Dutch Courage" was not unwelcome. I ~~totally~~ enjoyed with Willard for quite a time. In his ramblings and his cultured educated accent he was wholly coherent and his logic colored with passion that I truly understood. I could sense a strangeness there, but I felt with him and we became almost instant friends. This sounds naive, but I found a nobleness and integrity there, a sensibility I respected and could identify with, erratic as some of his ~~for~~ almost free association thinking was.

Finally I heard from someone, I think it was the actor, Lee Remick, another very handsome young man with a, what I thought was a very articulate New England background. I was familiar with some, actually more than some of his TV work and we had a good talk also.

The weather had been so sweet that I felt guilty about interrupting such an opportunity for you. But you showed up. I remember you had a green canvas ^{on which you} cardigan coat ~~on~~ which you laid on the ground and plopped your deep red covered Aquasbee sketch book.

We exchanged greetings and went into the kitchen I showed you some paintings from my spread portfolio about which you were kind, encouraging and I sensed somewhat ~~my~~ inevitable. I asked you about ways I could improve ~~the~~ color sense in a picture. You answered that color was a personal thing and that much had to be worked out by feeling and experience on the part of the painter himself, which helped me a little, just was of course absolutely correct ~~and~~ and what's more, I know it. ^{at the time} My questions were rhetorical ~~really~~ ^{actually}. What you really liked was the painting I had done that day with John's watercolor class - the sled and ~~and~~ the blue trimmed doorway.

But what you really responded to was my sketches you really liked them. Both of us love Rembrandt. Yet though influenced by him and others like Meryon & Frenchman.

Actually what it all amounts to was that I simply wanted to meet you John knew that too and it was a unique experience not just because of you but of my talks with those who formed such an important part of your life those people who were a part of your life.

H

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