

March 21, 1949

Dear Mitch—

What a very pleasant surprise to hear from you. I'm so pleased that you gave your wife ~~my~~ SINAI to read, and that that reminded you of me, and most of all that you acted on that and wrote. I look back on my time in Jerusalem as very special indeed, and it's a great joy to be connected again with old friends from that era.

Your life sounds good and interesting. How few—but you're married and have a child. Indeed, Hannah is a little beauty. Writing AND painting and guiding visitors on donkeys all sounds splendid to me. Is your moshav below Nazareth? I remember that as a very fertile area with lots of good Kibbutzim farming going on. (Helen's children were on a kibbutz there, and we used to visit. I always loved the area, though—for some reason I immediately felt sleepy upon entering the kibbutz and dozed the whole time we were there, awakening only to stuff myself at another meal or to take a dip in their grand swimming pool.)

But you live in an old Arab house, you say. Sounds lovely. And pomegranate trees, and a garden. To someone in Manhattan, it all sounds delicious and makes me very nostalgic.

~~Hannah~~ We had some ups & downs. I am out of money and had to take a terrible job for a couple of years (here in NYC). Worked a long time on a novel set in Egypt that didn't get published, a post-Quarrel effort, THE LAST PHARAOH. Then the Poles suddenly discovered me for some reason. ~~SHANGHAI~~ was translated & published there, now SHANGHAI DRAMA.

IMPRESARIO is being translated, and the rest of the (unpublished) will follow. Bizarre and exotic, and I love it. And I'm just finishing a big new novel, the first one I've set in the States in decades, which pleases me. SISTER GALLY (→ BILLY THE KID). Quite different from earlier work, but it's always good to change and adjust and explore new directions.

I would dearly love to visit Israel again sometime. It remains a very special passion for me. Unfortunately we had some health problems lately which are getting in the way of things but we'll see.

In the meantime I live in New York, with an old friend, Ann Pasanella.

Congratulations on your marriage to Sam. Please give her my love and best wishes. And congratulations on having that cute rascal, Hamza! My best to your sister when next you're in town with her. And most of all, thanks again for taking the time and bother to write.

Do write again. Take care and be well.

Love,

Ed

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